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The Coups d'Etat of the Year 193

I

The civil wars that caused the overthrow of Nero and ended with the accession of Vespasian have been the subject of frequent examination in recent times. The events that brought the Antonine dynasty to an end and replaced it with that of Severus have been subjected to remarkably little detailed scrutiny. The reason lies probably in the nature of the sources. Tacitus, and for that matter Josephus, Plutarch, Suetonius and Dio, have provoked the interest. The sources for the events of 193 are inferior in both volume and quality. But epigraphy and allied disciplines have more to offer. It was the evidence of epigraphy that produced the only really original or interesting

The following special abbreviations are used:

- G. Alföldy, Legionslegaten = G. Alföldy, Die Legionslegaten der römischen Rheinarmeen (Epigraphische Studien 3 [1967]).
- G. Alföldy, Senat = G. Alföldy, Septimius Severus und der Senat. Bonner Jahrb. 168, 1968, 122 ff.
- Barbieri, Albo = G. Barbieri, L'Albo senatorio da Settimio Severo a Carino (Roma 1952).
- T. D. Barnes = T. D. Barnes, The family and career of Septimius Severus. *Historia* 16, 1967, 87 ff.
- CP = H.-G. Pflaum, Les carrières procuratoriennes équestres sous le Haut-Empire romain (Paris 1960-1961).
- Domaszewski = A. von Domaszewski, Der Staatsstreich des Septimius Severus. *Rhein. Mus.* 53, 1898, 638 ff.
- F. Grosso = F. Grosso, La lotta politica al tempo di Commodo (Torino 1964).
- J. Guey = J. Guey, L'inscription du grand-père de Septime-Sévère, *Mem. Soc. nat. ant. France* 82, 1951/2, 161 ff.
- Hasebroek = J. Hasebroek, Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Kaisers Septimius Severus (Heidelberg 1921).
- Kajanto = I. Kajanto, The Latin Cognomina (Helsinki 1965).
- Kubitschek = W. Kubitschek, Imperium Romanum tributim discriptum (Wien-Leipzig-Berlin 1889).
- Stein, Dazien = A. Stein, Die Reichsbeamten von Dazien. *Diss. Pann.* I 12 (Budapest 1944).
- Stein, Präfekten = A. Stein, Die Präfekten von Ägypten in der römischen Kaiserzeit (Bern 1950).
- B. E. Thomasson = B. E. Thomasson, Die Statthalter der römischen Provinzen Nord-Afrikas von Augustus bis Diokletian (Lund 1960).

theory about the murder of Commodus: that Commodus was removed in the interests of Septimius Severus¹. This theory will not stand up². As a result, opinion has reverted to a simple acceptance of the accounts given by two contemporary writers, Cassius Dio and Herodian. In detail Herodian's account has been subjected to criticism – some instances where he is certainly in error will emerge presently; but since his basic picture agrees with that of Dio, this is not of great moment.

That picture is basically as follows³. In his last two years Commodus increasingly exhibited signs of megalomania. This reached a particularly intense level with the renaming of the months of the year, and of the city of Rome as the *colonia Commodiana*⁴; and the increasing attention by Commodus to his gladiatorial activity. Dio (72,17 ff.) concentrates on this, with detailed description of games that lasted for fourteen days (the figure given in 72,20,1)⁵; the episode of the decapitated ostrich, which caused Dio great difficulty in suppressing his laughter (72,21,1–2) is perhaps the best known part of his narrative. Dio then proceeds to describe the conspiracy by the praetorian prefect Laetus and the chamberlain Eclectus (72,22,1 ff.), with the connivance of Commodus' mistress Marcia (taken into the plot after its inception: 72,22,4) and, eventually, when the poison that was administered had failed, with the co-operation of the athlete Narcissus, who strangled Commodus (72,22,5). The reason given for the conspiracy is that Commodus planned a bloody charade for 1 January 193: to murder the consuls and 'issue forth both as consul and secutor from the quarters of the gladiators' (72,22,2) – and Dio adds: *καὶ μηδεὶς ἀπιστήσῃ*. That is all – although Dio does mention that Laetus and Eclectus had been threatened by Commodus for opposing his plans (72,22,1). Herodian is a little more elaborate (it must of course be remembered that Dio's account is available only in the abbreviated version by Xiphilinus). He gives the story of the intended appearance by Commodus from the gladiatorial barracks (1,16,3), but does not mention the intended execution of the new consuls (whose names do not appear in his narrative). He makes the conspiracy take its origin with Marcia (1,16,4), after Commodus had revealed this project to her – and the distinct impression is given that this all took place on 31 December 192. Marcia tried unsuccessfully to dissuade Commodus from this plan; and then the emperor gave instructions to Laetus and Eclectus to prepare the bizarre ceremony. In 1,17 a thrilling

¹ Domaszewski.

² It was accepted by J. Hasebroek, (still the basic study of the emperor Severus) 16 f., but rejected by M. Fluss in the RE article on Severus (2 A [1923] cols. 1940 ff.) col. 1948, and by subsequent scholars. The position of Severus' brother Geta was not, as supposed by Domaszewski, that of governor of Dacia (see below, p. 262 f.); on the prefect of Egypt, L. Mantennius Sabinus, see p. 268 f. below.

³ For the most recent account, which follows this viewpoint, cf. F. Grosso, part IV, chapter III ('La congiura') 388 ff.

⁴ The evidence is assembled and acutely examined by F. Grosso, 360 ff., who assigns these developments to 192 (second half of the year).

⁵ Unfortunately there is no agreement about which games are meant. Grosso, 376 f. favours the *ludi divi Augusti et Fortunae Reducis*, from 3–12 October. But he justly observes (n. 1 to p. 376, on p. 377) that 'la data dei festeggiamenti veniva fissata d'iniziativa dell'imperatore' and notes also that the *ludi plebei* – which, unlike the games that he himself selects, do in fact last for precisely fourteen days (in November) – are a possible alternative, which he rejects on the grounds that the time of year was unsuitable for the presence of provincial spectators. F. Millar, *A Study of Cassius Dio* (Oxford 1964) 132, with n. 6, assumes without question that these games are the *ludi Romani* of 4–18 September, evidently failing to note the existence of alternative festivities of appropriate length. The precise date, it may be added, does not affect the present enquiry.

account is given of ensuing developments: Commodus writes down a list of people to be executed (even the wax tablet is described in detail), headed by Marcia, followed by Laetus and Eclectus and 'a large number of leading senators' (1,17,2). Fortunately the tablet was picked up as a plaything by a little boy slave, Philocommodus, and thus found and read by Marcia, who summoned Eclectus – rumoured, says Herodian, to be her lover. Eclectus sealed the tablet up and sent it to Laetus. The three conferred and decided on poison, which was administered, but failed to work. Narcissus – described by Herodian (1,17,11) as *γενναῖόν τε καὶ ἀκμαστήν*, which is a curious choice of epithets if Herodian really knew what this person was – was then bribed to strangle him.

After the murder Laetus approached Pertinax, 'for because of his excellence and rank they were glad to choose him', Dio says (73,1,1). He does not comment on whether or not Pertinax had had any inkling in advance of what had taken place. Pertinax satisfied himself that Commodus was in fact dead and then 'took himself secretly to the camp', where his offer of a donative and the presence of Laetus' supporters won over the guards (73,1,2). Part of his speech upset the troops, but nothing untoward happened. Still during the night, he went to the senate-house, where the jostling throng made it difficult for anyone to get near him (73,1,3–4). There followed his acceptance as emperor (73,1,4–5) and the curious *adclamations* (73,2 – given more fully by the S. H. A. Commodus 18–19). Herodian gives a more detailed version once again. Laetus, Eclectus and Marcia discuss likely successors to Commodus, after preparing an announcement that the latter had died suddenly from natural causes (2,1,3) and settle on Pertinax. The decision taken, Laetus and Eclectus – 'accompanied by a few fellow-conspirators' (2,1,5: what fellow-conspirators? None have been mentioned before, except Marcia and Narcissus) – go by night to his house to give him the news, which is greeted by Pertinax with nervous incredulity. They finally win him over by displaying the famous wax tablet (2,1,4–10). They then go to the camp, where Laetus addresses the troops, whose hesitation is ended by the enthusiasm of the plebs, and Pertinax is then escorted to the palace just before daylight (2,2). After some anxious pondering here, 'when daylight came, he went to the senate-house' (2,3,1–2).

As far as details go there is much to criticise in Herodian's account⁶. His timing is certainly wrong, and Dio's must be preferred – for he was indeed at the meeting of the senate himself, which he says took place *νυκτὸς ἔτι οὔσης* (73,1,4)⁷. But the broad outline of the treatment is identical. Commodus was becoming mad – so mad that he planned to commit an act of criminal folly on 1 January. Those who attempted to

⁶ The severest modern critic of Herodian was E. Hohl. On this episode cf. his paper 'Die Ermordung des Commodus', *Philol. Wochenschr.* 52, 1932 (Poland-Festschrift) 1135 ff. See also his 'Kaiser Commodus und Herodian'. *Sb. Akad. Berlin* 1954, 1, 3 ff. and 'Kaiser Pertinax etc.' *Ibid.* 1956, 2, 3 ff. – Herodian is defended by F. Cassola, *Sull'attendibilità dello storico Erodiano. Atti dell'Accademia Pontaniana*, NS 6, 1957, 191 ff., esp. 195 ff. – A key question is whether Herodian has derived elements in his version from Dio's account of the murder of Domitian, which Cassola argues is contaminated by additions made by Xiphilinus.

⁷ Dio (73,1,4) says Pertinax went *ἐκ τοῦ τείχους πρὸς τὸ συνέδριον* – as does Herodian (2,3,2). The SHA (Pert. 4,9 ff.) give more detail on this question, noting that Pertinax had to wait in the Temple of Concord – where he was visited by Claudius Pompeianus – until the door of the senate-house could be opened. This agrees with Dio as to the time – *nocte* – and Dio's failure to give more information may perfectly well be explained if one assumes that his account has been abbreviated, or that he was not being specific in his use of the word *συνέδριον*.

prevent him were themselves in danger, and they destroyed him, to save themselves and others. Having rid themselves of Commodus, they approached Pertinax, who after brief delay went through the dangerous formula necessary to obtain recognition. This account is accepted by modern scholars with surprising unanimity⁸.

Yet Herodian's statement about the announcement which Laetus and the others prepared to issue (2,1,3: that Commodus had died of apoplexy) is enough to demonstrate that the details of what took place on the night of 31 December – 1 January must have been obscured by a cloud of propaganda. Besides this, the events which followed in the next four years – the murders of Pertinax, Laetus, Didius Julianus, the deaths of Niger and Albinus, and many others, the deification of Pertinax and Commodus – must have resulted in a real flood of confusing lies and half-truths. Herodian later in his history displays a striking capacity for being taken in by official versions of troublesome events⁹. In this case, at least he does not swallow the story that Commodus died from natural causes – but perhaps that proclamation was never issued; or, if it was^{9a}, no doubt the story was soon given up by the new government. But there is no reason to believe that he has not swallowed other propaganda, designed to cover the memory of Pertinax in an honourable cloak – designed by the man who deified him, and proclaimed himself his avenger, Severus. What of Dio? It should be noted that Dio, unlike Herodian, in no way asserts and scarcely even implies Pertinax' ignorance of the plot to murder Commodus. Yet Julian the emperor, writing less than two hundred years later, is quite explicit: καὶ σὺ δέ, ὃ Περτίναξ, ἠδίκεις κοινωῶν, ὅσον ἐπὶ τοῖς σκέμμασιν, τῆς ἐπιβουλῆς, ἣν ὁ Μάρκου παῖς ἐπεβουλεύθη (Caes. 312 C). The S. H. A. make the same charge: *tunc Pertinax interficiendi Commodi conscientiam delatam sibi ab aliis non fugit* (Pert. 4,4). *Tunc* presumably refers to what immediately precedes: *quia † illi esset iterum consul Pertinax factus est* (4,3), a slightly corrupt passage, which may have meant, for example, something like *qui cum VII esset, iterum cons. Pertinax factus est* – but the sense is in any case clear enough. The statement might even be pressed to mean that the conspiracy was mounted – and that Pertinax became involved – soon after the beginning of 192 when he took office as cos. II as the colleague of Commodus; or perhaps even soon after the moment in 191 when the coss. ord. for 192 were designated¹⁰. If the complicity of Pertinax in the conspiracy be accepted as at least a working hypothesis – one which a few modern scholars have indeed treated with respect¹¹ – certain statements from each of the three accounts take on a new and more

⁸ Cf. F. Grosso, 388–389: 'E i nomi degli audaci – esclusi di necessità i senatori – si riducevano a quelli dei collaboratori più immediati e dei suoi intimi: il prefetto del pretorio Leto e il cubiculario Ecletto, la concubina Marcia'.

⁹ Cf. his account of the murder of Plautianus (3,11–12) with that of Dio (76,3–4), and on this see E. Hohl, *Herodian und der Sturz Plautians*, Sitzber. Akad. Berlin 1956, 2, 33 ff.

^{9a} Cf. SHA Pert. 4,7.

¹⁰ The trustworthiness of the material in the life of Pertinax was impugned by R. Werner, *Der historische Wert der Pertinaxvita in den SHA*. *Klio* 26, 1933, 242 ff., whose criticisms, based on a priori arguments, were invalidated by G. Barbieri, *Sulle falsificazioni della vita di Pertinace negli S. H. A.*, *Stud. ital. filol. class.* 13, 1936, 183 ff. Since that time, the earlier part of the vita has been vindicated (as far as the beginning of the cursus honorum of Pertinax is concerned) by the inscription from Brühl published by H.-G. Kolbe, *Der Pertinaxstein aus Brühl*. *Bonner Jahrb.* 162, 1962, 407 ff.

¹¹ Cf. M. Platnauer, *The Life and Reign of the Emperor L. Septimius Severus* (Oxford 1918) 55: 'That Pertinax was not altogether without a shrewd suspicion of what was going to take place, nor entirely surprised by the deputation that offered him the crown on that New Year's morning, is a

intelligible light. Herodian (2,1,10) reveals that Laetus and Eclectus were ἀνδράσι καὶ πρότερον αὐτοῦ φίλοις. This may not mean very much, but in the context of the debate in the senate on the morning of 1 January 193 it surely has significance: *sed cum Laeto gratias egisset Pertinax, Falco consul dixit: 'qualis imperator es futurus, hinc intellegimus quod Laetum et Marciam, ministros scelerum Commodi, post te videmus.'* *cui Pertinax respondit: 'iuvēnis es consul nec parendi scis necessitates. paruerunt inviti Commodo, sed ubi habuerunt facultatem, quid semper voluerint ostenderunt'* (SHA, Pert. 5,2–3). If the involvement of Pertinax can be accepted, and especially if the beginning of the conspiracy can be antedated by some twelve months or more, it is legitimate to look further to discover who else may have been concerned. In this context another statement by the SHA is important: *sane nullum ex his quos Commodus rebus gerendis imposuerat, mutavit, expectans urbis natalem* (sc. 21 April), *quod eum diem rerum principium volebat esse* (Pert. 12,8). This indicates that the men found in office in April 193 must have been holding their posts already in 192. It need not imply that all or any of them were privy to the conspiracy, but it suggests that Laetus and Pertinax had taken care to place men that they could rely on in as many of the positions of power as possible. In the case of the governor of Pannonia Superior, L. Septimius Severus, there is explicit evidence: Laetus got him the job (SHA Severus 4,4: *Laeto suffragante*). This case suggests the need to look for others. This must be reserved for the second part of the present study.

Several features of the events of that night suggest co-ordinated planning. Dio's account, indeed, reads a little curiously if we are to believe that Pertinax was taken completely by surprise. As it stands, the account gives the impression of a very smoothly conducted operation. By the time Pertinax got to the senate, a large throng of senators was there, including Ti. Claudius Pompeianus, whose diplomatic absences from Rome Dio comments on (73,3,3), although in the extracts that survive there is no hint that Pompeianus was present on this occasion. This is recorded by the SHA who note: *et cum ad eum Claudius Pompeianus, gener Marci, venisset casumque Commodi lacrimasset, hortatus Pertinax, ut imperium sumeret. sed ille recusavit, quia iam imperatorem Pertinacem videbat* (Pert. 4,10). Dio states (73,3,3) that he himself had never seen Pompeianus in the senate during the reign of Commodus, for he rarely came to the city, 'alleging his age and the state of his eyes as an excuse; and he had never before, when I was present entered the senate' (73,3,2) – although during the reign of Pertinax 'he had both his sight and his good health' (73,3,3). In that case, it is surely worth asking what had brought Pompeianus to Rome on this particular occasion. Had he been persuaded to be on hand – he was, after all, the former patron of Pertinax (Dio 73,3,1; cf. SHA Pert. 2,4)? The encounter between Pertinax and Pompeianus was followed by the debate in the senate, already referred to, and the curious *adclamations*. The version quoted by the SHA (Comm. 18–19) contains over

supposition wanting neither evidence nor probability'. – More recently M. Hammond, *Septimius Severus Roman Bureaucrat*. Harv. Stud. Class. Phil. 51, 1940, 137 ff., 163 ff., implies his belief in the prior involvement of Pertinax. – The view is put forward vigorously by F. Cassola, *Pertinace durante il principato di Commodus*. Parola del Passato 105, 1965, 451 ff., esp. 476: 'ma Pertinace non fu scelto a caso, né poteva essere ignaro dei progetti esistenti'. This scholar refers in a note (472, n. 37) to a forthcoming study 'sul problema della successione a Commodus'. I may note at this point that my principal conclusions are embodied in my unpublished Oxford dissertation, 'The Roman High Command from the death of Hadrian to the death of Caracalla', submitted in 1965.

300 words. Admittedly there is some repetition – *parricida trahatur* occur sixteen times (*censemus unco trahendum* once) in this savage litany. Perhaps the SHA, or their source, Marius Maximus, have produced a stylised literary version of a series of spontaneous utterances. But Dio says quite explicitly that senate and people together shouted parodies of the rhythmic amphitheatrical chants (73,2,2–3). One may legitimately wonder how long those present had been given to learn the words – or were texts distributed? There is of course no doubt that this kind of demonstration could have been generated rapidly with apparent spontaneity. At most Laetus may have needed no more than a few minutes to brief a few claqueurs to lead the chorus. Too much should not be made of it. But the episode leaves a curious impression.

The date chosen for the conspiracy is of course explained satisfactorily by the official version of the reasons for it, the prevention of Commodus' plans for 1 January. It may be observed that one of the two principal intended victims, the consul Falco, showed singularly little gratitude to Laetus and Marcia, to judge from his speech in the senate (quoted above, from SHA Pert. 5,2). It may be that at this early stage he had not appreciated the fate that had been in store for him – but later he was involved in a conspiracy against Pertinax (Dio 73,8; SHA Pert. 10)¹². The fact is that 1 January was an excellent time to mount a conspiracy. As Grosso has pointed out¹³, since that day was a holiday, the praetorians would be unarmed – as indeed Herodian explicitly states that they were: ἄνευ τῶν ὄπλων ὡς ἐν ἱερομηνίᾳ (2,2,9). Since it seems only reasonable to believe that the assassination was planned well in advance¹⁴, it is equally reasonable to accept the evidence of Julian and the SHA that Pertinax, the direct beneficiary of the murder, was himself involved in it.

II

It is time now to turn to an examination of the men in positions of power at the moment of the murder. Apart from Laetus, the praetorian prefect, and Pertinax, the urban prefect, there are the governors of provinces. It may be taken as certain that the three future rivals, Severus, Niger and Albinus were already in Pannonia Superior, Syria and Britain respectively. The prefect of Egypt in March 193 was L. Mantennius Sabinus¹⁵. The governor of Dacia at some time between April and December 193 was Q. Aurelius Polus Terentianus. He may have been there at the end of 192. Severus' brother P. Septimius Geta was very possibly governing Moesia Inferior at the end of 192. The proconsul of Asia at the moment of the murder of Commodus must have been Asellius Aemilianus (a relative of Albinus).

Q. A e m i l i u s L a e t u s. The prefect was from Thaenae in proconsular Africa, as is revealed by the inscription of his brother Pudens¹⁶. The brother was a centurion

¹² This is a puzzling affair. The text of the SHA is corrupt in Pert. 10, but there is a clear statement that Falco may have been framed: *quamvis multi Falconem nescisse dixerint imperium sibi parari*, etc. (10,6). The role of Laetus in this is not clear. He may have engineered the whole affair to get rid of a dangerous opponent.

¹³ Grosso 390 f.

¹⁴ Cf. T. D. Barnes 94, n. 56: 'The timing of the assassination . . . suggests that it was carefully planned.'

¹⁵ The evidence for particular men will be set out below.

¹⁶ AE 1949, 38, Thaenae.

who had begun his career in III Augusta, and had then served in Britain with II Augusta and in Moesia Inferior with XI Claudia. At the moment when the *ordo* of Thaenae set up a statue to him, he was serving *in comitatu* of Commodus. Hence Laetus had a brother holding military rank in close attendance on the emperor's person. Nothing is known of the earlier career of Laetus. It is worth noting that his brother Pudens may have served in Britain (where he was promoted) with Pertinax. In view of the commonness of the name, it is impossible to tell whether there was any connection between the prefect and the procurator M. Aemilius Laetus¹⁷. But one thing is clear enough: Thaenae is in the same part of Africa as Hadrumetum, and one would expect Albinus (and for that matter Asellius Aemilianus and Didius Julianus) to know the prefect or have some connection with him¹⁸.

L. S e p t i m i u s S e v e r u s. The career of Severus has recently been re-examined¹⁹. Not all the conclusion of that re-examination can be accepted, and it will therefore be expedient to look at his origins and *cursus* again in some detail. The friend of the poet Statius (*Silvae* 4,5), Septimius Severus, clearly belongs to the same generation as the emperor's grandfather L. Septimius Severus²⁰. But identity between the two has been denied. It is argued that the grandfather, whose inscription records that he was a *iudex* at Rome (*10 in decuriis / et inter selectos Romae / iudicavit*) cannot – a *fortiori* – have been an *eques Romanus*²¹. This argument is perverse. On the contrary, the inscription does not describe the man as an *eques* precisely because it was superfluous. Service as a *iudex selectus* implies the rank of *eques*²². Other objections have been voiced. 'There is no hint that he (*sc.* the grandfather of the emperor) was an orator'²³. What hint could there be on an inscription of that nature? Besides, the poet's friend may not have been such a successful orator as Statius asserts. 'If Statius' friend were a successful lawyer he would hardly demean himself by becoming a humble juryman'²⁴. Yet if he were not after all such a successful lawyer, there is no reason why he might not have been glad enough to be chosen as a *iudex*. Besides, there is another factor. The poem was written about the year 95²⁵. The following year saw the murder of Domitian. Even a successful lawyer from the provinces in the reign of Domitian might well have found the new regime of Nerva and Trajan less profitable at first. A powerful patron might have been disgraced, for example. All things considered, the objections to regarding the friend of Statius, Septimius Severus the Roman knight from Lepcis, as identical with L. Septimius Severus, the Roman knight from Lepcis who was for a time at Rome²⁶, are far from overwhelming. Besides, there is a piece of positive evidence which renders the identification plausible. The poem of Statius speaks of his friend's home at Veii: *nunc in paternis sedibus et solo Veiente*

¹⁷ CP no. 213.

¹⁸ Cf. below, p. 265 f.

¹⁹ By T. D. Barnes.

²⁰ IRT 412, Lepcis.

²¹ By J. Guey 179 f. 216 ff.

²² I deal with this question in my paper: 'Some notes on HA Severus', forthcoming in: *Bonner Historia-Augusta-Colloquium 1968* (Bonn 1969).

²³ T. D. Barnes 88.

²⁴ T. D. Barnes 88.

²⁵ The date is supplied by *Silvae* 4, 1 (on the 17th consulate of Domitian). Cf. *RE Suppl.* 9 (1962) 1744 f.

²⁶ IRT 412 gives no indication at what time the man was at Rome as a *iudex*.

(Silvae 4,5,54–55). The SHA in the life of Severus speak of the future emperor's property as follows: *cum antea aedes brevissimas Romae habuisset et unum fundum † invenit Etiam* (Sev. 4,5). A brilliant conjecture has emended the text to *unum fundum Veientanum* (vel *Veientem*)²⁷. Besides this, a lead pipe bearing the inscription *P. Septimi Geta* (sic) has been found some five miles from Veii²⁸. If the future emperor owned property at Veii, it is a fair guess that it had passed to him by inheritance. If it is argued that the friend of Statius who lived at Veii was the ancestor not of Severus, but of his consular relative and patron C. Septimius Severus²⁹, why should Severus, rather than C. Septimius Severus, have acquired this property?

Something has been made of an inscription from Praeneste, recording a C. Septimius C. f. Pup. Severus³⁰. There is no reason whatever to connect the C. Septimius C. f. Pup. Severus at Praeneste with the family at Lepcis – any more than there is to connect the family with the IIvir from Sabora in Spain, M. Septimius Severus³¹. There can be no doubt that evidence will in due course be forthcoming to show that the Septimii of Lepcis – including C. Septimius Severus the proconsul of Africa of 174³² were enrolled in the tribe Quirina, to which the Lepcitani who had the citizenship before the town became a colonia belonged³³.

What of the ultimate origin of the family, a question that may or may not be important or relevant, but which is undoubtedly of great interest? It should be noted first of all that the compliments of Statius (Silvae 4,5,45 f): *Non sermo Poenus, non habitus tibi, Externa non mens: Italus, Italus*, only have any real point if there was in fact something about the young Lepcitane that was 'Poenus' (viz. his ancestry). There is another point. Had the Septimii originated from Italy, the SHA ought to have said so. This is an *argumentum ex silentio*, it is true. But it should be noted that the SHA do supply the ultimate origin of Hadrian (Hadr. 1,1: *origo . . . vetustior a Picentibus*) and – no doubt bogus in this case – of M. Aurelius (M. Ant. 1,6: *a rege Sallentino Malemnio, qui Lupias condidit*). Further, the SHA give a precise detail about the maternal grandfather of Didius Julianus (Did. Jul. 1,2: *avus maternus ex Hadrumetina colonia*). At this point one must consider the question whether the family of Severus may have been peregrini given Roman citizenship and taking the name of Septimius. It must be admitted that there is not a plethora of Septimii in the first century A. D. and earlier

²⁷ M. Hammond, *Septimius Severus Roman Bureaucrat*. Harv. Stud. Class. Phil. 51, 1940, 143–144. The emendation is alluded to by Barnes 89, n. 18, without reference to Hammond. – A preferable emendation, as E. Badian suggests to me, might be *unum fundum in Veiente*. At any rate, this means that *Etiam* may be retained (note that in Σ it comes before *unum fundum*).

²⁸ CIL XI 3816.

²⁹ So T. D. Barnes 88 ff.

³⁰ CIL XIV 3004. – T. D. Barnes 88 ff., argues that this is 'proof' that 'the Flavian orator was not the grandfather of the emperor and additional evidence of the ties of the former with Latium'. Barnes argues that it 'provides a valuable clue to the ultimate origins of the family'. This inscription from Praeneste proves nothing about the Septimii of Lepcis whatsoever. It is true that the tribe Pup. might have been retained by an Italian settler, but note ILAfr. 317, Puppit: *D. M. S. L. Taberius L. f. / Ofentina Foro Flaminii Julianus Arn. / Carthagini*, etc.

³¹ CIL II 1423 = Dessau 6092. – This man, be it noted, will have had the tribe Quirina (cf. Kubitschek 272) – a much more likely tribe for the Septimii of Lepcis to have had. Admittedly the praenomen M. is not recorded among Severus' family. But note -- s *M. f. Quir. Seve[rus]*, flamen of Claudius, who enlarged baths in 101 or 102 (IRT 352).

³² G. di Vita Evrard, *Mem. Ecole Franç. Rome* 75, 1963, 387 ff. – Cf. note 31 for a possible kinsman with the tribe Quirina.

³³ Cf. IRT p. 82.

from whom the name might have derived. However, there is one obvious possibility, the Septimius Flaccus who in the first century A. D. campaigned in the Sahara³⁴. The date of this man's expedition is assumed generally to be between A. D. 77, when Pliny's Natural History (in which it is not mentioned) was published, and c. A. D. 100, the date of Marinus of Tyre, ultimate source of the information³⁵. Some would assert that this man is really identical with Cn. Suellius Flaccus, epigraphically recorded as legate of III Augusta, who campaigned against the desert Nasamones, dated to A. D. 87. But this is not necessary³⁶. There is no real obstacle to inserting the command of Septimius Flaccus over III Augusta in the years c. 77/80³⁷. There happens to be an excellent reason why a legate of III Augusta might be active in the desert at the end of the 70s A. D.: the Flavian amphitheatre or Colosseum was nearing completion, and when it was opened in June 80, during a hundred days of festivities some 9000 wild beasts of all types were slaughtered. The lands south of Roman Africa were, as is well known, the major source of this valuable commodity³⁸. A Septimius Flaccus who

³⁴ Ptolemy 1,8,4.

³⁵ Thus B. E. Thomasson II 159 f.

³⁶ B. E. Thomasson II 158 f. (who does not identify Suellius Flaccus with Septimius Flaccus). – P. Romanelli, *Storia delle province romane dell'Africa* (Roma 1959) 304, identifies Septimius with Suellius Flaccus on the grounds that the identity of cognomen, the similar field of military operations and the fact that 'un personaggio di questo nome non e fino ad ora altrimenti conosciuto' make it probable that the nomen Suellius was mistakenly transcribed as the more familiar Septimius. Governors with identical cognomina in a single province are not infrequent: Cf. Germania Inferior: governed by P. Salvius Julianus, Ti. Claudius Julianus, and M. Didius Severus Julianus within the space of about 25 years (cf. E. Ritterling, *Fasti des römischen Deutschland* [Wien 1932], 68 f. 70 f. 74 f.); and by L. Marius Maximus and Fulvius Maximus within perhaps a single decade (Ritterling, 75 f. 77 f.). – Dacia Superior: governed within the space of c. 15 years by Q. Mustius Priscus and M. Staius Priscus (A. Stein, *Dazien* 22. 27). – Lycia-Pamphylia: governed within a space of less than ten years by D. Rupilius Severus (IGR III 513) and C. Septimius Severus (as he is now known to be, formerly described as -rius Severus, cf. ILAlg. I 1283 and G. di Vita-Evrard op. cit. [note 27] 387 ff.). – Syria within the space of ten years by Cn. Julius Verus (PIR² J 618) and P. Martius Verus (RE 14 [1930] 2024). – From the legates of III Augusta: L. Javolenus Priscus and A. Larcus Priscus within a space of c. 25 years, P. Metilius Secundus and P. Cassius Secundus within the space of at most 15 years (see, most conveniently, B. E. Thomasson II 327). – From the governors of Britain: within c. 25 years, P. Metilius Nepos and A. Platorius Nepos (A. R. Birley, 'The Roman Governors of Britain', *Epigr. Stud.* 4 [1967] 68 ff.). – Admittedly Flaccus is less common than all these cognomina, but Kajanto (240) records the existence of more than 150 epigraphic instances. The similar field of military operations should not be used as an argument – after all, Valerius Festus had likewise campaigned in the desert in A. D. 69 (Tac., *Hist.* 4, 50). As for the existence of other men called Septimius Flaccus, one may refer to J. Fitz, *Prosopographica Pannonica. Epigraphica* 23, 1961, 66 ff., who convincingly identifies the cos. suff. 183 L. Septimius Fla - - with Septimius Flaccus legate of Pannonia Inferior (AE 1910, 147); and note also a Septimius Flaccus recorded (apparently) as governor of Thrace (AE 1963, 76).

³⁷ The apparently rather crowded list in B. E. Thomasson II 149 ff., for the decade 70–80, may be set out as follows: Valerius Festus 69–70; Sex. Sentius Caecilianus 73–75; Q. Egnatius Catus 75–77. – The command of Cn. Domitius Tullus could well be assigned to the space between Festus and Caecilianus, for his career may reasonably be redated, cf. G. Alföldy, *Die Hilfstruppen der römischen Provinz Germania inferior. Epigr. Studien* 6 (1968) 131 ff., making him available for III Augusta by 71. – Cn. Pinarus Cicatricula, legate in 79/80, need not be dislodged as a commander of III Augusta, but Thomasson (155) is inclined to think that he was a special commissioner. This leaves ample room for Septimius Flaccus in the period suggested – which allows one to suggest a very special reason for his desert activities, see below, and next note.

³⁸ G. Lugli, *Roma antica: il centro monumentale* (Roma 1946) 322. – Cf. the important article by J. Desanges, *Notes sur la datation de l'expédition de Julius Maternus au pays d'Agisymba. Latomus* 23, 1964, 713 ff. on beast-prospecting at this time – or rather, a little later: that scholar is obliged to conflate Septimius with Suellius Flaccus through insufficient consideration of the *Fasti* of III Augusta.

was at Lepcis in the late 70s might well have had occasion to obtain citizenship for deserving Lepcitanes. One should note the enigmatic ancestor of Severus named Macer – described, manifestly incorrectly, as *avus maternus* (SHA Sev. 1,2 – that label belongs to Fulvius Pius)³⁹. It is not at all unlikely that something has been omitted from this passage in the SHA, where there are certainly errors of transmission⁴⁰. There is a possibility that Macer may have been, for example, the *proavus paternus* – and one notes the existence of the name at Lepcis, borne by peregrines⁴¹. Any investigation of the origins of the Septimii ought not to neglect the evidence available in the inscriptions from Lepcis. For it is not enough to ask the origin of the Septimii themselves and of the Fulvii. The Lepcitane families that are linked with them may be discovered easily enough. It may be recalled, firstly, that C. Fulvius Plautianus is now attested as a kinsman of Severus, bearing out the explicit statement of Herodian (3,10,6)⁴². The implication therefore is that the Plautii of Lepcis are connected, if only distantly, with Severus. The sister of Severus is called Septimia Octavilla⁴³ suggesting a link with the Octavii. As it happens, a certain L. Plautius Octavianus is attested at Lepcis⁴⁴. Severus' first wife was Paccia Marciana⁴⁵. It is worth noting that one Q. Marcius Candidus Rusonianus was married to a lady named Fulvia Crescentilla⁴⁶. In other words, there is a faint hint that Paccia Marciana may have been a distant connection of Severus' mother Fulvia Pia⁴⁷. It is not infrequent in many societies for a son to marry a bride chosen from the kinsfolk of his mother. It would be expedient therefore to examine the Octavii, Plautii, Paccii and Marcii. No other Octavii or Octaviani, etc., at Lepcis, are known, apart from the two already mentioned. But it should be recorded that there was a legate of a proconsul of Africa in the late 60s or early 70s named Octavius Avitus⁴⁸. The Plautii are more promising. Seven, perhaps eight, are recorded at Lepcis. A Plautius dated to ca. A. D. 138 is little help, except that the fact that his name is on a marble panel suggests that he was an honestior⁴⁹. More interesting are Q. Plautius Haterianus, Ti. Plautius Lupus, L. Plautius Octavianus, L. Silius Plautius Amicus Haterianus Gavilianus Proximus and L. Silius Plautius Haterianus Blaesianus. The first two are joint supervisors of the erection of a stone to the flamen M. Cornelius Capitolinus, in accordance with the will of his deceased son-in-law C. Aelius Rufinus, also a flamen and their brother. The family provided a senator by the 160s, Silius Plautius Haterianus⁵⁰. All three had the same mother Aquilia Blaesilla. The other

³⁹ Cf. IRT p. 19, n.1. The presence of Septimius Flaccus at Lepcis is guaranteed by Ptolemy 1,10,2.

⁴⁰ E. g. *patruī magni Aper et Severus* (1,2) where Mommsen's proposal that *magn(a)* belongs two lines higher up after *Lepti* is to be followed.

⁴¹ Cf. IRT p. 19, n. 1 and no. 338, recording Balitho Annonis Macri f. Commodus, and 615, where the same person, and also C. Macri f. C. Annonis n. Phelyssam are recorded. The editors supply a stemma of these people (p. 161).

⁴² Cf. *Sammelbuch griechischer Inschriften aus Aegypten* (1913 ff.) VI 9526, lines 47–48, a papyrus from A. D. 200, where Plautianus is described as ὁ κράτιστος ἐπαρχὸς τῶν στρατοπέδων καὶ οἰκεῖος ἡμῶν.

⁴³ IRT 417.

⁴⁴ IRT 517.

⁴⁵ IRT 410, 411.

⁴⁶ IRT 705.

⁴⁷ IRT 415, 416.

⁴⁸ Thomasson II 138.

⁴⁹ IRT 366.

⁵⁰ IRT 632, cf. 587. – Cf., for the senator: J. M. Reynolds, *Four inscriptions from Roman Cyrene*. *Journ. Rom. Studies* 49, 1959, 95 ff., esp. 98 ff. (he was quaestor of Crete-Cyrene).

known member of this family is the wife of Lupus, Aurellia Sextilla⁵¹. No date can be ascertained, other than, in general terms, from the 'capitals with some Rustic forms', that they are 'Antonine-Severan'. The same applies to their presumed polyonymous kinsmen, who erected a stone to one Caecilius Proculus, *ex testamento Sentiae Caecilianae*, in rustic capitals⁵². Is one of these two the same as L. Silius Amicus Haterianus C. V., curator and patron of Oea, recorded on a stone 'probably III cent.'⁵³? It would be preferable to regard this eminent person as a member of the next generation, deftly omitting the name Plautius. L. Plautius Octavianus can, fortunately, be dated. He and three other worthies of Lepcis dedicated to the polyonymous proconsul M. Atilius Metilius Bradua etc., clearly the *cos. ord.* 185, hence proconsul ca. 200⁵⁴. It may be noted also that the son of Plautianus was called C. Fulvius Plautius (surely, rather than Plautus) Hortensianus⁵⁵, but no Hortensii, or for that matter Haterii or Gavilii, are known at Lepcis. A Plautius Lupus occurs again, in the longest inscription from Lepcis⁵⁶. It is possible that another inscription from Lepcis records the first member of the family to receive the citizenship. A fragmentary stone, of first century style, records the following: . . . *Ti. Plau[] [. . B?] alsille[. .]*⁵⁷. Now *]alsille[* is clearly part of a Punic name⁵⁸. In view of the praenomen *Ti.* it is logical to suppose that a kinsman of the great *Ti. Plautius Silvanus Aelianus*⁵⁹ served in Africa and gave the citizenship to a Lepcitane.

The Marcii of Lepcis are amply recorded. Paccia Marciana and Q. Marcius Candidus Rusonianus have already been mentioned. The other are Q. Marcius Dioga, the father and son both Q. Marcius Pudens, C. Marcius Dento, Marcius Cre --, Marcius Vitalis, O. Marcius Asper and two ladies, Marcia Eutychia and Marcia Rerycth, finally a Q. Marcius without cognomen and a -- Marcius --⁶⁰. Dioga was prefect of the annona after the death of Severus, dedicating to *divo Pio Severo Aug.* The elder Pudens is described as a *iuris peritus* on the stone in 'late II-III cent. capitals' set up by his son *ex decreto ordinis*. Dento was flamen Aug., *sufes* and flamen perpetuus -- the title *sufes* suggests a pre-colonial date, except that the lettering looks later. Marcius Cre -- is less certain (the stone only has *-rcio Cre --* and his nomen might therefore be Larcus or Porcius, etc.). But the lettering -- lapidary capitals -- suggests a first-century date. Vitalis can be dated precisely, in the proconsulship of Lollianus Avitus, hence 157/158⁶¹. He was rich enough to pay for part of the theatre, although not so rich as his fellow-donor Junius Galba. Q. Marcius Asper belongs to the third or fourth century, to judge from the lettering. Eutychia was the wife of Cornelius Marsus, Rerycth of M. Pompeius Geta Chirit. Both look third-century in style. The elegant stone on which Candidus Rusonianus mourned his wife looks second-century in date⁶². The man might possibly be identical with the flamen, augur and II vir Rusonianus whose name appears on a

⁵¹ IRT 634.

⁵² IRT 635.

⁵³ IRT 542.

⁵⁴ IRT 517.

⁵⁵ PIR² F 555.

⁵⁶ IRT 601.

⁵⁷ IRT 734.

⁵⁸ Cf. IRT 300, line 4: *Iddibal Balsillecis f. Annobalis n. Asmunis pro n.*, an inscription of the year 72.

⁵⁹ Dessau 986, etc.

⁶⁰ IRT 401. 647. 600. 726. 534. 725. 727. 649. -- Afr. Ital. 1, 1927, 237. -- IRT 728.

⁶¹ Cf. J. Guey, *Au théâtre de Lepcis Magna. Le proconsulat de Lollianus Avitus et la date de l'Apologie d'Apulée*. Rev. Etud. Lat. 29, 1951, 307 ff.

⁶² 'Not seen' by the editors of IRT ad. 705, but observed by the present writer in the garden of the museum at Lepcis in 1965.

Commodan inscription recut under Severus⁶³. Finally, attention must be drawn to P. Cornelius Attax Marcianus⁶⁴. His name appears on a stone in 'mannered Rustic capitals, probably III cent.'. The Cornelii at Lepcis are very numerous⁶⁵. Also, one must note Flavius Marcianus, decurion of Lepcis, witness in the trial of Marius Priscus at Rome⁶⁶. Paccia Marciana is the only representative of the Paccii at Lepcis. But in the case of both Marcii and Paccii clear indications point to the source of their citizenship, the proconsuls Q. Marcius Barea (suff. 34), proconsul in 42, and C. Paccius Africanus, proconsul in 78⁶⁷. Since only one of the Lepcitan Marcii who had a praenomen has anything other than Q. (of which there are six examples), C. Marcius Dento, the case for the Marcii having been made citizens early in the reign of Claudius seems strong. As for Paccia, that name surely derived from the proconsul Paccius Africanus.

The Fulvii may fairly be regarded as an immigrant family, from Italy⁶⁸. The preceding paragraphs should, it is hoped, go some way to suggest that the Septimii, themselves possibly of native extraction, were certainly linked – as were the Fulvii – with families of this kind, made Roman by the grant of citizenship from first-century Roman magistrates. Such a conclusion can hardly be called astonishing.

Before turning to look at the *cursus honorum* of Severus, one further item concerned with his family ought to be investigated. It should be axiomatic that senatorial Septimii attested before the accession of Severus deserve special consideration. L. Septimius Flaccus (suff. 183) might be cited, but if connected with anyone, it should be with the first century legate of III Augusta, from whom, it was argued, the Septimii of Lepcis might conceivably have obtained the citizenship⁶⁹. Severus' kinsman C. Septimius Severus has already been mentioned. He should be one of the two consular patrum *Aper et Severus* recorded by the SHA (Sev. 1,2). Aper must be the suff. 153, P. Septimius Aper; and as procos. Africae in 174 C. Septimius Severus must have been consul after Aper – for which reason it is satisfying to note that the SHA rightly give the senior man, Aper, in first place. He should also be the *Septimio Severo adfini suo, bis iam consulari* (Sev. 1,5), to whom Severus owed the *latus clavus*. *bis* is surely an error. It might have been caused by *sibi Septimio* a few words earlier⁷⁰. The fact that – apparently – the same man is described variously as *patruus* and as *adfinis* inclines one to suspect that the first description is inexact⁷¹. It might be preferable to suppose that

⁶³ IRT 396.

⁶⁴ IRT 263.

⁶⁵ Cf. IRT, indices p. 241. – Senatorial Cornelii active at Lepcis are: Cossus Lentulus (IRT 301), Ser. Cornelius Scipio Salvidienus Orfitus (IRT 341) and C. Cornelius Rarus Sextius Na- (IRT 523), all proconsuls of Africa.

⁶⁶ Pliny, Ep. 2,11,8 ff., esp. 23.

⁶⁷ IRT 273 and 342. – Cf. J. Guey, o. c. (note 61) 315, for a similar view on the Marcii of Lepcis.

⁶⁸ Cf. P. Romanelli, Fulvii Lepcitanii. Arch. Class. 10, 1958, 258 ff.; that scholar prefers to regard the Septimii as Romanised native stock.

⁶⁹ Cf. p. 255 f. above, notes 36–37.

⁷⁰ T. D. Barnes (90) suggests that *bis* 'doubtless results from the confusion of this Severus with the Severus who occurs in the consular date given for the year of Severus' birth' (Sev. 1,3: *ipse natus est Erucio Claro bis et Severo cons.*). The suggestion is reasonable enough except that the *bis. cos.* there was not the Severus but Erucius Clarus. C. Septimius Severus and P. Septimius Aper might conceivably be sons of C. Cl. Septimius [A]fer (? Aper) (IRT 316), attested under Pius.

⁷¹ J. Guey is willing to separate the *patruus* and the *adfinis* (cf. his stemma, p. 168). That is legitimate. But I do not accept the reasoning behind it, based on his, in my view, misguided interpretation of IRT 412, and of the rank and identity of Severus' avus.

Severus and Aper were not *patrui* of the future emperor, but *fratres patruales* of his father. As for the father, it is inexact to say that he 'had been content with municipal honours'⁷². The evidence does not allow us to say that Severus' father had any honours at all, municipal or otherwise. On the other hand, it is well worth noting that Severus' aunt, Septimia Polla, on her death must have been an extremely wealthy woman. A silver statue set up by P. Septimius Geta in accordance with his sister's will is 'the most expensive statue of any material known in Africa'⁷³. If a female member of the family, apparently unmarried, possessed wealth on this scale, the family as a whole must have been easily qualified to place its members in the senate.

To return to the search for other Septimii. The only possible connection is suggested by the nomenclature of the *cos. ord. 190*, M. Petronius Sura Septimianus. As it happens, there is another man whose names recall a link between the Septimii and the Petronii, the Antonine procurator L. Septi - - Petro - -, whose names may reasonably be regarded as having been L. Septimius Petronianus⁷⁴. The career is dated in general terms between the years 125 and 165. It is worth noting that it includes two, perhaps more, posts in Egypt⁷⁵. One should note that the prefect of Egypt in the years 133-137 was M. Petronius Mamertinus and in 147-148 M. Petronius Honoratus⁷⁶. In view of the dating of the career, the likelihood that L. Septi - - Petro - - served in Egypt under one or both of these men - and owed his position to relationship with the Petronii - becomes fair. One might conjecture that a Petronia had married a Septimius. The possibility becomes more reasonable if one investigates the Petronii, for whom African origin is not implausible⁷⁷. H.-G. Pflaum regards the *cos. ord. 190* M. Petronius Sura Septimianus, and his brother M. Petronius Sura Mamertinus *cos. ord. 182*, as sons of

⁷² T. D. Barnes 91.

⁷³ R. Duncan-Jones, *Costs, outlays and summae honorariae from Roman Africa*. *Pap. Brit. School Rome* 30, 1962, 47 ff. 57. Cf. also n. 123, p. 110. - On p. 55 he states that it is 'probably Septimian' (*sc. in date*), but there are no grounds for this assumption, in view of the fact that there is no mention of the imperial connection in IRT 607 - which was clearly set up in the lifetime of P. Septimius Geta, who died when Severus had just been appointed quaestor in Baetica (SHA Sev. 2,3), i. e. in 170, see below p. 260. - The other inscription naming Severus' father at Lepcis (IRT 414) was, by contrast, set up in 201, after Severus had become emperor. But neither stone records any municipal or other honour enjoyed by P. Septimius Geta.

⁷⁴ Cf. CP, where H.-G. Pflaum judiciously keeps open the possibility that the nomen may have been Septicius or Septienus.

⁷⁵ Namely the tribunate of II Traiana and the position of archistator praef. Aegypti. The first post, as prefect of a cohort of volunteers might, conceivably, have been in Egypt, as might - much more likely - the prefecture of a fleet. Pflaum (following the original editor) rejects the possibility that the Alexandria fleet is in question, on the grounds that there is insufficient space for *Alexandrinae* (CP III p. 977). The post in fact appears on only one other Latin inscription (Dessau 1341), where the form *Alexandrin.* occurs. Other, shorter, abbreviations, are conceivable, which would fit the space available. In fact, it would seem clear that there is space for *Alexand.* In view of the other abbreviations on the inscription (e. g. *Mauret.* for Mauretaniae) this possibility seems strong. This would then give a sequence of promotion from archistator to fleet prefect within Egypt itself. - Cf. also J. F. Gilliam, *Ala Agrippiana and archistator*. *Class. Philol.* 56, 1961, 100 ff.

⁷⁶ Stein, *Präefekten* 68 ff. 78 ff.

⁷⁷ The name Honoratus is characteristically African, cf. Kajanto 279 (495, out of a total of 666, in Africa). There are plenty of Petronii in Africa - and one should note a dedication to the praetorian prefect M. Petronius Mamertinus at Thysdrus (ILTun. 127). Pflaum (CP no. 117) regards Honoratus as Italian. But note that he has the tribe Quirina, found extensively in Africa (but only in nine towns in Italy), cf. Kubitschek 271 f. The rare cognomen Mamertinus (only 15 in Kajanto 212), occurs four times in Africa: (CIL VIII 8438 = Dessau 6873, Sitifis (two men); CIL VIII 18966 (Thibillis); ILAlg. I 2661 (Madauros); and note also an amphora from Carthage, with the name Mamer- (CIL VIII 22640,60).

the praetorian prefect M. Petronius Mamertinus⁷⁸. But this is hard to believe. As consuls suo anno in all probability, as Pflaum, they should have been born c. 149 and c. 157. Yet the praetorian prefect, attested in office 139–142⁷⁹, was probably at the end of a long career and of an advanced age. It is much more likely that a son or nephew of his was the father of the consuls of 182 and 190 and is the cos. suff. 150, M. Petronius Mamertinus. However this may be, it would seem reasonable to suggest that marriage with a Septimia was the reason why a son received the cognomen Septimianus. If the Petronii were already connected with the Septimii, as was just suggested, such a marriage would be all the more likely. Be it noted finally that 190, when Sura Septimianus was cos. ord., was the year when L. Septimius Severus was one of the twenty-three *suffecti*⁸⁰. Although other factors – such as judicious bribery of Cleander – may easily have contributed to obtaining the consulate, the influence of a family connection, however distant, such as Sura Septimianus may have been, could have had an influence. The Septimia married into the Petronii might have been, for example, a sister of P. Septimius Aper and C. Septimius Severus.

So much for the family of Severus. It is time now to examine his career. Certain points, such as the year of his birth (145) and most of his early appointments, are no longer problematic⁸¹. As far as the *advocatio fisci* is concerned, it seems to be pure fiction. But it might be borne in mind that some relative may have held the post. On his initial career, it is worth remarking that even if he omitted the military tribunate, as the *vita* undoubtedly states (Sev. 2,2), it is not necessarily the case that he did not serve as a *XXvir*. The SHA do not consistently record this item. It is mentioned in the case of Hadrian (Hadr. 2,2: *nec multo post decemvir litibus iudicandis datus*) and Didius Julianus (Did. Jul. 1,4: *inter viginti viros lectus est suffragio matris Marci*), but not in the case of Pius, the only other emperor of whom one would expect to find it recorded (Ant. Pius 2,9: *fuit quaestor liberalis, praetor splendidus, consul cum Catilio Severo*, which summarises his urban career with extreme brevity). It is legitimate, and preferable, to assume that Severus held a post in the *XXvirate*, but omitted the military tribunate. This was a quite common practice⁸². His quaestorship would presumably commence in December of the year when he was 24, hence 169, and occupy most of 170. Then came the provincial quaestorship, for which he was assigned in the first instance to Baetica. It may be noted that iterated quaestorships are extremely rare, and the probable explanation is that the plague had thinned the ranks of quaestors due to serve in the ten senatorial provinces in 171. At this point it is important to take note of the interesting conclusion of G. Alföldy that the proconsul of Baetica, who may well have played a role in selecting Severus as his quaestor, was in all probability

⁷⁸ Les gendres de Marc-Aurèle, Journ. des Savants 1961, 28 ff. 36; also CP 117, vol I p. 286.

⁷⁹ RE 19 (1937) 1217 ff.

⁸⁰ For the year of his consulate cf. now F. Grosso 280 ff. – P. Lambrechts, Une famille du II^e siècle: Les Petronii Mamertini. Ant. Class. 5, 1936, 187 ff. argues convincingly that the cos. 150 was nephew of the prefect.

⁸¹ Cf. J. Guey, La date de naissance de l'empereur Septime-Sévère d'après son horoscope. Bull. Soc. Nat. Ant. Franc. 1956, 33, who points out that only A. D. 145 is suitable astrologically.

⁸² Cf. E. Birley, Senators in the emperors' service. Proc. Brit. Acad. 39, 1954, 197 ff. 200. – For some examples of careers recorded apparently in full, with no mention of a tribunate, cf. Dessau 1022. 1048. 1049. 1051. 1055. 1067. 1068. 1075. 1097–8, etc.

T. D. Barnes (91) assumes *ex silentio* that Severus omitted the *XXvirate* as well as the military tribunate: '(he) omitted the two preliminary posts normally held by an aspirant to a senatorial career'.

P. Cornelius Anullinus, the later Severan marshal and praefectus urbi⁸³. After various other posts, with the praetorship in 177⁸⁴, came his post as iuridicus in Spain. 180 is perhaps the likeliest year for him to have been made legate of IV Scythica in Syria (SHA Sev. 3,6) – *circa Massyam*, as the text must certainly be emended⁸⁵. 'Severus' sojourn in Syria had fateful consequences⁸⁶, but not only because he almost certainly met Julia Domna there then. The significance surely lies in the identity of the governor of Syria at this time, P. Helvius Pertinax⁸⁷. In 182 Pertinax was sacked. The reason was the hostility of Perennis (SHA Pert. 3,3). Since he was out of work for a triennium until the death of Perennis in 185 (ib. 3,4–5), the date is secure. Now Septimius Severus was also out of work for a period before obtaining his governorship of Lugdunensis at about that time⁸⁸. It is perfectly clear, and has long been recognised, that his period without employment, when he was at Athens (Sev. 3,7) was the result of disfavour from Perennis similar to that experienced by Pertinax⁸⁹. The rest of Severus' career up till 193 does not require detailed discussion. But the statement that 'the career . . . was in no way remarkable before 193'⁹⁰ is misleading. It is precisely his appointment to govern the three legion province of Pannonia Superior in 191 that is so remarkable⁹¹. He was chosen 'precisely because he was thought mediocre' in one view⁹². It would be preferable to conclude that he was chosen, firstly because he was known to Pertinax (and Laetus), and only secondly, because he was known to have indifferent talents. The main criterion must have been his reliability.

P. S e p t i m i u s G e t a. The *cursus* inscription from Lepcis Magna has created as many difficulties as it has solved⁹³. It will be useful to set the text out in full:

⁸³ Cf. G. Alföldy, *Fasti Hispanienses* (Wiesbaden 1969) 122 f. – I am indebted to Dr. Alföldy for allowing me to consult this work in typescript. See also G. Alföldy, *Senat* 140 and p. 270, below.

⁸⁴ T. D. Barnes 92.

⁸⁵ Cf. P. Thomsen, *Massilia in Syrien. Ein Beitrag zur Historia Augusta und zur Ortskunde Syriens. Zeitschr. deutsch. Palästina-Vereins* 67, 1945, 75 ff. But the specific site that he suggests, south-west of Epiphania, is too close to Raphanaea, base of III Gallica, to be likely. It is also much too far from Antioch. It would be preferable to understand *Massya* as the name for the plain extending from Epiphania to Chalcis, and to look for the base of IV Scythica at the northern end of this plain.

⁸⁶ T. D. Barnes 92.

⁸⁷ Cf. PIR²H 73, p. 65, and, most recently, F. Cassola, *Ricerche sul II secolo dell' imperio: l'ascesa di Pertinace fino al 180 d. C.* (1966) 41. – From SHA Pert. 2,11 and 3,1 one may conclude that Pertinax was governor of Syria at the time of the death of M. Aurelius in March 180. Cassola (28) points out the significance of the fact that Syria was entrusted to Pertinax, client of Ti. Claudius Pompeianus, a native of Antioch.

⁸⁸ The date of his arrival in Lugdunensis cannot be established with certainty, it is true. Caracalla was born on 4 April 188 (cf. J. Hasebroek 12 and T. D. Barnes 93, n. 48), hence Severus who married Julia Domna when already in Gaul, must have been there at least from July 187. As he had to send for Julia and win her hand *interuentu amicorum* (Sev. 3,9) one might reasonably allow a further lapse of time, bringing Severus' arrival in Gaul back at least to 186. – Cf. also M. Hammond, *Septimius Severus, Roman bureaucrat*. *Harv. Stud. Class. Phil.* 51, 1940, 137 ff. 159 f. and F. Grosso 163 and 4.5 f.

⁸⁹ This key point is ignored by T. D. Barnes, but recognised by most scholars, cf. for example F. Grosso 163 and M. Hammond (cited in previous note) 159 (who by a slip assigns Commodus' accession to 181).

⁹⁰ T. D. Barnes 91.

⁹¹ Cf. E. Birley, *Senators in the emperors' service*. *Proc. Brit. Acad.* 39, 1953, 197 ff. 211, and *id.*, *Beförderungen und Versetzungen im römischen Heere*. *Carnuntum-Jahrb.* 1957, 3 ff., esp. 10 and Tabelle I. – The explanation suggested in the latter article – that the province was safe enough at that time to allow such an inexperienced man to be made governor – no doubt contains part of the truth.

⁹² T. D. Barnes 93.

⁹³ IRT 541.

P. Septimio Getae c. v. X/vir. stlitibus iudican/dis trib. latic. leg. II Aug. /⁴ quaest. provin. Cretae et / Cyrenarum aed. Cereali / curator rei pub. Anconita/norum praet. hastario et tu/⁸telar. sacerdoti fetiali leg. / leg. I Italicae procos. Siciliae / les. (sic) Auggg. pr. pr. provinciae / Lusitaniae cos. leg. Auggg. / ¹²pr. pr. provinciae Mysiae in/ferioris leg. Au[ggg. p]r. pr. /provinc. Daciarum / curia Dacica ex voto posuit. The inscription belongs to the period 195/202⁹⁴. Geta is recorded as governor of Dacia in 195⁹⁵. He must therefore have governed Moesia Inferior not later than that year. But there is unfortunately no means of deciding who appointed him to that province. The story in the SHA that Severus ordered his brother, who had come to meet him, to govern the province assigned to him (Sev. 8,10: *occurrit ei et statim Geta frater suus, quem provinciam sibi creditam regere praecepit aliud sperantem*) does not help. The province might be equally well Moesia Inferior or the III Daciae⁹⁶. The practice of nomenclature adopted by the Septimii of Lepcis does not permit any conclusion about which of the two brothers was the elder. It may be noted that neither of Severus' own sons was named after himself – but that the younger was named after his paternal grandfather. It is certainly commoner, to judge from the examples known, for the elder son to be named after his father; and it ought to be the natural assumption, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, that Geta was older than Severus. It is worth remembering, lest it should seem paradoxical that the younger brother, not the elder, became emperor, that Otho, Vitellius and Vespasian were all younger brothers. Two pieces of evidence in the SHA may, it must be conceded, suggest that Severus was the elder brother. Firstly, there is the fact that he returned to Lepcis when his father died – *ut mortuo patre rem domesticam componeret* (Sev. 2,3). It might be argued that this is the action of an elder son. On the other hand, it could be that Geta was otherwise engaged,

⁹⁴ Geta was cos. II ord. in 203. He is attested in Dacia in 195 (see next note). Strictly speaking the inscription should be assigned to the period 193/202, as Geta may have been made governor of Dacia as early as 193 – except that the use of the form *Auggg.* is hardly possible before 197, or more likely 198, when Caracalla became Caesar and Augustus, respectively. The form *Auggg.* was technically correct only from 209 (when the younger Geta became Augustus) to 211, but it is found in Africa well before that; cf. R. Cagnat, *Cours d'Épigraphie Latine* (Paris 1914) 211, n. 4, who points out that it is normal for the younger Geta to be counted as an Augustus there from 198. In any case, the elder Geta was dead several years before 209, so the question of technical correctness does not arise. – The arguments of T. D. Barnes (95) on this question are curious, and – in the light of the observations of Cagnat – both superfluous and misguided: 'The three Augusti whose legate he was in Lusitania must (if the description of the post is correct) be Commodus, Pertinax and Severus Geta therefore held Lusitania in late 192 and early 193'. (If one must be strictly technical, why not suggest that the three emperors might be Commodus, Pertinax and Didius Julianus?). The fact of the matter is that the description *Auggg.* on this as on many other inscription has no relevance whatever to the number of emperors reigning at the time the posts were held.

⁹⁵ CIL III 905. – This is one of the pieces of evidence that led Domaszewski, to his theory about Severus' Staatsstreich. Had he known of Geta's earlier command, he might have been even more convinced of the truth of his theory.

⁹⁶ T. D. Barnes (95–96) regards the anecdote as implausible: 'If Geta was governing Moesia Inferior in the summer of 193 what other province could he desire? Glory, influence and power were to be won by defeating Pescennius Niger, not by deserting his post to importune his brother for a different appointment'. – This misses the point; and Barnes in effect answers his own question by the sentence immediately following it. It is only too obvious that Geta must have wanted an active post in the high command against Niger, instead of being left in his province. When it is remembered that L. Marius Maximus the legate of I Italica, the legion that Geta himself had commanded, had been given a special command over an army corps drawn from the Lower Moesian legions, (on this see below, p. 276), the request becomes even more intelligible.

on public service that did not permit him to take leave of absence – for example as curator of Ancona. Or perhaps he did go to Lepcis then: the sources would not have recorded it anyway. Secondly, it is Severus who owns the *fundum Veientanum* (Sev. 4,5), which had, it was suggested, come down by inheritance from the grandfather, the friend of Staius. On the other hand, since a lead pipe near Veii carries the name *P. Septimi Geta*, the possibility must be considered that the estate was divided – Severus perhaps receiving, in the shape of the *unum fundum*, only a portion of it. However this may be, there is no reason why Geta should not have been appointed to govern Moesia Inferior through the influence of Laetus in the year 192. The evidence of SHA Pert. 12,8 excludes the possibility that he was put there by Pertinax. It is certainly remarkable to find two brothers commanding five Danubian legions between them; but who was making these appointments? If Laetus had good reason to want to put the brothers in these posts, he is likely to have been capable of doing so⁹⁷.

The earlier career of Geta will only repay analysis if one can make some assumptions about his age. If he was older than Severus, born in, say 143, he would have entered the senate as quaestor in 167, after service as military tribune in Britain. It is worth noting that Pertinax was serving in Britain ca. 164–166, as an equestrian officer. The two men might well have met⁹⁸. It seems likely that Geta's post as curator of Ancona is commemorated by the inscription from that town in honour of a *cognatus* of Severus and *avunculus* of Caracalla. The initials – *P. S G* – alone survive from his name⁹⁹. He would, on this assumption, have been aedile in 169, and curator of Ancona in 170 – by no means a sinecure, for the town must have been exceedingly busy in that year, ensuring sea communications with Saloniae, whose walls were being constructed in 170¹⁰⁰. He could have become praetor in 171, and should have gone on to command I Italica during the first German-Sarmatian war. It should be noted that Pertinax governed Moesia Inferior at some time c. 175¹⁰¹. Thus, as with Severus and Polus Terentianus later, in Syria and Britain respectively, it is perfectly conceivable that Geta served under the governorship of Pertinax. In that case he should have gone on to be proconsul of Sicily and to govern Lusitania before 185 at the latest. This would make it necessary to conclude that his career then came to a halt for several years. If one could be confident that Geta had already been governor of Lusitania when Pertinax and Severus suffered setbacks in their careers at the hands of Perennis¹⁰², then it would be intelligible why he failed to secure further advancement on the fall of Perennis as they did. Pertinax was a special case, a man of outstanding talent and experience, needed for special tasks. Severus had only reached a relatively lowly grade. But in the case of Geta further advancement may in any case have been deemed unlikely. There were many men who never got any further than a praetorian pro-

⁹⁷ F. Grosso 413 ff.) argues emphatically that Geta was appointed to Moesia Inferior in 192.

⁹⁸ On the early career of Pertinax see my paper The invasion of Italy in the reign of M. Aurelius. Festschrift R. Laur-Belart (Basel 1968) 223 f.

⁹⁹ Dessau 441. – In spite of the doubts of J. Guey, it seems reasonable to assume with G. M. Bersanetti (P. Settimio Geta, fratello di Settimio Severo. Epigraphica 4, 1942, 105 ff. 112) that *cognatus* is simply a mistake. It may be that Geta was prohibited from having himself described as frater of Severus (a description notably lacking on IRT 541).

¹⁰⁰ Cf. my Marcus Aurelius (London 1966) 228 f.

¹⁰¹ Cf. my paper The status of Moesia Superior under M. Aurelius. Acta Antiqua Philippopolitana: Studia Historica et Philologica (Sofia 1963) 109 ff.

¹⁰² Cf. previous note.

vince, with the consulate, if they were lucky, as the crowning glory of their career. The consular posts were reserved for the top men¹⁰³. If this hypothesis is correct, both Severus and Geta are men who in the normal course of events would have been unlikely to be appointed to govern consular provinces. The needs of the hour made the difference. They could be trusted by Laetus, and by Pertinax¹⁰⁴.

C. Fulvius Plautianus. Various attempts have been made to identify Plautianus with *ignoti*, whose names are missing or have been erased from *cursus* inscriptions¹⁰⁵. It is not even completely certain when Plautianus was appointed praetorian prefect by Severus. He was certainly in office on 9 June 197¹⁰⁶, and had probably been appointed well before this. He was undoubtedly a compatriot and indeed kinsman of Severus¹⁰⁷. For this reason it is tempting to identify him with the Φλούβιος whose name is marked in the margin of a manuscript of Dio, against a passage (73,15,4) which runs as follows: ὄτι οὗτος ἐπὶ πονηρία καὶ ἀπληστία ἀσελγεία τε ὑπὸ τοῦ Περτίνιακος ὅτε τῆς Ἀφρικῆς ἦρχε, κατεδέδικαστο, τότε δὲ ἐν τοῖς πρώτοις ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ἐκείνου τῆ τοῦ Σεουήρου χάριτι ἀπεδέδεικτο¹⁰⁸. It need not be Plautianus himself – but it is sheer perversity to deny that the excerpt almost certainly refers to one of the Fulvii Lepcitanii. After all, Herodian (3,10,6) specifically states that Plautianus was alleged to have been banished after being convicted of treason and many other crimes – from the context this refers to the period before AD 193. Either this man, or the *ignotus* on an inscription from Lepcis – or both – may be identical with Plautianus. The inscription is set up by a lady named Fulvia Nepotilla, to her brother, with the support of her husband (another Fulvius) and her sons¹⁰⁹. The first five lines and most of the sixth line have been erased. What survives of 11,6–8 records part of the man's career [*praef.* / *vehiculorum proc.* / *XX her. fratri pio* / etc. The procuratorship of the *vicesima hereditatium* is, evidently, the higher of the two posts that survive¹¹⁰. It is worth noting, however, the significance of the post of praefectus vehiculorum. This man had

¹⁰³ Cf. the remarks of E. Birley, *Senators in the emperor's service*. Proc. Brit. Acad. 39, 1953, 197 ff. 206.

¹⁰⁴ F. Grosso (414 f.) on the grounds that Geta's appointment to Moesia Inferior 'per me... e fatto sicuro', dates the earlier career as follows: leg. leg. I Ital. c. 180; procos. Siciliae not later than 184; governor of Lusitania 184–187; cos. not later than 188. – This appears to assume that Geta was older than Severus, but does not allow sufficiently for imponderable factors, such as the influence of Perennis and Laetus in retarding or accelerating careers.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. PIR² F 554, which refers to Ephem. Epigr. VIII 478, Capua, on which see CP no. 165. – G. Barbieri, *Un nuovo cursus equestre (Plauziano ?)*. Epigraphica 19, 1957, 93 ff. tentatively identified an unknown eques recorded at Ostia with Plautianus (cf. CP no. 271 + add., where however the suggested identification is not discussed). The identification is not at all convincing (cf. R. Meiggs, *Roman Ostia* [Oxford 1960] 565).

¹⁰⁶ Dessau 2185, Rome. – But see now F. Grosso, *Ricerche su Plauziano*, etc. Rend. Accad. Lincei ser. 8, 23, 1968, 7 ff., who shows good reason to believe that he was already prefect of the guard on 1 January 197 (and that he was prefect of the vigiles in 195). I do not accept all the consequences that Grosso draws (cf. n. 108 and 234).

¹⁰⁷ Cf. p. 256, above.

¹⁰⁸ The passage is mistranslated in the Loeb edition, Vol. IX 153: 'This man, when governor of Africa, had been tried and condemned by Pertinax'. F. Grosso, op. cit. (n. 106) has a quite different interpretation, which I do not follow (arguments are given in the second work referred to in n. 234).

¹⁰⁹ IRT 572; cf. CP no. 238 (where the identification is not discussed) and PIR² F 522. To the editors of IRT 'the deliberate erasure of the opening lines suggests that the inscription may refer to the early career of C. Fulvius Plautianus... or to a homonymous relation' (by which presumably another Fulvius is meant).

¹¹⁰ Cf. CP no. 238.

control of the operations of the *cursus publicus*, and as such would have been ideally placed to facilitate the transmission of secret messages¹¹¹.

D. C l o d i u s A l b i n u s. There is less need for a detailed examination of the origin and career of Albinus thanks to G. Alföldy's exhaustive investigation¹¹². However, it may be of some value to present briefly the results of an enquiry made to a large extent independently¹¹³. The life of Albinus given by the SHA is so clearly the product of the author's imagination in almost every particular, that it is tempting to reject it in toto. However, Hasebroek, who as a pupil of v. Domaszewski, treated everything in the SHA, and the minor lives in particular, with extreme suspicion, accepted the statement that Albinus' origo was Hadrumetum¹¹⁴. But Dessau, reviewing Hasebroek's work, rejected this view¹¹⁵. Hasebroek's grounds for accepting the SHA's evidence lay mainly in the coinage of Clodius Albinus, in which the deity *Saeculum Frugiferum* appears. Noting that this appears to be the patron deity of Hadrumetum, and comparing the figure of the god on Albinus' coins with the god as represented on the coins struck in the Augustan period by Hadrumetum itself, he came to the reasonable conclusion the two were identical¹¹⁶. But Dessau pointed out that a representation of this deity had been found elsewhere than at Hadrumetum¹¹⁷. However, since that time, a much more striking discovery has been made at Hadrumetum itself, namely the relief of the god Baal-Hammon from the fifth century B. C. sanctuary. The god bears a remarkable resemblance to the figure on the coinage of Albinus¹¹⁸. Besides, it has always been recognised that the title of the colonia of Hadrumetum was the colonia *Concordia Ulpia Traiana Frugifera*¹¹⁹. The special connection of Hadrumetum with the deity *Saeculum Frugiferum* can scarcely be denied in the light of this evidence¹²⁰. It has been pointed out that Pertinax minted coins with the slogan *Saeculo Frugifero*; and that the coins of Albinus with this legend, and others with the legend *Africa S. C.* all date from the civil wars, from the years 194 and 195¹²¹. This makes excellent sense, if one supposes that Pertinax and Severus were both of them courting Albinus¹²². The concentration of coins with an African connotation in these

¹¹¹ Cf. H.-G. Pflaum, *Essai sur le Cursus Publicus* (Paris 1940).

¹¹² *Herkunft und Laufbahn des Clodius Albinus in der Historia Augusta*. Bonner *Historia-Augusta-Colloquium 1966/1967* (Bonn 1968) 19 ff.

¹¹³ This enquiry was undertaken in preparation for my article *The Roman Governors of Britain*, *Epigr. Stud.* 4 (1967) 63 ff., in which Albinus' career is examined under no. 35 (p. 77 f.). In the event it seemed inappropriate to publish a detailed examination in that place.

¹¹⁴ J. Hasebroek, *Die Fälschung der vita Nigri und vita Albinus in den SHA* (Berlin 1916) 13 ff. – Not only SHA *Clod. Alb.* but also *Sev. 11,3* makes Hadrumetum the origo of Albinus.

¹¹⁵ *Philol. Wochenschr.* 35, 1918, 389 ff. 391 f.

¹¹⁶ For the *Saeculum Frugiferum* coins of Albinus cf. *BMC V*, pp. lxxxix–xc, and *Severus nos. 539*, etc. – For the coins issued by Hadrumetum, cf. L. Müller, *Le Numismatique de l'ancienne Afrique* (1860) I 51 ff.

¹¹⁷ He referred to the discoveries published by A. Merlin, *Le Sanctuaire de Baal et de Tanit près de Siagu*. Notes et documents publiés par la direction des antiquités et arts (Gouvernement Tunisien) IV (1910) esp. p. 17 pl. II, and 39 ff.

¹¹⁸ Cf. P. Cintas, *Le sanctuaire punique de Sousse*, *Rev. afric.* 91, 1947, 1 ff.

¹¹⁹ *CIL VI 1687* = Dessau 6111, lines 4 and 10.

¹²⁰ T. D. Barnes (87, n. 1) denies that Albinus was from Africa, citing Dessau's review of Hasebroek (as does *PIR² C 1186*). But later (104) he is prepared to describe *Saeculum Frugiferum* as the 'local deity of Hadrumetum', which Dessau argued that it was not – the main point of his criticism of Hasebroek.

¹²¹ T. D. Barnes 104.

¹²² The *Saeculum Frugiferum* coins of Pertinax do not, however, show the characteristic Hadrumetine figure (*BMC Pertinax no. 5*).

years surely indicates clearly enough the importance the governments of both Pertinax and Severus attached to Africa at precisely this period, 193–195, for very good reasons.

The evidence of nomenclature, while it does not dramatically support, does not in any way conflict with the view that Albinus was indeed from Hadrumetum. Clodii are, predictably, very numerous on inscriptions from N. Africa. D. Clodii are rare, here as elsewhere, but they are found¹²³. Equally the cognomen Albinus is not uncommon in N. Africa¹²⁴. At this point one must recall that Asellius Aemilianus, proconsul of Asia in 193, is stated by Dio to have been a kinsman of Albinus (74,6,2). One must therefore examine the inscriptions of N. Africa for Asellii. There are in fact ten in CIL VIII (compared with eight in CIL VI). It should be noted further that Didius Julianus is said by the SHA to be the son of Aemilia Clara, from Hadrumetum (Did. Jul. 1,2 – strictly speaking it is his *avus maternus* who is from Hadrumetum). The connection of Didius Julianus with Hadrumetum (and with Salvius Julianus) is still doubted by some – needlessly¹²⁵. An inscription from Thuburbo Maius records Salvius Julianus as proconsul of Africa. The name of his legate has been erased. It was surely that of Didius Julianus¹²⁶. Aemilia Clara, from Hadrumetum, might conceivably be a relative of Asellius Aemilianus. A link, even only a link of domicile between Albinus and the mother of Didius Julianus, would help to explain the puzzling story that Albinus – with Julianus – was the *auctor Pertinacis occidendi*¹²⁷. This is exactly the kind of story that must have been circulated by Severus and his agents after the break with Albinus.

About Albinus' previous career little can be established with certainty, save that early in the reign of Commodus he took part in a war with the barbarians 'beyond Dacia', perhaps as legionary legate. It seems possible that he was legate of Germania Inferior before going to Britain at latest in 192¹²⁸. Albinus clearly had a wide following¹²⁹. Of particular interest is the fact that the father-in-law of Pertinax, T. Flavius Sulpicianus, was executed by Severus in 197 as a supporter of Albinus¹³⁰. What is particularly remarkable is that this man was not put to death by Didius Julianus after his unsuccessful attempt to outbid Didius for the empire. It could be that Didius had special reasons for sparing him¹³¹.

¹²³ CIL VIII 1400 (Thignica). 16550 (Theveste) = ILAlg. I 3120; and note ILAfr. 479 (Thuburnica): Clodia Urbani f. Decima. – IRT 395 + 407 + 424 (all Lepcis and referring to D. Clodius Galba).

¹²⁴ CIL VIII 350 (Ammaedara). 1980 (Theveste). 3378 (Lambaesis). 9054 (Auzia). 12827 (Carthage). 15880 (Sicca). 23854 (Cast. Biracaccarensium). 27698 (nr. Sicca). – The numerous inscriptions of the fourth century proconsul Ceionius Albinus are excluded.

¹²⁵ But even W. Kunkel, *Herkunft und soziale Stellung der römischen Juristen* (Weimar 1952), after judicious examination, accepts both connections, 157 ff., esp. 163 ff.

¹²⁶ A. Merlin, *Le juriconsulte Salvius Julianus, proconsul d'Afrique*. Mém. Acad. Inscr. 43, 1941, 95 ff. = ILTun. 699. – This is accepted by H.-G. Pflaum, *Les sodales Antoniniani à l'époque de Marc-Aurèle* (Paris 1966) 60 ff. – The year is 168. This will explain satisfactorily the episode in the SHA (Sev. 2,2), clearly confused, according to which Severus was tried for adultery before the proconsul Julianus – most of the sentence is a confusion with Pertinax. Severus is very likely to have returned from Rome to Africa at this time – to escape the plague.

¹²⁷ The story is found in Victor, *Caes.* 20,9; Eutropius 8,18,4 and SHA Clod. Alb. 1,1 and 14,2,6.

¹²⁸ Cf. G. Alföldy, *op. cit.* (n. 112) and my paper, *The Roman Governors of Britain*, *Epigr. Stud.* 4 (1967) 63 ff. 77 f.

¹²⁹ Cf. especially G. Alföldy, *op. cit.* (n. 112) 27 ff.

¹³⁰ PIR² F 373.

¹³¹ It may be noted finally that the procurator D. Clodius Galba (CP no. 244^{bis}), who made three dedications at Lepcis, two from the year 204, to Severus and to Caracalla, *ob caelestem in se*

Q. Aurelius Polus Terentianus. This man's full names are revealed by a recently discovered inscription from Mainz: *Libero et Apollini pro salute / [[im[p.] C[a]e[s]. M. [Au]r. / Commod[i] Pi[i] Fel. / Aug. ---- / ----]] Q. Aurel. / Polus Terentianus / cum Q. Aur. Polo / Syriaco filio / fetialis leg. / leg. XXII Pr. p. f. / item leg. II Aug.*¹³². This is undoubtedly the same man as the governor of Dacia in 193¹³³. It was always known that this man held some further office, under Severus and Caracalla, in the period 198/209, when he received a rescript from them¹³⁴. He is now recorded as proconsul of Asia¹³⁵. The nomenclature of Terentianus and his son Syriacus gives some indication of his possible origin. Q. Aurelii are extremely rare in all parts of the empire. Excluding the notable fourth century family of the Symmachi, the numbers recorded in the various volumes of the CIL are as follows: II 1. - III: 4. - IV: 0. - V: 3. - VI: 8. - VII: 0. - VIII: 18. - IX: 1. - X: 2. - XI: 1 (2 ?). - XII: 4. - XIII: 1. - XIV: 2¹³⁶. Of these, apart from those in CIL VIII, only Q. Aurelius Q. f. Ter(t)ius Pap. Sarm., decurion and flamen at Sarmizegetusa (III 1448, cf. 7981 = 6269) is clearly an honestior. Among the cases in CIL VIII the most interesting are the senators Q. Aurelius Pactumeius Clemens and Q. Aurelius Pactumeius Fronto, from Cirta¹³⁷. Three further Q. Aurelii may be added¹³⁸. No Q. Aurelii are recorded in IGRR¹³⁹; one is recorded at Athens¹⁴⁰, but the indexing system of IG does not lend itself to an enquiry of this kind.

The name Syriacus or Suriacus is not common¹⁴¹, but six examples occur in CIL VIII¹⁴². To these four further African examples may be added¹⁴³. Finally one may note the nomenclature of the Severan senator, Olus (sic) Terentius Pudens Uttedianus¹⁴⁴. Taking the evidence as a whole, it seems reasonable to argue that the case for African origin is stronger than that for any alternative¹⁴⁵. As for the career, the

indulgentiam eius (IRT 395. 424), and a third, undated, to Julia Domna (IRT 407), may perhaps have been a kinsman of Albinus, spared by Severus and allowed to pursue an equestrian career. That at least would neatly explain the *caelestis indulgentia*, and, given the rarity of the nomenclature D. Clodius, relationship with Albinus is worth considering as a serious possibility. Pflaum, l. c., does not discuss this question.

¹³² The above reading is as given by G. Alföldy, *Legionslegaten* 44, n. 229, who has improved on the original publication in *Mainzer Zeitschr.* 59, 1964, 56 f., no. 2.

¹³³ Cf. Stein, *Dazien* 56: he is named there by his two cognomina only.

¹³⁴ *Frag. Vat.* 200.

¹³⁵ *AE* 1964, 232, again with his two cognomina only.

¹³⁶ This includes cases of men and women who are Aurelius or Aurelia Q. f.

¹³⁷ *CIL VIII* 7057-8 = *ILAlg.* II 642. 644. - *ILAlg.* II 643.

¹³⁸ *AE* 1958, 144 (Hippo Regius), a *flamen perpetuus, omnibus honoribus functus*. - *AE* 1962, 282 (Castellum Tidditanorum). - *ILAfr.* 192 (nr. Thuburbo Maius).

¹³⁹ But note *AE* 1931, 73 (from Pisidia): Q. Aurelius Papias.

¹⁴⁰ *IG III* 877, apparently a senator, as the father of a vestal virgin.

¹⁴¹ Not in *Kajanto*, no doubt because classed as non-latin.

¹⁴² 3433. 15032. 15427. 25901. 3167 = 4329. 3174.

¹⁴³ *ILAfr.* 33 (Thaenae). 38 (Thaenae, two examples - cf. *ILTun.* 82 for an improved reading of one). - *ILAlg.* I 3641 (south of Theveste); and cf. 3342, a Suricus (Theveste).

¹⁴⁴ *CIL III* 993 = *Dessau* 3923. Cf. Barbieri, *Albo.* no. 499. - The spelling of the praenomen as Olus suggests that the man is following the same fashion as Polus (for Paulus) Terentianus (cf. another example from the same period, from Thaenae: Olus Cosinius Fortis [*ILAfr.* 34]). The coincidence of the names Terentius and Terentianus gives a little extra support to the hypothesis that these two may be linked.

¹⁴⁵ Certainly it is illegitimate to state, as does G. Alföldy, *Legionslegaten* 44, that the man is 'zweifelloos Orientale'.

inscription from Mainz must be dated to the period 185/192 by the titulature of Commodus (185/192). The natural interpretation of the legionary commands as they are set out is that Terentianus put up the stone when he had been transferred from the Mainz legion to command II Augusta¹⁴⁶. Iterated legionary commands are not at all common. In most of the known cases it is possible to detect some special crisis that made it necessary to give a man command over a second legion¹⁴⁷. In this particular instance, it is natural to see the special occasion for such a command in the British mutinies of the period. One may recall also the strong reaction provoked by the action of the praetorian prefect Perennis, who dismissed the British legionary legates and replaced them with equites¹⁴⁸. This was the occasion also for the recall from retirement of Pertinax, appointed governor of Britain with the mandate to suppress the mutiny¹⁴⁹. G. Alföldy argues that Terentianus may have been one of the equites appointed by Perennis, with his position later regularised¹⁵⁰. There is of course no evidence for either view. But it should be noted that Terentianus had already been made a *fetialis* at the time the inscription was dedicated, an unlikely distinction for a man with the background postulated by Alföldy.

If the view suggested above is correct, it follows that Polus Terentianus must have served under the command of Pertinax in Britain. Be it noted that as a *fetialis* he may have come into contact with P. Septimius Geta, also a member of that priestly college¹⁵¹. The likeliest explanation available for the mention of *fetialis*, to the exclusion of any other public apart from the legionary commands, is that Terentianus had just been elected to this college¹⁵². In that case, it is just worth recording that C. Aufidius Victorinus (cos. II ord. 183), who was a *fetialis*¹⁵³, died in about the year 185 or 186¹⁵⁴. Polus Terentianus may conceivably have been chosen to succeed him as *fetialis*.

L. M a n t e n n i u s S a b i n u s. The importance of the prefect of Egypt during any crisis in the Roman Empire does not need to be emphasised. If a serious attempt had been made to place trusted men in key positions at the end of 192, it is hardly likely that the prefecture of Egypt would have been left to chance. Sabinus is recorded in

¹⁴⁶ Such cases are fairly common, cf. for a parallel (from a lower grade in the service) RIB 827 (Maryport: *IOM / Cammi/[u]s Maximus prae. / coh. I His. / eq. e(t) tri. XVIII / coh. volu. / v. s. l. m.*, on which see E. Birley, *Noricum, Britain and the Roman Army*. Festschrift R. Egger I (Klagenfurt 1952) 187. – In support of this interpretation of the legionary commands of Terentianus see now F. Grosso, *La carriera di Q. Aurelio Polo Terenziano*. *Athenaeum* 45, 1967, 346 ff. 348.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. most recently G. Alföldy, *Legionslegaten* 77 ff., esp. 79, n. 353.

¹⁴⁸ On the mutinies, cf. now F. Grosso, 451 ff. I have some reservations in detail about the interpretation and chronology offered by Grosso.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. previous note. – The ancient sources are: Dio 72,9,2 and 73,4,1; SHA Pert. 3,6 and 8,9, cf. 3,10, etc.

¹⁵⁰ *Legionslegaten* 45. – At the same time he argues that the command over XXII Primigenia was Terentianus' second legionary appointment, and that the reason for it was the need to crush the revolt of Maternus.

¹⁵¹ IRT 541, Lepcis Magna. – The fact that the priesthood is recorded in the *cursus* of Geta between his praetorship and his legionary command makes it certain that he was already a *fetialis* before his brother's accession to the throne. L. Marius Maximus (below p. 276 f.) was also a *fetialis*.

¹⁵² G. Alföldy, *Legionslegaten* 45, n. 234 supposes that this may be explained by his having been an eques, adlected to senatorial rank, with no other offices to record.

¹⁵³ AE 1957, 121, Rome.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. Grosso 214. – His death is recorded by Dio 72,11, immediately after his account of the death of Perennis (185); which is of course precisely when Pertinax – and, it is argued, Polus Terentianus – were sent to Britain.

Egypt on 6 March 193, the day when the news of Pertinax' accession was first announced, having presumably just reached him¹⁵⁵. Clearly he must have been appointed by Commodus. It is noteworthy that another prefect, Larcus Memor, is attested in 192¹⁵⁶. Domaszewski, who based a good deal of his argument about the Staatsstreich of Severus on the fact that Mantennius Sabinus was in office under both Pertinax and Severus, did not attempt to discover the man's background. Only one other fact is known about him. An inscription from Praeneste is in honour of his son¹⁵⁷: *L. Mantennio L. f. Severo L. Mantennii Sabini trib. coh. III pr. et Fl. T. f. Procillae filio T. Flavius Germanus nepoti suo*. The father-in-law of Sabinus, T. Flavius Germanus¹⁵⁸, was an imperial procurator. But the important point is that Germanus is a native of Praeneste, where he held local office¹⁵⁹, for, like Sabinus, Pertinax was married to a woman whose father lived at Praeneste. The father-in-law of Pertinax, T. Flavius Sulpicianus, is generally supposed to be of Cretan origin; but however this may be, he had property at Praeneste, the only conceivable explanation for the presence there of a waterpipe bearing his name¹⁶⁰. There is no need to postulate that T. Flavius Sulpicianus and T. Flavius Germanus, the father-in-law of Pertinax and of his prefect of Egypt, were related to one another, in spite of the coincidence of names – for the names are after all very common (it is worth mentioning that the full nomenclature, T. Flavius Claudius Sulpicianus, strongly suggests some freedman element in the ancestry of this man – either from a freedman of Claudius or Nero, of Galba, or of the Flavians. This would be entirely appropriate in the case of the father-in-law of Pertinax, himself a freedman's son). The assertion of a link of this kind between the wives of Pertinax and Sulpicianus, namely their home, Praeneste, may seem laughably implausible. But it might be rendered a little more convincing if it is remembered that with the exception of a single inscription in Gaul, Flavia Titiana the wife of Pertinax is given the title Augusta only on the coins of Alexandria and on an Egyptian papyrus (Pertinax had indeed refused the title for her)¹⁶¹. It would indeed be intelligible – and a piquant commentary on the influence of women at that time – for Flavia Procilla to have urged her husband Sabinus to give prominence to her compatriot Flavia Titiana. However, one must bear in mind that a slight delay might have ensued between the senate decreeing the titles of Augusta and Caesar, and Pertinax' refusal (Dio 74,7,1–3; SHA Pert. 5,4;6,9); and before refusal the despatch to Egypt may have been sent off.

The consular proconsuls. At a time of crisis the attitude of the proconsuls of Asia and of Africa would clearly be important, even if they had no legions at their command. They could obviously play a useful role in influencing their provinces, important above all for their wealth. And even if a hostile proconsul could easily be overthrown (as was to happen in the case of Gordian in 238), the psychological

¹⁵⁵ Cf. Stein, *Präefekten* 105.

¹⁵⁶ Stein, *Präefekten* 104.

¹⁵⁷ CIL XIV 2955.

¹⁵⁸ CP no. 183.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. CIL XIV 2922 = Dessau 1420, and CP no. 183.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. PIR² F 373. – The lead-pipe is CIL XIV 2838 = XV 7889. – H.-G. Pflaum, *Les sodales Antoniniani de l'époque de Marc-Aurèle* 59, argues convincingly that Sulpicianus is unlikely to be connected with the Cretan Flavii Sulpiciani.

¹⁶¹ Cf. PIR² F 444. – The same applies to their son, cf. PIR² H 74 (who is named as Caesar on three milestones in Arabia as well).

effect of prompt adhesion by the governors of these great provinces would obviously be something valuable. It is not absolutely certain whether P. Cornelius Anullinus was already proconsul of Africa at the moment of the murder of Commodus. But it seems likely¹⁶². Anullinus had been without employment throughout the reign of Commodus¹⁶³. A link between Anullinus and Severus seems probable, dating from the period when Severus was chosen to be quaestor of Baetica for 170, when Anullinus was proconsul of that province. Anullinus will, it would seem, have commanded VII gemina under C. Aufidius Victorinus¹⁶⁴. Thus he was closely linked with a great figure of the reign of M. Aurelius¹⁶⁵. He was probably consul suffect at about the same time as Pertinax, but no other link between the two men can be established or conjectured¹⁶⁶.

The case of Asellius Aemilianus is particularly interesting. He was a kinsman of Clodius Albinus (according to Dio, whose comments on the man deserve special study): ἐχρη̄το (sc. ὁ Νίγρος) ὑποστρατήγῳ μετὰ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῷ Αἰμιλιανῷ, ὅτι τε μεσεύων καὶ ἐφεδρεύων τοῖς πράγμασι πάντων τῶν τότε βουλευόντων καὶ συνέσει καὶ ἐμπειρίᾳ πραγμάτων προσφέρειν ἐδόκει (ἐπὶ πολλῶν γὰρ ἐθνῶν ἐξήταστο ὑφ' ὧν περὶ καὶ ἐξώγκωτο), ὅτι τε τοῦ Ἀλβίνου προσήκων ἦν (Dio 74,6,2). His previous career is unfortunately little known¹⁶⁷. But he was legate of Thrace during the period 176/180, and legate of Syria as the predecessor of Pescennius Niger (Herodian 3,2,3). If, as seems to be the case, he was already in Syria in 185/186, it is quite possible that he had governed that province for more than three years¹⁶⁸. These two considerations are important. For, in view of his connection with Albinus, it seems plausible to conjecture whether he might not have been made proconsul of Asia through the agency of Laetus and Pertinax, with the deliberate intention of keeping him as near as possible to the Syrian army. If, as seems probable, Laetus and Pertinax could not rely on Niger, it may have seemed wise to keep some check on him. In the circumstances, an ex-governor of Syria, known to the troops, and above all, known as an outstandingly skilful governor (as Dio records), and related to Albinus, ought to have been as good an insurance as one could imagine to ensure that no trouble came from Syria in the event of a crisis. His military capacity – or, at least, the high opinion people had of it – was borne out by his selection as commander-in-chief of the Pescennian forces. It is certainly remarkable that Severus had such a strong animus against this man. *Aemiliano autem non ignovit* (Sev. 8,15) – at a time when he was offering Niger himself *tutum exsilium, si vellet*. This would be explicable if Severus regarded Aemilianus as a turncoat¹⁶⁹.

¹⁶² T. D. Barnes (98) argues that Anullinus was proconsul for the year 192–193, rightly, in my view. – B. E. Thomasson (II 99 f.) assumes that his year ran from 193–194, but Barnes points out that since Anullinus was present at the battle of Issus this dating is unsatisfactory.

¹⁶³ Cf. his cursus inscription, Dessau 1139, from Ilberis (his home).

¹⁶⁴ See G. Alföldy, *Fasti Hispanienses* 122 f.

¹⁶⁵ On Victorinus, cf. now especially G. Alföldy, *op. cit.* 38 ff.

¹⁶⁶ For the date of his consulate cf. G. Alföldy, *op. cit.* 123.

¹⁶⁷ The attempt by E. Groag to identify him with the subject of the acephalous cursus inscription from Mainz, CIL XIII 6806, ap. – E. Ritterling, *Fasti des römischen Deutschland* 34 f., is now generally rejected.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. PIR² A 1211 for details.

¹⁶⁹ For the earlier career of Aemilianus, cf. the suggestion by E. Birley, reviewing B. E. Thomasson, in *Journ. Roman Stud.* 52, 1962, 224, that a fragmentary inscription from Capidava may attest him as legate of Moesia Inferior. – For the inscription, cf. AE 1934, 108; R. Florescu, *Capidava* (Bucuresti 1958) I 93, no. 15 (with photograph). – A partial restoration would give: Q. A[se]lliu[s]

III

In the foregoing pages the attempt has been made, by examination of the careers and background of some of the principal figures involved in the murder of Commodus and its aftermath, to render more plausible the view that Pertinax himself was directly involved. A fair number of the men in key positions have been seen to be African: in particular, Q. Aemilius Laetus, the praetorian prefect, L. Septimius Severus the governor of Pannonia Superior and his brother P. Septimius Geta, governor of Moesia Inferior, D. Clodius Albinus, governor of Britain and, perhaps, Q. Aurelius Polus Terentianus, governor of the III Daciae. In addition, the prefect of Egypt, L. Mautennius Sabinus, may well have had personal links with Pertinax. The forces that could be relied upon thus amount to eleven legions (with large numbers of auxiliary regiments, particularly in Britain and the Dacias), and the praetorian guard. Other provinces, Hispania Tarraconensis, the Germanies, Moesia Superior, Pannonia Inferior, may well be deemed to have been reliable with good reason, and in some cases to have had men of African origin in command¹⁷⁰. The fact that Laetus himself was from Africa may in itself be sufficient to explain the dominance of Africans in positions of power at this time. But the special connection of Pertinax with Severus, Geta and Polus Terentianus has been examined. It is a curious coincidence that two manuscripts of Dio, by error, described Pertinax as $\Lambda\beta\upsilon\varsigma$ rather than $\Lambda\gamma\upsilon\varsigma$ (Dio 73,3,1). The error is not surprising, when one considers the circumstances. Other connections of Pertinax with Africa may or may not be significant, but deserve noting. For example, his teacher was Sulpicius Apollinaris, from Carthage¹⁷¹.

Pertinax at first followed Apollinaris in his profession (SHA Pert. 1,4), which suggests a close link between pupil and teacher. At this point one might well ask what the ultimate origin of Pertinax' father Helvius Successus (Pert. 1,1) was¹⁷². As it happens, there are about 100 Helvii in CIL VIII, compared with about 90 in CIL VI. As for the cognomen Successus, out of 859 recorded examples among both men and women, 332 come from Rome¹⁷³. There are just over 100 in CIL VIII, not a strikingly high proportion¹⁷⁴. But it is at least worth remembering that Pertinax may have had, in a modest way, some kind of link with the province of Africa from birth. It is worth noting that Helvius Successus was engaged in the cloth-trade (SHA Pert. 1,1 and 3,3). Now, 'the cloth of Africa was the only manufactured product (sc. from that province) which enjoyed an international reputation'; out of seventeen African inscriptions giving trades, eleven are concerned with wool or the clothing industry; and in the fourth century 'the chief feature of industry and commerce (except in food) is the

...]cidi[... leg. Aug.] pro [pr.]. – A. Stein, Die Legaten von Moesien, Diss. Pann. I 11 (Budapest 1940) 79 identifies the man with P. Vigellius cet. Saturninus cet. Caucidius Tertullus, elsewhere recorded as legate of V Macedonica in Moesia Inferior (Dessau 1116).

¹⁷⁰ Cf. p. 274 f., below.

¹⁷¹ SHA Pert. 1,4. – On Apollinaris, cf. RE 4 A (1931) 737 ff.

¹⁷² In PIR² 73 (p. 64) the existence of Helvii (or rather Elvii) in the vicinity of Pertinax' birthplace Alba Pompeia is reported, with the comment: 'Qui Helvii loci sane mediocris cognati vel clientes Pertinacis aut patris fortasse erant' – but hardly connected with the patronus who gave Helvius Successus his freedom.

¹⁷³ Kajanto 356.

¹⁷⁴ 59 men and 43 women (more than in any other volume except VI).

prominence of woven products¹⁷⁵. This would support the admittedly very tenuous hypothesis that Helvius Successus may have lived in Africa before Pertinax' birth.

In his early equestrian service he received promotion in Britain, probably from the governor Sex. Calpurnius Agricola, who may well have been from Africa¹⁷⁶. Pertinax himself had been proconsul of Africa shortly before becoming urban prefect¹⁷⁷. But nothing permits us to deduce any connection between this and the conspiracy to overthrow Commodus. As far as his career at this time is concerned, the major problem is that he is stated by Herodian to have been prefect for a long period (2,2,7), which is difficult to reconcile with his governorship of Britain, *cura alimentorum*, proconsulship of Africa and urban prefecture all having to be fitted in to the years 185–192¹⁷⁸. The question is insoluble. But it should be noted that as urban prefect Pertinax cannot have had the prospect of a long tenure of office, for Commodus is alleged to have changed the urban prefects with considerable frequency (SHA Comm. 14,8), a statement that doubtless has some foundation.

At this juncture one point should perhaps be made. It is being claimed in the present paper that common origo may in some circumstances suggest common interest – for example, Albinus from Hadrumetum, may have links with Laetus, from Thaeanae. This is not to imply the working of any 'nationalistic', racial or other such sentiments. In a society such as the Roman empire, patronage was all-important. There can be no doubt that common origin in the same province was an important factor that cannot be neglected. A man's friends are likelier in the first instance to be derived from those whom he has known longest. African senators and knights are likelier to have known one another than to have known men from Baetica or Narbonensis or Italy; and family and economic ties are more likely to have existed between men from the same region¹⁷⁹.

IV

Pertinax was murdered on 28 March 193 (Dio 73,10,2; SHA Pert. 15,6, etc.). Severus was proclaimed exactly twelve days later, at Carnuntum¹⁸⁰. The speed with which he acted in the first instance, and then the short time that it took him to get within striking distance of Rome – he was at Interamna on 1 June¹⁸¹ – suggest very strongly

¹⁷⁵ T. Frank (Ed.), *An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome IV* (Baltimore 1938) 73. 59. 117. It should not be supposed from the above that Pertinax is being claimed as a kind of African – but to show that he need not have been much of an Italian.

¹⁷⁶ SHA Pert. 2,1, on which cf. PIR² H 73, confirmed by the Brühl inscription (H.-G. Kolbe, *Bonner Jahrb.* 162, 1962, 407 ff.). – On Calpurnius Agricola, cf. my paper 'The Roman Governors of Britain', *Epigr. Stud.* 4 (1967) 73 f., citing PIR² C 249, where it is suggested that he may be from Cirra.

¹⁷⁷ On this see most recently F. Cassola, *Pertinace durante il principato di Commodo*. *Parola del Passato* 105, 1965, 451 ff., esp. 462 ff. – Cassola rejects the ingenious theories of G.-Ch. Picard *Pertinax et les prophètes de Caelestis*. *Rev. Hist. Relig.* 155, 1959, 41 ff., according to which Pertinax, as proconsul of Africa, had contributed to the crisis of 190 by promoting the sabotage of the African grain supply to the capital.

¹⁷⁸ Cf. Cassola, *op. cit.* 460 ff.

¹⁷⁹ Certain other prominent men are dealt with below, p. 274 f.

¹⁸⁰ *Feriale Duranum*, col. ii, line 3. – Cf. C. B. Welles – R. O. Fink – J. F. Gilliam, *Dura Europos Final Report V 1* (New Haven 1959) 199.

¹⁸¹ Severus was there (SHA Sev. 6,2) on the day that Didius died (Dio 73,17,5; SHA Did. Jul. 8,8).

that some contingency plan was being put into action. There can scarcely have been time to wait for replies to messages sent from Pannonia on 9 April, before Severus began his march – at least, as far as the more distant provinces, among those that gave their support to Severus, are concerned – Britain and Lower Germany, Dacia and Lower Moesia. It is readily intelligible that the conspirators of 31 December 192 must have allowed for the possibility of failure. Besides this, the conspiracies of Falco and Triarius Maternus¹⁸² must have made Laetus and Pertinax realise that retention of power, once gained, would not be easy. It would be thoroughly intelligible if some arrangement had been made that, in the event of Pertinax failing, the governor of the nearest military province with a large army should be in readiness to redress the balance.

Laetus is blamed for murdering Pertinax. His behaviour on 28 March 193 is curious, for he seems to have had no plan of action, and disappears from the scene, later to be executed by Didius Julianus (SHA *Did. Jul.* 6,2). It is possible that Laetus, who had certainly fallen out with Pertinax (*Pert.* 10,9), simply acquiesced in the face of pressure exerted by the guards. It is certainly remarkable that if Laetus deliberately planned to overthrow Pertinax, he had no candidate for the throne ready. It seems, in fact, as unlike his cool behaviour on the night of 31 December as could be imagined. Such inconsistency is of course not impossible in psychological terms. But it might be better to regard the accusation against Laetus in the same light as that against Albinus, as a piece of propaganda¹⁸³. In the light of the available evidence, and by analogy – or rather by contrast – with the events of 69, when Galba's murderer acted at once to secure the throne for himself, it would be best to regard the murder of Pertinax as an independent act by a group of discontented guardsmen¹⁸⁴. From the very outset, Severus proclaimed himself to be the avenger of Pertinax¹⁸⁵. The name Pertinax, assumed by Severus in 193, was retained throughout the reign¹⁸⁶. The continuance of the nomenclature may perhaps indicate some real attachment by Severus himself to the memory of Pertinax. Certainly, he should have had cause to be attached to it.

¹⁸² Dio 73,8; SHA *Pert.* 10 and 6,4–5.

¹⁸³ Cf. p. 266, above.

¹⁸⁴ It should be noted that Herodian (2,5) makes no mention of Laetus in his account of the murder. – Besides, Dio (73,9) has a very curious story, that Laetus had been executing guardsmen ostensibly on Pertinax' orders, which incited the other to get rid of Pertinax – a very curious way to carry out the conspiracy which he earlier (73,8,1) states that Laetus and the guards formed against Pertinax. The SHA state that a *factio* was prepared against Pertinax *per Laetum* and those whom Pertinax' behaviour had offended (*Pert.* 10,8). But in the account of the actual murder (11,1–13) the only comment on Laetus' behaviour is to note that – unlike Eclectus, who fought to the last defending Pertinax – Laetus slipped away to his house, *adoperto capite*. If he had organised the murder, why was this necessary? Finally, it should be noted that Didius Julianus at once appointed two new prefects on the recommendation of the guardsmen themselves. (SHA *Did. Jul.* 3,1).

¹⁸⁵ Cf. Dio 74,4–5. – Herodian 2,9,8 ff.; 2,10,1 ff.; 2,13,1,5 ff.; 2,14,3. – SHA, *Sev.* 5,4; 7,8–9.

¹⁸⁶ As far as the inscriptions are concerned; cf. Dessau 426 (the arch of the *Argentarii*: A. D. 203). 431 (Rome: A. D. 209) 436 (Gighthis: A. D. 209/211), etc. The name Pertinax is omitted on the coinage with the assumption of the title *Parthicus Maximus* – understandably, for there would hardly have been space for the full titulature. Later in the reign the titulature is drastically reduced on the coinage, to Severus Pius Augustus.

V

'Behind Severus there is no trace of an ›African party‹. Some of his supporters, it is true, were Africans'¹⁸⁷. This question deserves detailed investigation, as does the statement that 'none of the generals of the emperor (except Plautianus) can be demonstrated to have been his close associates before 193'¹⁸⁸. It is of course the case that no close associates of Severus before his accession (except Plautianus) are known with certainty, whether future generals of his or not. But some possibilities can be brought to light. If it can be shown that a substantial number of the men in key positions in early 193 were of African origin, on the one hand, or connected with Pertinax, on the other – or both – then there is surely a strong likelihood that there was indeed a *factio* with a strong African bias in its composition – a bias caused in part by the fact that Laetus was from *Thaenae*. I would argue that the following were definitely of African origin, and definitely governing military provinces at the beginning of 193: L. Septimius Severus (*Pannonia Superior*); P. Septimius Geta (*Moesia Inferior*); D. Clodius Albinus (*Britain*); for each of whom the evidence has been presented above.

The following were definitely governing provinces early in 193 and were very possibly of African origin: Q. Aurelius Polus Terentianus (*III Daciae*) and L. Naevius Quadratianus (legate of *III Augusta*)¹⁸⁹. Also possibly African – although his rather colourless nomenclature makes extreme caution necessary – was C. Valerius Pudens, probably governor of *Pannonia Inferior* in early 193¹⁹⁰. C. Memmius Fidus Julius Albius, from *Bulla Regia*, may have been governor of one of the *Germanies* in 193¹⁹¹. To these seven names may be added, as a possible partisan of Pertinax, that of L. Mantennius Sabinus, prefect of *Egypt*. One may add also, in this context, the African Asellius Aemilianus, proconsul of *Asia*, and P. Cornelius Anullinus, perhaps a patron of Severus, or a longstanding ally. In addition, there is reason to believe that both Severus and his brother may have been closely connected with Pertinax for many years. The identities of only six other provincial governors from this time are known or many be conjectured. One was Niger. The other were: L. Novius Rufus (*Hispania Tarraconensis*), P. Aelius Severianus Maximus (*Arabia*), Pollienius Auspex (*Dalmatia*), (? Vettule)n. Pompeianus (*Moesia Superior*) and P. Claudius Attalus Paterculianus (*Thrace*). The first two are certain, the other more doubtful. Novius Rufus was almost certainly Italian, as was certainly Pollienius Auspex, and – if he existed – Vettulenus Pompeianus. Attalus and Severianus Maximus were of Greek-speaking origin¹⁹².

From this point it is logical to go on to examine the identity of the men who served Severus in the civil wars of A. D. 193–197. By far the most senior of the Severan

¹⁸⁷ T. D. Barnes 98.

¹⁸⁸ T. D. Barnes 103.

¹⁸⁹ For Quadratianus cf. G. Alföldy, *Senat* 148. – For Terentianus, see above, p. 267 f.

¹⁹⁰ Cf. G. Alföldy, *Senat* 153. – To the items which he cites to support a possible African origin for Pudens, add E. Frézouls, *Les Ocratii de Volubilis d'après deux inscriptions inédites. Mélanges Piganiol* (Paris 1966) 233 ff., for M. Valerius Sassius Pudens, who married into the Ocratii, the family which was to produce the Severan senator T. Ocratius Valerianus (Barbieri, *Albo*, no. 811); note also, for another Valeria Pudentilla, *IL Afr.* 38 (*Thaenae*).

¹⁹¹ G. Alföldy, *Senat* 147.

¹⁹² Cf. G. Alföldy, *Senat* 133 (Severianus). 148 (Rufus). 150 (Auspex). 153 (Pompeianus). – For Attalus, cf. Barbieri, *Albo* no. 140, and *PIR*² C 795: in both places the reasonable view put forward by

marshals was Anullinus. Of the other senators active at this time, nothing useful can be discovered about Probus, Bassus and the man or men named Laetus¹⁹³. The other names to be considered are (in alphabetical order): Ti. Claudius Candidus, Ti. Claudius Claudianus, Claudius Gallus, L. Fabius Cilo, T. Flavius Secundus Philippianus, Q. Hadius Rufus Lollianus Gentianus, L. Marius Maximus, T. Sextius Lateranus, T. Statilius Barbarus, and Q. Venidius Rufus.

In the case of four of these men, their origin is certain. Ti. Claudius Claudianus was from Rusicade in Numidia¹⁹⁴. L. Fabius Cilo was from Spain¹⁹⁵. His career is known from beginning to end. But apart from the fact that he was consul designate at the time of Commodus' murder, the exact timing of his pre-Severan career is uncertain. But it should be noted that his posts between praetorship and consulate were the following: legate of XVI Flavia; proconsul of Narbonensis; prefect of the military treasury; and governor of Galatia (and, perhaps, at some stage when he was praetorius, the curae of Nicomedia and of various Italian towns). Proof is naturally lacking, but it would not be surprising if Cilo had been legate of a Syrian legion at the time that Severus was legate of IV Scythica; or if he had been proconsul of Narbonensis when Severus was legate of neighbouring Lugdunensis. However this may be, the succession of key posts that he was given from 193 onwards strongly suggests that he did indeed have ties of *amicitia* with Severus before that year. That is the way that men were chosen¹⁹⁶. Lollianus Gentianus was an Italian patrician. But, besides, he was from the family of Pertinax' original patronus¹⁹⁷. That surely was a key factor in his relations with Severus. Lateranus was also an Italian patrician¹⁹⁸. There is nothing whatever to link this man with Severus in the period before 193¹⁹⁹.

The origins of the other six men on the list cannot be ascertained with certainty. Secundus Philippianus, the governor of Lugdunensis expelled by Albinus, presumably in 196, was probably from a Greek-speaking province²⁰⁰. Claudius Candidus has an uninformative style of nomenclature. But a man of those names is recorded at Cirta²⁰¹, which is not far distant from Thibilis, home of the Marcan senator Q. Antistius Adventus. Now, as has been pointed out²⁰² the first two posts in the equestrian career of Candidus were held in Germania Inferior, and then in Britain, at the time when

A. Stein, *Römische Reichsbeamte in der Provinz Thracia* (Sarajevo 1920) 38, is rejected (that Attalus governed Thrace in 193 and that incompetence or treason in the face of an advance by Niger's forces was the reason for his expulsion from the senate by Severus, cf. Dio 79,3,5). But see now T. D. Barnes, *Philostratus and Gordian*. *Latomus* 27, 1968, 594 f.

¹⁹³ Cf. Barbieri, *Albo nos.* 436 & 343 (Probus). 297a (Julius Laetus) and 323a. – On Julius Laetus cf. also PIR² J 373. – A case can be made out for the view that there was only one Severan general named Laetus.

¹⁹⁴ Cf. PIR² C 834; Barbieri, *Albo no.* 147, etc.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. PIR² F 27; Barbieri, *Albo no.* 213, etc.

¹⁹⁶ It should be noted that as *dux vexillationum... per Italiam*, Cilo did not necessarily lead 'detachments to secure the Alpine passes against Clodius Albinus in the winter of 196/7' (T. D. Barnes 101) – it is equally possible that his task was to secure Rome itself, cf. Hasebroek 94.

¹⁹⁷ PIR² H 42; Barbieri, *Albo no.* 261.

¹⁹⁸ Barbieri, *Albo no.* 477.

¹⁹⁹ For the record, however, it should be noted that Lateranus' father was proconsul of Africa at the time when Severus returned there to settle his father's affairs (the first half of 171, cf. p. 260 f. above), cf. Thomasson II 84.

²⁰⁰ PIR² F 362; Barbieri, *Albo no.* 241; G. Alföldy, *Senat* 142.

²⁰¹ CIL VIII 7281.

²⁰² By J. Fitz, *Réflexions sur la carrière de Tib. Claudius Candidus*. *Latomus* 25, 1966, 831 ff.

Adventus was governing those provinces²⁰³ while the proconsul of Asia to whom Candidus was legate might well have been the Cirtensian senator C. Arrius Antoninus. There is certainly no warrant for the view that he 'was a Greek of Asia', as has been suggested solely on the basis of 'his posts in Asian cities' (one of the posts presumably referred to thus was in the Bithynian town of Nicomedia)²⁰⁴. If one were determined to assign an eastern origin to this man, reference to the tribune of XV Apollinaris, Ti. Claudius Candidus, recorded at Ancyra²⁰⁵, would seem a more promising line of enquiry. But on balance it seems preferable to regard him as a potential African.

Little certainty attaches to Claudius Gallus. But he too, it may be argued, could be from Numidia²⁰⁶. L. Marius Maximus is customarily regarded as an Italian²⁰⁷. But certain facts about this man, legate of I Italica in 193 and subsequently dux of an army drawn from the Moesian legions, point elsewhere. His tribe, Quirina, is found in only nine Italian towns compared with nineteen in Africa (which includes all the communities, such as Mastar, Rusicade, etc., in the Cirtensian federation). It is also widely found in Mauretania Caesariensis – eleven towns²⁰⁸. The association of the nomen Marius with Africa scarcely needs pointing out. Now it should be noted that a certain L. Marius Perpetuus was scribe quaestorius to a proconsul of Africa in the Antonine period, a man assumed reasonably enough to be grandfather of Maximus (whose full nomenclature, be it recalled, was L. Marius Maximus Perpetuus Aurelianus)²⁰⁹. Otherwise, one might note also the two tribunates held by Maximus, of XXII Primigenia in Upper Germany and III Italica in Raetia. If one assumes, which

²⁰³ Cf. my paper *The Roman Governors of Britain*. *Epigr. Stud.* 4 (1967) 64 ff. 74.

²⁰⁴ T. D. Barnes 101 and n. 113. – On the career of Candidus, cf. G. Alföldy, *Senat* 139, whose interpretation (similar to my own in my dissertation, vol. II 23–28) I accept.

²⁰⁵ CIL III 6752.

²⁰⁶ Cf. G. Alföldy, *Senat* 139.

²⁰⁷ Barbieri, *Albo* no. 1100; CP no. 168, etc.

²⁰⁸ Cf. Kubitschek 271 f.

²⁰⁹ Cf. CP no. 168, where H.-G. Pflaum, discussing the procurator Perpetuus, assumed the family to be from Rome, on the basis of the grandfather's post as scribe and the father's tenure of a minor pontificate. As far as the latter position is concerned, the cases recorded in CP do not support the argument that it was confined to 'Romains de Rome' (or even to Italians): nos. 68 (a man from Verona). 117 (M. Petronius Honoratus, on whose possible African origin see p. 259 f., above). 134 (C. Junius C. f. Quir. Flavianus whose tribe at least suggests Africa latter than Italy). 140 (L. Domitius L. f. Quir. Rogatus. This man's tribe and cognomen [650 out of 714 in Africa, according to Kajanto 297] point to Africa if anywhere). 141 (L. Volusius Maecianus – almost certainly Italian). 163 (L. Aurelius Nicomedes, an imperial freedman). 168 (Perpetuus himself). 183 (T. Flavius Germanus, from Praeneste). 194 (P. Livius Larensis – no real evidence for his origin). 248 (Macrinus – if one may believe SAH *Macr.* 7,1, which is the sole evidence for his having been pontifex minor. Macrinus was of course from Caesarea in Mauretania). 293 (-atus, no other details of his provenance recorded – but his friend was named L. Jul. Aur. Hermogenes, and he himself was clearly the friend – *amicus fidissimus* – of Elagabalus). – In CP I p. 499, n. 23, Pflaum lists the recorded cases, which include, apart from those listed above, only D. 140 (T. Statulenus Juncus, clearly from Pisa) and 3599 (-anus from Praeneste, very probably identical with Pflaum's no. 183). – As for the post of scribe quaestorius, the fact is that most of those recorded served in Rome, and there is no certainty that proconsuls of Africa would select men from the city and take them out to the province. On the contrary, one might well argue that proconsuls would find men from the province, whose knowledge of local conditions (e. g. dialects) would be useful. – For completeness one should note the following information about the distribution of the cognomen Perpetuus. Kajanto (274) notes the existence of 65 Perpetui and 15 Perpetuae; and 3 Christian men and 14 Christian women with these names. In North Africa there are 20 Perpetui (18 in CIL VIII + ILAfr. 162, Ammaedara and IRT 680, Lepcis Magna) apart from the scribe (ILAfr. 542), and 3 Perpetuae (1 in CIL VIII + IRT 645, Lepcis Magna; ILAfr. 66, Hadrumetum);

is reasonable, that Maximus was consul at more or less the average age – forty-two²¹⁰ – this would put the year of his birth ca. 156. This would imply that his tribunate fell in the middle and later 170s. Now it happens that the governors of Upper Germany in the second half of the 170s were Anullinus, who has already been much discussed, and, perhaps, P. Salvius Julianus (ord. 175)²¹¹. The latter was, it may be recalled, from a family domiciled in Africa Proconsularis²¹². However this may be, the governor of Raetia at the end of the reign of M. Aurelius was a man who may have been from Carthage, M. Helvius Clemens Dextrianus²¹³. Q. Venidius Rufus, who also had the names Marius Maximus L. Calvinianus²¹⁴ was presumably a kinsman of Marius Maximus. Now it has been asserted that the nomen Venidius is confined, or almost confined, to Italy²¹⁵. There are in fact eight, perhaps nine, examples in Africa, two or perhaps three of them Q. Venidii²¹⁶. T. Statilius Barbarus might have been African²¹⁷, but the question cannot be resolved.

When the civil wars were over, Africa did not escape the kind of purge that other provinces experienced²¹⁸. There is no reason why one should not believe that opponents of Severus were drawn in the main from adherents of Albinus²¹⁹. With the ending of civil war a new period begins. It is worth examining the identity of the provincial governors and other key personages in the period 197–211. From the study by G. Alföldy it becomes apparent that the proportion of Africans given posts of importance is strikingly high²²⁰.

and there are one Christian man (CIL) and 12 women (7 in CIL + ILTun. 1147, Cathage [with 4 cases] and 1710, Thabraca). Thus more than a quarter – nearly a third of the men – come from Africa, showing that although the name cannot be regarded as predominantly African, it is well represented there. – Finally one may note the names of the procurator Perpetuus' cornicularius: Q. Marcius Donatus. Cf. Kajanto 298 for the predominantly African distribution of Donatus.

²¹⁰ Cf. J. Morris, *Leges Annales* under the principate. *Listy Filologické* 87, 1964, 316 ff.

²¹¹ This was suggested in PIR S 104, but the basis was the identification with the man in CIL XIII 8159 (and cf. also XIII 7791), regarded by E. Ritterling, *Fasti des röm. Deutschlands* 68 f., as the ord. 148 (the jurist). But it should be noted that the ord. 175, who was indicted for conspiracy at the beginning of the reign of Commodus, was commanding an army at the time (SHA Comm. 3,2: *qui exercitibus praeerat*; cf. F. Grosso esp. 154 ff. for further details).

In view of the fact that Didius Julianus was implicated in the affair immediately after governing Lower Germany, the possibility that Salvius Julianus was governing the Upper province remains strong (cf. SHA Did. Jul. 2,1).

²¹² Cf. n. 126, above.

²¹³ PIR² H 70, cf. 69 (M. Helvius Clemens, M. f. Arn. domo Carthagine, an equestrian officer from the reign of Severus Alexander).

²¹⁴ Barbieri, *Albo*. no. 519.

²¹⁵ Barbieri, *Albo* no. 519, p. 120: 'il nome Venidius non si trova nelle provincie (ma cf. C. VIII 60)'.

²¹⁶ CIL VIII 60 (Hadrumetum: Q. Venidius Gallio) – noted by Barbieri, *Albo*, l. c.; Venidia Grattia, Q. Venidius Agricola, Q. Venidius Agricola Rust. f. (perhaps the same as the preceding man), L. Venidius Maximus, L. Venidius Rusticus (ILTun. 82 improving on ILAfr. 38, which also gives M. Venidius Florus); M. Venidius Fideus Rustici f. (ILTun. 85). All these are from Thaeanae (the home of Q. Aemilius Laetus). Also Venidia Quartilla (ILAfr. 284. Thurburbo Maius).

²¹⁷ T. D. Barnes 102 and n. 120. – Cf. Barbieri, *Albo* no. 483, for the career. – For the cognomen Barbarus cf. Kajanto 312 (41 out of 98 instances are from Africa).

²¹⁸ Cf. on this, briefly, T. D. Barnes 99, citing Tertullian, *Apol.* 35,11 and the procurator ad bona cogenda in Africa (CP no. 222).

²¹⁹ I may refer to my tentative suggestion that the procurator D. Clodius Galba may have been a kinsman of Albinus, spared by Severus and allowed to pursue a career, cf. n. 131, above.

²²⁰ I base the information tabulated below on G. Alföldy, *Senat* 156 ff., appendix III, except where otherwise stated.

1. *Britannia*: Three governors are known, of whom one, L. Virius Lupus was probably Italian, or perhaps from Gaul²²¹, one, C. Valerius Pudens, was perhaps from Africa, and the third, L. Alfenus Senecio, was definitely from Africa (from Cuicul in Numidia).
2. *Pannonia Superior*: Four governors are known, of whom L. Fabius Cilo was from Spain, Ti. Claudius Claudianus was from Africa (from Rusicade in Numidia), Egnatius Victor was perhaps from Africa (from Thibilis in Numidia) and Fulvius Maximus was perhaps from Italy.
3. *Germania Inferior*: Five governors are known, of whom C. Valerius Pudens was perhaps from Africa, as were also perhaps L. Marius Maximus and Q. Venidius Rufus²²²; while Fulvius Maximus was perhaps from Italy and the origin of L. Lucceius Martinus is quite unknown.
4. *Germania Superior*: Three governors are known, of whom C. Caesonius Macer was from Italy, as Q. Aiacius Modestus may also have been, while T. Statilius Barbarus might possibly have been from Africa²²³.
5. *Moesia Superior*: Two governors are known, of whom Q. Anicius Faustus was from Africa²²⁴, and L. Marius Perpetuus may have been also²²⁵.
6. *Moesia Inferior*: Five governors are known, of whom C. Ovinus Tertullus was probably from Africa, L. Aurelius Gallus was from a well-established (presumably Italian) consular family, C. Junius Faustinus *cet.* was from Africa, while the origins of Flavius Ulpianus and L. Julius Faustinianus are unknown.
7. *Dacia*: Five governors and one procurator *agens vice praesidis* are known, of whom C. Julius Maximinus was perhaps from Philippi, L. Octavius Julianus was probably from Africa (Hadrumetum), L. Pomponius Liberalis is of unknown origin, Mevius Surus was probably from Africa, as was Claudius Gallus (Numidia in the latter case). The procurator Herennius Gemellinus may have been Italian²²⁶.
8. *Cappadocia*: Three governors are known, of whom C. Julius Flaccus Aelianus was probably from Africa, and Claudius Hieronymianus was probably from an eastern province, while the other governor's name is incompletely known (L. M - - - ius).
9. *Syria Coele*: Two governors are known, of whom L. Alfenus Senecio was from Africa (from Cuicul in Numidia) and L. Marius Maximus was perhaps from Africa²²⁷.

To these two or three legion consular provinces tabulated by G. Alföldy, it will be convenient to add the other consular provinces – Hispania Tarraconensis, Dalmatia and Pontus-Bithynia.

²²¹ Cf. my paper, *The Roman Governors of Britain*. *Epigr. Stud.* 4 (1967) 79.

²²² Cf. p. 276 f., above.

²²³ Cf. p. 277, above, with n. 217.

²²⁴ As Dr. Azedine Beschouch was able to demonstrate in his communication to the Conference of Greek and Latin Epigraphy at Cambridge in 1967.

²²⁵ Cf. p. 276 f., above.

²²⁶ CP no. 254.

²²⁷ Cf. p. 276 f., above.

10. *Hispania Tarraconensis*²²⁸: Five governors are known, of whom Ti. Claudius Candidus was perhaps from Africa (Numidia), the origins of T. Flavius Titianus and M. Maecius Probus are unknown, while Q. Hadius Rufus *cet.* and M. Nummius Umbrius *cet.* were Italian.

11. *Dalmatia*: The only known governor, C. Fulvius Maximus, can be dated securely to the period 197/211 – he was probably Italian²²⁹.

12. *Pontus-Bithynia*: Six governors are known from this period, of whom Q. Tineius Sacerdos was no doubt Italian, Ti. Cl. Callipianus, Aelius Antipater, C. Claudius Attalus Paterculianus and M. Claudius Demetrius were from the Greek-speaking part of the empire, while Egnatius Victor may well have come from Africa²³⁰.

Taking these twelve consular provinces as a whole, one obtains the following results:

Total known	44	Certainly from Africa	5	Possibly from Africa	8
Origin unknown	7	Probably from Africa	6	Others	18

Excluding *Pontus-Bithynia*, with four Greek governors, from the calculation, the figures are as follows:

Total known	38	Certainly from Africa	5	Possibly from Africa	7
Origin unknown	7	Probably from Africa	6	Others	13

Thus out of 31 governors for whom an origin is either known or may be conjectured, 18 were certainly, probably or possibly from Africa. The five certain cases are: L. Alfenus Senecio (*Britain and Syria Coele*); Ti. Claudius Claudianus (*Pannonia Superior*), Q. Anicius Faustus (*Moesia Inferior*), C. Junius Faustinus (*Moesia Inferior*).

The six probable cases are: C. Ovinus Tertullus (*Moesia Inferior*), L. Octavius Julianus (*Dacia*), Mevius Surus (*Dacia*), Claudius Gallus (*Dacia*), C. Julius Flaccus Aelianus (*Cappadocia*), Ti. Claudius Candidus (*Hispania Tarraconensis*). The eight possible cases are: C. Valerius Pudens (*Britain and Germania Inferior*), Egnatius Victor (*Pannonia Superior and Pontus-Bithynia*), L. Marius Maximus (*Germania Inferior and Syria Coele*), Q. Venidius Rufus (*Germania Inferior*), T. Statilius Barbarus (*Germania Superior*), L. Marius Perpetuus (*Moesia Superior*).

As for the one-legion praetorian provinces, the results of G. Alföldy's enquiry are if anything even more striking: Out of the 18 men who governed *Numidia*, *Raetia*, *Noricum*, *Pannonia Inferior*, *Syria Phoenice* and *Arabia* in the years 197–211, the origins of one, Q. Scribonius Tenax, seem undiscoverable, but ten of the others in Alföldy's view may derive from Africa (or from *Numidia*), of whom six cases are quite certain. Another, L. Marius Perpetuus, governor of *Arabia*, is a possible case²³¹. One might conclude fittingly by noting the long tenure of office as praetorian prefect (197–205) by Severus' fellow-Lepcitanus and kinsman Plautianus²³², and the long

²²⁸ Cf. now G. Alföldy, *Fasti Hispanienses* 42 ff.

²²⁹ Cf. G. Alföldy, *Senat* 142, etc.

²³⁰ Barbieri, *Albo nos.* 501 + *Agg.*, 107, 4, 142, 150. – On Egnatius Victor cf. H.-G. Pflaum, *Historia* 4, 1955, 121 and (for the origin) G. Alföldy, *Senat* 141.

²³¹ Cf. p. 276 f., above on L. Marius Maximus.

²³² Cf. p. 264 f., above.

Egyptian prefecture of Subatianus Aquila, from Cuicul in Numidia²³³. Even if a number of the 'possible' or 'probable' Africans be rejected from this category, the degree to which Severus made use of his fellow-Africans does seem striking. It need not indicate any chauvinistic feelings on Severus' part – it will simply tend to demonstrate that this emperor, like most of his predecessors, made use of the men best known to him²³⁴.

²³³ Cf. Stein, *Präefekten* 111 ff. and CP no. 242. – O. W. Reinmuth, A working list of the prefects of Egypt. *Bull. American Soc. of Papyrology* 4, 1967, 75 ff., esp. 106–109, corrects the dating there given.

²³⁴ The arguments presented in this paper have been exploited and in some cases refined in the Paper cited in n. 22, above; and also in a forthcoming biography of Septimius Severus. – I wish to thank Dr. G. Alföldy for his valuable advice; also E. Badian, A. J. Graham, J. B. Leaning and R. Newbold, who offered comments on a draft version. None should be held responsible for any remaining errors of facts or interpretation.