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DIPARTIMENTO DI  
STUDI UMANISTICI

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STUDIES IN THE CLASSICAL TRADITION

QUADERNI

6

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Roma Tre-Press

2025

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# PPRET INSCRIPTIONS

INSCRIPTIONS PERTAINING TO THE PRAETORIAN  
PREFECTS FROM 284 TO 395 AD.

PAPER EDITION

PIERFRANCESCO PORENA,  
ELEONORA ANGIUS, ANDREA BERNIER,  
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GILDED STATUE BASE FROM TRAJAN'S FORUM (ROME)  
 IN HONOUR OF THE FORMER PRAET. PREFECT  
 FL. EUGENIUS REHABILITATED BY CONSTANTIUS II  
 AUG. AND JULIAN CAES.

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PROVENANCE AND LOCATION

Ancient city: Roma. Modern city: Rome (Italy). Province: Urbs. Diocese: Italiciana. Regional prefecture: Italia Illyricum Africa.

Provenance: found in the area of Trajan's Forum (explicitly stated by the inscription). Current location: Rome, Trajan's Forum, deposit of Basilica Ulpia, FT 14454. Ancient location: public space, Trajan's Forum.

TYPE AND MATERIAL OF THE SUPPORT AND TEXT LAYOUT

Type of support: gilded statue base. Material: marble.

Reuse of the inscribed field: no. Reuse of the monument: no. Opisthographic: no.

Dimensions of support: Height: 141 cm. Width: 90 cm. Breadth: 80 cm. Dimensions of letters: 3/3,5 cm.

Inscribed field: One inscribed field (*frons*), alignment of writing on left-hand edge; reduced line spacing and dense writing. Undamaged.

Writing technique: chiselled. Language: Latin. Rhythm: prose. Palaeography: late Roman monumental capitals.

TEXT CATEGORY: Honorary inscription for the former praetorian prefect Flavius Eugenius

## LATIN TEXT

Fl(avio) Eugenio, v(iro) c(larissimo), ex praefecto praetorio,  
 consuli ordinario designato, magistro  
 officiorum omnium, comiti domestico  
 ordinis primi omnibusque Palatinis  
 5 dignitatibus functo, ob egrægia (*sic*) eius  
 in rem publicam merita, huic  
 dd(omini) nn(ostri) Constantius Victor ac  
 Triumphator (*sic*) semper Augustus et  
 Iulianus nobilissimus Caesar  
 10 statuum sub auro in foro divi  
 Traiani, quam ante sub divo  
 Constante vitae et fidelissimæ  
 devotionis gratia meruit,  
 adprobante amplissimo senatu,  
 15 sumptu publico loco suo  
 restituendam censuerunt. ((hedera))

## CRITICAL EDITION

Edition based on *CIL* VI 1721.

5: *egregia*

8: *triumphator*

12: *Costante*, Conti, Bruggisser

16: *censerunt*, Conti

## TRANSLATIONS

– English: «To Flavius Eugenius, of clarissimus rank, former praetorian prefect, designated ordinary consul, master of all offices, domestic count of the first order, having served all dignities in the imperial Palace, for his distinguished public merits, our masters Constantius, Victorious and Triumphant always Augustus, and Iulianus the most noble Caesar, decreed the restitution, in its (original) place, of the gilded statue in the Forum of the divine Trajan that he had deserved before, under the reign of the divine Constans, in gratitude for his life and loyalest devotion, with the approval of the greatest Senate, at public expenses».

– French (Lassère 2005, p. 729): «À Flavius Eugenius, clarissime, ancien préfet du prétoire, consul ordinaire désigné, maître de tous les offices, comte domestique du premier ordre, ayant parcouru toutes les dignités palatines, en raison de ses éminents mérites envers l'État; pour lui, nos seigneurs Constance, Victorieux et Triomphant toujours Auguste, et Julien, nobilissime César, ont trouvé bon de rétablir à

son emplacement, avec l'approbation du très grand Sénat et aux frais de l'État, la statue dorée sur le Forum de Trajan qu'il avait méritée, sous le divin Constant, par sa vie et son fidèle dévouement».

(a very similar French translation by Bruggisser 2014, pp. 97 f.)

– Italian: «A Flavius Eugenius, chiarissimo ex prefetto del pretorio, designato console ordinario, maestro di tutti gli uffici, conte domestico del primo ordine che è asceso a tutte le dignità del Palazzo, per i suoi meriti straordinari verso lo stato, a lui i nostri signori Constantius, Vincitore e Trionfatore sempre Augusto, e Iulianus nobilissimo Cesare, decisero di ricollocare nel suo spazio (originale) la statua dorata nel Foro del divo Traiano, che in precedenza aveva meritato sotto il divo Constans per la sua vita e la sua fedelissima devozione, a spese pubbliche con l'approvazione dell'amplissimo senato».

#### THE INSCRIPTION AND ITS PREFECTS: CRITICAL COMMENTARY, UPDATING, OVERVIEWS

The statue base was most probably found in 16th Century in the area of Trajan's Forum, where it had stood in ancient times (as stated in the text of the inscription itself, ll. 10-11). Pirrus Ligorius (1513-1583), who sketched the inscribed monument, states: «Trovato dentro del monesterio del Spirito Santo, dove fu già il Foro Traiano, et hora è nella casa di Capranica» (cf. Orlandi 2008, p. 143). Although the monastery and church of the Augustinian nuns was founded in 1432 and partly rebuilt between 1566 and 1572, the base was probably found before that, since Martin Smetius (1525-1578) and Pirrus Ligorius copied ancient inscriptions in Rome before the middle of the 16th Century (for the Monastery, see Milella 1989, pp. 74-76, 91 and 99, who dates the finding of the statue base to the 17th Century; on the activity of the two humanists in Rome, see Stenhouse 2005, chap. 2). The monastery was part of the Capranica's urban estates and this explains the location of our base in the Cardinal Capranica's house in the second half of the 16th Century. Both Ligorius and Smetius, amongst others, attest to the base being placed in the cardinal's house (see introduction to *CIL* VI 1721). What happens next is unclear, all we know is that the base was eventually returned to the storerooms of Trajan's Forum, where E. Bormann (1842-1917) read it for the edition of the first tome of the sixth volume of *CIL*, published in 1876, and where it is still preserved today (deposit of Basilica Ulpia, FT 14454).

The inscription on the base from Trajan's Forum reveals that two monuments in honour of Eugenius succeed each other in that public space. The first one was made by Constans Augustus before the beginning of 350 AD, when the Augustus died, but in 350/352 AD that monument was destroyed

by the usurper Magnentius (ll. 10-16). The second monument, the one that has come down to us, was made by the emperors Constantius II Augustus and Julian Caesar between 355 and 360 AD (ll. 7-11 and 16). It is likely that both monuments in the prestigious forum were built at public expense and with the approval of the Senate of Rome (ll. 14-15, on *amplissimus senatus* see Bruggisser 2014; similarly PPRET 46; cf. PPRET 93 and 98). This 'rehabilitation' shows that Eugenius had been a devoted servant of the two *Augusti*, Constans and Constantius II, and an enemy of Magnentius.

The monument erected in honour of the former praetorian prefect Eugenius is the first case in any late antique Roman forum of a statue of a praetorian prefect being put back up, after a *damnatio*. Between 364 and 367 AD, a gilded statue in honour of the praetorian prefect Fl. Taurus was repositioned in Trajan's Forum by Valentinian I and Valens with the consent of the Senate, after the emperor Julian had had the monument removed; the original monument was made by Constantius II Augustus and Julian Caesar in 355/361 AD (see PPRET 46). In 431 AD, Virius Nicomachus Flavianus senior was rehabilitated, thirty-seven years after his suicide, following the victory of Theodosius at the River Frigidus (in September 394 AD). Thanks to the openly declared support of the emperor Valentinian III, a new monument, made by the man's grandson Dexter, was repositioned in Trajan's Forum (PPRET 93; for a private rehabilitation of the praetorian prefect Fl. Eutolmius Tatianus, see the posthumous verse, inscribed in his honour in Aphrodisias, Caria, PPRET 91; the senator was erased in PPRET 82, 83, 84, 85, 86 and 88). Eugenius' inscription is highly significant, not just because it is the first example of a praetorian prefect receiving a gilded statue in late antique Rome (post 284 AD), but also because it is the first example of a praetorian prefect whose monument was removed from an imperial forum, only to be put back again in the same forum, when the senator was eventually rehabilitated.

The monument in honour of Eugenius consisted of a gilded statue of the praetorian prefect standing atop an inscribed base. To have a gilded statue mounted within Rome's Trajan's Forum was the highest possible honour for a dignitary of the later Roman Empire, a tribute that cannot be overstated. The public monuments in honour of the praetorian prefects, which were removed and then reinstated not only show the importance of these dignitaries, but also the high esteem with which they were held by the emperors at that time. In the 4th Century, other monuments were put up by the emperors in honour of their praetorian prefects and these too were placed in Trajan's Forum (see PPRET 46, 51, 54, 62, 93, 98; on the inscribed monu-

ments in this highly prestigious forum in Late Antiquity cf. Bauer 1996, pp. 409-12; Niquet 2000, 18-20, 80-86, 230-32; Chenault 2012, pp. 130 f.). For references to gilded bronze statues in honour of praetorian prefects, erected in prestigious public spaces in this period (*sub auro, inaurata, auro condecorata*), see PPRET 27, 28, 31, 46, 51; for bronze statues see PPRET 24, 54, 57, 58.

In its first five lines, Eugenius' inscription contains his *cursus honorum* in reverse order. Since the sources do not allow us to precisely date of the various stages of his *cursus*, reconstructing his career is difficult. Moreover, the generic reference to a long career in the imperial palace (ll. 1-5) and the expressions *ex praefecto praetorio* (l. 1) and *consul designatus* (l. 2) have posed scholars further problems due to the difficulty of interpreting and dating these appointments. Eugenius did not receive any constitutions from the late Law Codes, although it is also true that the years of his high-level activity, circa 337/349 AD, are poor in constitutions (cf. Cuneo 1997). Eugenius had a long palatine career, but in the first half of the 4th Century, officials like these, who were not part of the high senatorial aristocracy and who were often new men, recruited for their rhetorical and juridical qualities, are not honoured in the cities. Notwithstanding his long and brilliant career, this high dignitary, so dear to the Constantinian family, fell victim to the reprisals of the usurper Magnentius. As a consequence he left no traces. He probably had a career similar to that of C. Caelius Saturninus *signo* Dogmatius, the only well known palatine official who ended his prefectorial career about ten years before Eugenius (see *CIL* VI 1704 = *ILS* 1214 = Di Stefano Manzella, Orlandi 1997, p. 267 = *LSA* 1266 = *EDR* 127936, and PPRET 19). The contemporary praetorian prefect, Philippus, held positions in the palace of Constantius II Augustus, but the sequence of his positions is also unknown (see PPRET 27; 28; 29; 30; 31). Constantine and his sons rewarded palatine bureaucrats by promoting them to the praetorian prefecture, but apart from Dogmatius and Eugenius, their careers are only known for the second half of the 4th Century (cf. Olszaniec 2013a, s.v. Cl. Antonius, Aurelianus, Ausonius, Iulius Catervius, Maternus Cynegius, Caesarius, Aemilianus Dexter, Domitianus, Eustathius (?), Eutychianus, Nicomachus Flavianus senior, Florentius, Florus, Claudius Mamertinus, Nebridius, Principius, Fl. Rufinus, Saturninius Secundus Salutius, Sibirius, Syagrius, Eutolmius Tatianus, Fl. Taurus, Mallius Theodorus, Trifolius, Viventius. In 370-399 AD, twenty-one praetorian prefects hold palatine positions, cf. Porena 2019, pp. 287 f.).

The elements of Eugenius' career which are not in doubt include: having been appointed to the highest offices, to the praetorian prefecture and to

the consulship by Constans Augustus, before January 350 AD; much appreciated by the Roman senatorial aristocracy, he continued to enjoy the favour of Constantius II Augustus after his brother's death.

A passage from Athanasius' *Apologia ad Constantium* (Athan. *apol. ad Const.* 3), in which the bishop recalls a hearing before Constans Augustus in the presence of Eugenius *magister* (see below), in an unspecified year, has been dated by Seeck (1906, p. 134; 1907) to 346 AD. Following this chronology, scholars have conjectured that Eugenius was at that time *magister officiorum* or *magister admissionum* and *magister officiorum* no later than 349 AD, under the emperor Constans. According to scholars, the emperor designated him ordinary consul in 350 AD, even though Eugenius must have already died before January 1<sup>st</sup> 350 AD. His praetorian prefecture (l. 1) would thus be not real but honorary (cf. *PLRE* I, pp. 292 f.; Clauss 1980, pp. 152 f.; De Bonfils 1981, pp. 20 f.; Petit 1994, p. 94; *CIL* VI, p. 4743; Lassère 2005, pp. 729 f.; Olszaniec 2013a, pp. 141-46; Moser 2018, pp. 115, 291, 306). Only Palanque (1933, pp. 28 f.) argued that Eugenius had actually held praetorian prefecture in Italy between 344 and 346 AD, but was eventually forced to retract his proposal (1955, p. 259). Vogler (1979, pp. 124-26) on the other hand, pleaded for Eugenius holding the praetorian prefecture in Africa between 347 and 350 AD. Some doubts about the chronology of Eugenius' career have been rightly raised by Castello (in Carlà, Castello 2010, pp. 339-41).

Anomalies in the reconstruction of Eugenius' career from the incomplete inscription in Trajan's forum are as follows:

1) an honorary praetorian prefecture in the mid-4th Century is too early; the *ex praefectis praetorio* attested in inscriptions of the 4th Century were actually prefects, not honorary ones (see *PPRET* 20, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 55, 61, 73, 74);

2) imperial legislation on rank and honorary appointments is not attested before 372 AD and may only concern issues of precedence from the time of Valentinian I onwards (although the Sixth Book of the Theodosian Code is incomplete). Approximately eighty imperial constitutions concerning rank in the Law Codes are concentrated in the years between 380 and 450 AD. Until Julian Augustus, honorary rank did not attain the level of *ex praefecto praetorio*, but remained at lower level of *clarissimus* (see above all, Schmidt-Hofner 2010; and also Olszaniec 2013a, pp. 9-22; Dillon 2015).

3) all thirty-five ordinary consuls who were also praetorian prefects in the 4th Century (from 285 to 394 AD) were effectively praetorian prefects, not honorary ones; they were rewarded with the eponymous consulship for

their merits as praetorian prefects, especially in the age of Constantius II and Constans Augusti (see *CLRE*, pp. 104 f.; 118 f.; 154 f.; 162 f.; 188 f.; 196 f.; 198 f.; 214 f.; 216 f.; 220 f.; 222 f.; 228 f.; 230 f.; 232 f.; 244 f.; 256 f.; 258 f.; 260 f.; 276 f.; 278 f.; 292 f.; 296 f.; 306 f.; 310 f.; 314 f.; 316 f.; 318 f.; 322 f.).

4) the twenty senators who had a statue erected to them in Trajan's Forum were serving officials, not honorary ones (list in Chenault 2012, p. 130); the praetorian prefects who had a statue put up in their honour in Trajan's Forum, close to that of Eugenius, were also serving prefects, not honorary ones (see *PPRET* 46, 51, 54, 62, 93, 98).

The author of this entry therefore believes that Eugenius was an effective praetorian prefect, much appreciated by the Senate of Rome. To reconstruct his career, we have to go back to the passage of Athanasius, which was erroneously dated by Seeck. In 356/357 AD, Athanasius wrote his *Apologia ad Constantium* in the Egyptian desert, addressing it directly to the emperor Constantius II (on Athanasius' journeys cf. Barnes 1993; Martin 1996, pp. 410-50, in particular p. 422, and 474-536; on this *Apologia* cf. Szymusiak 1987, pp. 9-77; Brennecke 2006; further bibliography in Athanasius Werke). In paragraph 3 the bishop defends himself against the accusation that he had insulted the emperor Constantius II in front of his brother Constans, an incident had apparently taken place when he had spoken at an audience some fifteen years earlier inside Constans' *consistorium* in the imperial palace in Milan. In this passage of the *Apologia*, Athanasius calls Eugenius as a witness, since in 356/357 AD, the senator was still alive and as *magister* he had heard the conversation between the bishop and the emperor Constans in the *consistorium*:

δύναται Φουρτουνατιανός ὁ τῆς Ἀκυληίας ἐπίσκοπος μαρτυρῆσαι περὶ τούτου, ἰκανός ἐστιν ὁ πατήρ Ὅσιος εἰπεῖν καὶ Κρισπίνος ὁ τῆς Πατάβων καὶ Λούκιλλος ὁ ἐν Βεραῶνι καὶ Διονύσιος ὁ ἐν Ἡλίδι καὶ Βικέντιος ὁ ἐν Καμπανία ἐπίσκοπος, καὶ ἐπειδὴ τετελευτήκασι Μαξιμῖνος ὁ Τριβέρεως καὶ Προτάσιος ὁ τῆς Μεδιολάνου, δύναται καὶ Εὐγένιος ὁ γενόμενος μάγιστρος μαρτυρῆσαι· αὐτὸς γὰρ εἰστήκει πρὸ τοῦ βήλου καὶ ἤκουεν ἅπερ ἤξιοῦμεν αὐτὸν καὶ ἅπερ αὐτὸς κατηξίου λέγειν ἡμῖν.

«Fortunatian, Bishop of Aquileia, can testify this, the father Hosius is able to say the same, as also are Crispinus, Bishop of Padua, Lucillus of Verona, Dionysius of Helis, and Vincentius of Campania. And although Maximinus of Treveri, and Protasius of Milan, are dead, yet Eugenius, who was Master of the Palace, can bear witness for me; for he stood before the veil, heard what we requested of the emperor, and what he vouchsafed to reply to us» (Greek text by Szymusiak 1987, p. 93, there French transl.; Engl. transl. by Robertson 1891, p. 666).

As Barnes rightly perceived (1993, p. 258, n. 13), Eugenius was alive in 356/357 AD and was *magister* in front of (not behind) the veil that separated emperor Constans from the bishops in the audience. It was the only position that legitimately allowed such dialogue to be heard inside the hall. Moreover, if Eugenius had had a long palatine career, as the inscription in Trajan's Forum states, and if his career had reached its peak around 349 AD, when he must have already been *ex praefecto praetorio* and *consul designatus*, then it is clear that around 342/345 AD, he must have been at least *magister officiorum* and not *magister admissionum*, which in the mid-4th Century in the West was a lower position than *magister officiorum*. The audience of Athanasius before Constans Augustus is not explicitly dated, but in par. 4 of the *Apologia*, Athanasius states that he attended an audience with Constans in Milan three years after his departure from Alexandria in the Spring of 339 AD. This chronology coincides with the dates deducible from the biography of the bishops who followed Athanasius to Milan. In 343 AD, Fortunatianus was ordained bishop of Aquileia, and in 346 AD bishops Maximinus of Trier and Protasius of Milan died. In our opinion the audience took place in Milan in November/December 342 AD – December 25<sup>th</sup> was the glorious *Decennalia* of the emperor Constans – when Eugenius was thus *magister officiorum*. We do not know any other *magistri officiorum* of Constans, and Eugenius may well have remained in this position for a long time (340/344 AD), and so may well indeed have attended the meeting of Athanasius with the emperor.

In our opinion Eugenius became praetorian prefect of Italy after May 28<sup>th</sup> 344 AD, when Furius Baburius Caecilianus Placidus, prefect of Italy-Illyricum-Africa united, was in office (*CTh* XII 1, 37, see PPRET 23 and 25), and before the end of 346 AD or the middle of 347 AD. Towards the end of 346 AD, Vulcarius Rufinus was appointed praetorian prefect, perhaps for Italy, but then only for Illyricum, before his consulate on January 1<sup>st</sup> 347 AD (see PPRET 32 and 33). In June 347 AD, Ulpian Limenius was appointed praetorian prefect of Italy [and Africa] and prefect of Rome at the same time (see PPRET 34; Vogler 1979, pp. 124-26, who thinks that Eugenius was serving as praetorian prefect in Africa between 347 and 350 AD). We assume therefore that in 344/345 AD Constans Augustus divided the large regional prefecture of Italy-Illyricum-Africa, separating Illyricum from Italy-Africa and appointing from then on two praetorian prefects for the two areas. The hypothesis is also supported by the silence over Eugenius' geographical jurisdiction as praetorian prefect in the inscription in Trajan's Forum. In 356/360 AD, when Constantius II and Julian Caesar rebuilt the monument

to Eugenius and had the inscription carved, the praetorian prefecture of Italy-Africa was distinct from the prefecture of Illyricum. Since this had been the case fifteen years earlier, during Eugenius' prefecture, it was deemed unnecessary to specify the geographical boundaries of his appointment. Two inscriptions to praetorian prefects in Trajan's Forum are significant. The inscription on the base of the reconstructed monument in honour of Fl. Taurus, erected by Valentinian I and Valens in 364/367 AD in Trajan's Forum (PPRET 46) presents the first surviving geographical specification in the epigraphic record, *per Italiam atque Africam* (ll. 5-6). Taurus was praetorian prefect of Italy and Africa between 355 and 361 AD. Then, between 364 and 367 AD, when the emperors placed the new statue to Taurus in Trajan's Forum, the 'central' praetorian prefecture was Italy-Illyricum-Africa, and so it was necessary to specify that Taurus' appointment, awarded five/ten years earlier, was limited to the dioceses of Italy and Africa. In 362 AD, the praetorian prefect Claudius Mamertinus, in the inscription from Concordia Sagittaria (PPRET 49), was unusually defined as the governor of Venetia and Histria *per Italiam et Inlyricum praefecto praetorio* (l. 8-9), because Italia and Illyricum were two different prefectures until 360 AD, being joined after 360 AD, as testified by Ammianus Marcellinus (Amm. XXVI 5, 5). Finally, Eugenius' activity at court and then as praetorian prefect of Italy explains his success at winning over the Senate of Rome, which wanted to honour him in Trajan's Forum.

In our opinion Eugenius' career can be reconstructed as follows: after first holding palatine functions with Constantine Augustus (313/337 AD), he was made *comes domesticorum* and counsellor of Constans Augustus (337/340 AD), collaborating closely with Constans in his dispute with Constantine II in 340 AD, which led to him becoming the *magister officiorum* of Constans (340/344 AD). In the Winter of 342/343 AD, he was at the audience of the bishop Athanasius in the *consistorium* of Milan, after which maybe in the second half of 344 AD and no later than the half of 346 AD, he became praetorian prefect of Italy. His work was appreciated by the Senate of Rome and in 347 AD, perhaps around the age of 60, after thirty to thirty-five years of service, he was allowed to retire, whereupon, between 347 and 349 AD, a gilded statue of him was put up in Trajan's Forum by Constans and the Senate. All that was missing was the consulship.

Between 340 and 350 AD, praetorian prefects were appointed ordinary consuls: 340 AD Septimius Acindynus (*CLRE*, pp. 214 f.), 341 AD Antonius Marcellinus (*CLRE*, pp. 216 f.), 343 AD Furius Baburius Caecilianus Placidus (*CLRE*, pp. 220 f.), 344 AD Domitius Leontius (*CLRE*, pp. 222 f.), 347

AD Vulcaci Rufinus (*CLRE*, pp. 228 f.), 348 AD Flavius Philippus (*CLRE*, pp. 230 f.), 349 AD Ulpian Limenius and Aconius Catullinus (*CLRE*, pp. 232 f.). Probably, when in 344/345 AD Eugenius became praetorian prefect, the non-imperial consulships were already intended for others: the noble prefect Vulcaci Rufinus in 347 AD, Philippus prefect of Constantius II in 348 AD, the prefects Limenius, already prefect of Constantinople, and Aconius Catullinus (praetorian prefect eight years earlier 340/341 AD) in 349 AD (note that the inscription from Trajan's Forum for L. Aur. Avianus Symmachus *signo* Phosphorius, *CIL* VI 1698, p. 4737 = *EDR* 123515 = *LSA* 342, cites that the urban prefecture was actually held in 364-365 AD in the first position, followed by the designated consulship, as in Eugenius' inscription). Eugenius, a newcomer, had to wait his turn. But the usurpation of Magnentius and the death of Constans (350 AD) prevented Eugenius from entering the ordinary consulship and his loyalty to Constans was punished by the usurper with the removal of the statue and its inscription in Trajan's Forum.

When in 355/360 AD Constantius II and Julian Caesar had the monument to Eugenius rebuilt in Trajan's Forum, the new inscription presented the formula «*ex praefecto praetorio*», a first in late antique epigraphy. While the Greek epigraphic formula ἀπὸ ἐπάρχων (πραιτωρίου/-ων) only indicates that the prefectorial mandate had ended when the inscription was written (see *PPRET* 52, 61, 73), in Latin epigraphy the formula «*ex praefecto praetorio*» is not used when the senator has simply been dismissed from the praetorian prefecture, nor when the senator has died (for inscriptions made after the praetorian prefect has been dismissed, see *PPRET* 10, 59, 70, 77, 79, 80, 92, 93; written after the death of the senator, see *PPRET* 10, 26, 64, 65, 66, 77; these texts show the title as *praefectus praetorio*). Moreover, in the epitaph of Fabia Aconia Paulina (*PPRET* 20) the formula is apparently used irrationally with regard to the deceased woman's father and husband, who were both praetorian prefects who ended their term of office before Paulina's death. Paulina's dead father, Aconius Catullinus, is called *ex praef(ecto)* (l. 2), while Paulina's dead husband, Vettius Agorius Praetextatus, is called *praef(ectus)* (l. 3). In our opinion, the formula «*ex praefecto praetorio*», common to private and public inscriptions, seems to be used after a political crisis or an usurpation, because some senators were affected by infamy and their rank in the *ordo dignitatum* was downgraded (basic *CTh* XV 14, *De infirmandis his quae sub tyrannis aut barbaris gesta sunt*). Senators who had not sided with the usurpers, or who had been downgraded in the *ordo* by usurpers and had been rehabilitated in their rank through the intervention of legitimate emperors, signalled this by inserting an indication of the legitimate praetorian prefecture

they had held. In fact, the formula «*ex praefecto praetorio*» appears in inscriptions evoking careers straddling usurpations or political crises or in texts written in the aftermath of those crises. In Paulina's epitaph, the formula refers to Aconius Catullinus, after the fall of Constantine II in 340 AD, but not to Preatextatus, who died before Maximus' usurpation involved Rome and Italy (PPRET 20); in his numerous inscriptions from Rome, the urban prefect Rufius Volusianus *signo* Lampadius, loyal to Constantius II and praetorian prefect at the end of the usurpation of Magnentius, uses this formula regularly (PPRET 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41). Viventius, prefect of Gaul in 368/371 AD, was entitled to this formula in Maximilla's epitaph, that was written in 389 AD during the purges following the death of the usurper Maximus (PPRET 55). Postumianus adopted this formula in a *tabella immunitatis* possibly from Rome, probably engraved during the same post-Maximus period (PPRET 74). Perhaps the formula «*ex praefecto praetorio*» highlighted the level of the senator in the *ordo dignitatum* in political phases in which the *ordo* had been revolutionised and then put back together again – differently – by the next legitimate Augustus. In our opinion, the formula «*ex praefecto praetorio*» was inserted in the titulature only by the loyalists of the reigning emperor after an usurpation (or political crisis), which changed the hierarchy of the senatorial aristocracy, starting with the usurpation of Magnentius (concluded in 353 AD).

In the years 355/360 AD, Eugenius' inscription in Trajan's Forum probably testifies to the beginnings of a demand for distinctions of rank within a western senatorial order that was already too large. It testifies also the 'epigraphic implications' of Constantius II's political relations with the western Roman aristocracy after the trauma of the long crisis caused by the usurpation of Magnentius. The reconstruction of Eugenius' monument in Trajan's Forum by Constantius II and the Senate of Rome shows the desire for a restoration of the political balance and exalts the legitimacy of the prefectorial mandate of a man who had been deeply devoted to the late Constantian Augustus. The same formula «*ex praefecto praetorio*» was not used in the inscription in honour of Taurus, also in Trajan's Forum, whose monument was restored by Valentinian I and Valens (PPRET 46). Although Julian had found the official undesirable and removed him, both the emperor and the official were legitimate: since the removal of Taurus' monument was not the result of a veritable usurpation, it was not necessary to reaffirm the legitimacy of his praetorian prefecture in the inscription.