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6

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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,
GIORDANA FRANCESCHINI, IRENE VAGIONAKIS

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INSCRIPTION IN HONOUR OF FABIA ACONIA PAULINA
FROM ROME, MENTIONING HER FATHER,
THE FORMER PRAET. PREFECT CATULLINUS,
AND HER HUSBAND, THE PRAET. PREFECT PRAETEXTATUS

EDITIONS: *CIL* VI 1780 (pp. 4759 f.) = *CIL* VI 31930 [by mistake indicated in Benevento and Ancona, *CIL* IX *223,6 and *CIL* IX *641,3]; *ILS* 1260; Duthoy 1969, p. 21, nr. 29; Vidman 1969, p. 216, nr. 450; Vermaseren 1977, p. 79, nr. 295; Niquet 2000, p. 244; Kahlos 2002, p. 223; Martinez-Maza 2003, p. 67; Bricault 2005, p. 564, nr. 501/0210; Dubosson-Sbriglione 2018, pp. 507 f., nr. 109

LINKS: *EDCS* 18100595; *EDR* 138111; *LSA* 1474; *TM* 570243

PLRE: I, pp. 187 f. and 722-24

PRAETORIAN PREFECTS: Aconius Catullinus; Vettius Agorius Praetextatus

DATE OF THE INSCRIPTION: 384/387 AD

PROVENANCE AND LOCATION

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

Provenance: Rome, first seen in the 15th Century in the church of the Santi XII Apostoli. Current location: lost. Ancient location: private space or building.

TYPE AND MATERIAL OF THE SUPPORT AND TEXT LAYOUT

Type of support: statue base. Material: marble.

Reuse of the inscribed field: no. Reuse of the monument: yes. Epistographic: no.

Dimensions of support: Height: unknown. Width: unknown. Breadth: unknown. Dimensions of letters: unknown.

Inscribed field: One inscribed field (*frons*). At the time of its transcription the text was undamaged. The text is known only from its manuscript tradition. The transcriptions preserve different line divisions: the layout of the lines of writing is not certain.

Writing technique: chiselled. Language: Latin. Rhythm: prose. Palaeography: unknown (no images available).

TEXT CATEGORY: Honorary inscription for Aconia Paulina

LATIN TEXT

Fabiae Aconiae Paulinae, c(larissimae) f(eminae),
 filiae Aconis (?) Catullini v(iri) c(larissimi) ex praef(ecto) et consule ord(inario),
 uxori Vetti Praetextati v(iri) c(larissimi) praef(ecti) et consulis designati,
 sacratae apud Eleusinam deo Iaccho Cereri et Corae,
 5 sacratae apud Laernam deo Libero et Cereri et Corae,
 sacratae apud Aeginam deabus, tauroboliatae, Isiacae,
 hierophantiae deae Hecatae, Gra<ia>e co<n>sacraeae deae Cereris.

CRITICAL EDITION

Edition based on *CIL* VI 1780. For the many variants in the transcriptions of the MSS see *CIL* VI 1780 apparatus.

2: MSS *Aconis* (*Aconi*, MS Alciatus and MS Pighius); *Aconis*, Vidman 1969, Vermaseren 1977, Bricault 2005, Dubosson-Sbriglione 2018, *EDR*; *Aconi*<*i*?>, Niquet 2000; *Aconi*, Kahlos 2002; *Aconi*[*i*], Martinez-Maza 2003; *Aconii*, *LSA*; *ord(inarii)*, Martinez-Maza 2003

3: *praef. <urbi>*, Niquet 2000

7: *Graeco sacraeae*, *CIL*; *hierophantiae deae Hecatae Graec[ae]* (vel *Graiae*), *consacraeae deae Cereris*, Mommsen (*CIL* VI 1780 apparatus); *hierophantiae Deae Cereris Graiae*, *consacraeae* – vel *co(n)sacraeae* – *Deae Hecatae*, Mitthof in *CIL* VI, p. 4759; *hierophantiae*, Martinez-Maza; *Graecosacraeae*, *ILS*, Vidman 1969, Vermaseren 1977, Bricault 2005, *LSA*; *Graeco* (!) <*con*>*sacraeae*, Niquet 2000; *Hecatae Graeco*, *sacraeae*, Kahlos 2002; *graeco sacraeae*, *EDR*, Martinez-Maza 2003; *hierophantiae deae Hecatae Grae(cae) consacraeae deae Cereris* *EDCS*; *Hecatae Grae(cae) sacraeae*, Dubosson-Sbriglione 2018; concerning our reconstruction of the text on line 7 see below (Commentary)

TRANSLATIONS

– English: «To Fabia Aconia Paulina, of clarissimus rank, daughter of Aconius Catullinus, of clarissimus rank, former prefect and ordinary consul, wife of Vettius Praetextatus, of clarissimus rank, prefect and consul designate, consecrated at Eleusis to the god Iacchus, Ceres and Cora, consecrated at Lerna to the god Liber, Ceres and Cora, consecrated to the goddesses at Aegina, tauroboliate, initiate of Isis, hierophant of the goddess Hecate, united to the worship of the Greek goddess Ceres».

(other engl. transl. by Croke, Harries 1982, pp. 105 f., nr. 65 = Erhart 2002, pp. 158 f., nr. 65, with notes; by Lefkowitz, Fant 1992², p. 306 = Kraemer 2004, p. 372)

– French (Bricault 2005, p. 564): «Pour Fabia Aconia Paulina, clarissime, fille du clarissime Aconius Catullinus, ancien préfet et consul ordinaire, épouse du clarissime Vettius Praetextatus, préfet et consul désigné, consacrée à Éleusis au dieu Iacchos, à Cérès et à Corè, consacrée à Lerne au dieu Liber, à Cérès et à Corè, consacrée à Égine aux déesses, tauroboliée, isiaque, hiérophante de la déesse Hécate, Graecosacranea de la déesse Cérès».

(Dubosson-Sbriglione 2018, p. 508): «À Fabia Aconia Paulina, femme clarissime, fille d'Aconius Catullinus, clarissime, ancien préfet et consul ordinaire, épouse de Vettius Praetextatus, clarissime, préfet et consul désigné, consacrée à Éleusis au dieu Iacchos, à Cérès et à Coré, consacrée à Lerne au dieu Liber, à Cérès et à Coré, consacrée aux déesses qui sont à Égine, tauroboliée, isiaque, hiérophante de la déesse Hécate Grecque, prêtresse de la déesse Cérès».

l. 7 (Porena): «admise au culte de la déesse grecque Ceres».

(other French transl.: Chastagnol 1991², p. 157, nr. 41B)

– Italian: «Per la chiarissima Fabia Aconia Paulina, figlia del chiarissimo Aconius Catullinus, già prefetto e console ordinario, moglie del chiarissimo Vettius Praetextatus, prefetto e console designato, consacrata a Eleusi al dio Iacchos, a Cerere e a Core, consacrata a Lerna al dio Libero, a Cerere e a Core, consacrata a Egina alle dee, tauroboliata, isiaica, ierofantria della dea Ecate, ammessa al culto della dea Cerere greca».

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

The inscription was copied in Rome in 1424 in the Basilica dei Santi XII Apostoli on the hillside of the Quirinal by the Italian merchant and traveller Ciriaco Pizzicollì (1391-1452) (see Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, ms. Parmensis 1191, f. 93v; Rome, Biblioteca Angelica, ms. Angelicanus 430, f. 25v; concerning Pizzicollì's visit to Rome, see Scalamonti, *V. Cyriaci* 55-59, pp. 46-57 Mitchell Bodnar Foss; cf. Colin 1981, pp. 39 f., 115). The basilica was damaged in the earthquake of 1348. Perhaps the inscribed support had been reused inside the church, or perhaps it was found during the restoration work, which began in 1417 at the behest of pope Martin V (1417-1431). The basilica was restored upon the initiative of a pope belonging to the Colonna family, who, from 1424 to 1431, often resided in the palaces surrounding the church (see Finocchi Ghersi 1992). Later, the inscription in honour of Paulina was placed in the collection of Cardinal Giuliano Della Rovere (1443-1513), who became pope Julius II in 1503 (see S. Magister 2000, p. 48; 2002, pp. 391-400,

487 f., 504-32, especially p. 521). Since 1471 the Cardinal had the ‘commenda’ of the basilica of the Santi XII Apostoli, around which he had the palaces restored (they became the property of the Colonna family in 1513): he lived in these palaces from 1474 and placed his collection of antiquities there. We do not know why in 1508 the monument inscribed for Paulina was not transferred to the nucleus of the future Vatican Museum collection by pope Julius II (i.e. the same Giuliano Della Rovere who became pope). No one seems to have copied the inscription when it was in the Della Rovere collection. Pizzicolti’s Latin text seems to be the only text copied by an autoptic reading and it soon found its way into numerous epigraphic repertories and publications written by learned Renaissance humanists (see *CIL* VI 1780 apparatus). The inscription may have disappeared before the transfer of the Della Rovere collection to the future Vatican Museums. It should be noted that as many as 19 of the 30 inscriptions attributed to this collection by S. Magister (2002, pp. 504-32) are lost.

The text, at the time of its transcription, was undamaged, but the layout of the seven lines which were copied by Pizzicolti is not certain: perhaps he has transcribed in six lines (ll. 2-7) a Latin text that had been chiselled on twelve (cf. Mitthof in *CIL* VI, p. 4759). The letters of the first line containing the onomastics of the honoree appear to be larger than in the others lines.

The inscription begins with the name of the honoured woman, Fabia Aconia Paulina (l. 1). This is followed by the patronymic and the name of her husband: Aconius Catullinus and Vettius Agorius Praetextatus, two famous senators who both reached the highest prefectures and the consulship, both of whom were dead when the inscription was written (ll. 2-3) (see below); finally, the list of the woman’s pagan consecrations and priesthoods has been included (ll. 4-7). The name of the dedicator(s) does not appear to have been added at the end of the inscription, while the pagan cults of the devout Paulina are emphasised. The silence about the dedicator(s), the exaltation of the father and husband, both high dignitaries, and the mention of pagan cults suggest that the text was engraved on the base of a statue in honour of the woman and that the monument was located in a Roman *domus* belonging to the couple (so Niquet 2000, p. 246). F. Mitthof and H. Niquet (*CIL* VI, p. 4759) think that Paulina’s base may have been placed next to the large base in honour of Praetextatus, now exhibited at Palazzo Altemps in Rome (see PPRET 79). It too lacks a dedicator. However, the inscription for Praetextatus seems to have been discovered in the Mattei families *horti* on the Caelian hill, which is a mile away from the ba-

silica of the Santi XII Apostoli on the Quirinal hill, where Paulina's inscription was seen and copied. That Paulina's monument was erected in a private room is confirmed by other surviving inscriptions in honour of Praetextatus and Paulina: their funerary altar comes from the family tomb (PPRET 77); the large base exhibited at Palazzo Altemps in Rome, was seen among the ruins of the late antique *domus* on the Caelian hill (PPRET 79). Not only does the inscription exhibited in Palazzo Massimo alle Colonne declare that the monument was located in a *domus*, it was indeed found in a residential area atop the Aventine hill (PPRET 80, l. 10). The *tabula ansata* (CIL VI 1781, cf. p. 4760 = EDR 111561) and two *fistulae* (CIL XV 7563 = EDR 149417), bearing Praetextatus and Paulina's names, which were found on the Esquiline hill in the 19th Century, almost certainly come from their urban *domus* (concerning the *domus* of Praetextatus and Paulina see Guidobaldi 1995d; Kahlos 2002, p. 25; for the *domus* that was probably inherited by Paulina on the Esquiline hill, see Ensoli 2000, pp. 279 f.; Carucci 2008; concerning the inscriptions of Praetextatus and Paulina that have been found in Rome, see Niquet 2000, pp. 237-52; a probable epigraphic eulogy of Praetextatus was found in a *villa* in Tuscia, see Berti, Cecconi 1997 = AE 1997, 526). In 4th Century AD Rome the aristocratic wives of praetorian prefects were often celebrated by inscribed monuments both in their own homes and in those of their relatives (see the inscription in honour of Tyrrania Anicia Iuliana, PPRET 70). The adult children of Sex. Petronius Probus and Anicia Faltonia Proba celebrated both their father and mother with individual inscribed monuments in their *domus*: they had (at least) five elegant monuments built for their illustrious parents, all of which must have been erected sometime after the beginning of 395 AD (see PPRET 65 and 66). There are further comparisons between the epigraphy of the pagan Fabia Aconia Paulina and the christian Anicia Faltonia Proba. In similar periods (resp. 384/385 AD and 388/395 AD) the two noble women organised the funerals and epitaphs of their husbands; both were then buried in the same sarcophagus (Paulina in a cinerary urn?) with their respective husbands. Paulina composed or commissioned the long epitaph in verse which appears on the funerary altar, that commemorates both her and her beloved husband Praetextatus (see PPRET 77); Proba certainly played a role in the composition of the double epitaph of her husband Probus (see PPRET 64). In the second half of the 4th Century AD women of senatorial rank had inscriptions carved and received them in the great houses and sumptuous tombs of their families in Rome.

THE LADY, HER FATHER AND HER HUSBAND

Fabia Aconia Paulina (or Aconia Fabia Paulina in PPRET 77, side a, l. 19; or Fabia Paulina in *CIL* VI 2145 = *ILS* 1261 = *LSA* 1510 = *EDR* 151259) was a noble lady belonging to the pagan high aristocracy of Rome. She was the daughter of Aconius Catullinus (l. 2; see *PLRE* I, pp. 187 f., and below); she was probably born between 320 and 328 AD if she married in 344 AD the nobleman Vettius Agorius Praetextatus, who seems to have had no other wives (l. 3; see PPRET 77, side a, l. 23, see Mustakallio 2021, pp. 84 f.). The couple had children (see PPRET 77, side d, l. 35), whose names we do not know, but the family onomastics are still attested in the 6th Century (see *PLRE* II, pp. 736 f., 848, 901-4, 908). After 40 years of what was apparently happily married bliss, in which all pagan religious activities, both public and private, were shared, in December 384 AD, Paulina solemnly celebrated the funeral of her husband. It is not known how much longer she lived for (on the epitaph she composed, or commissioned to celebrate their marriage and the sharing of the sepulchre, see PPRET 77; concerning Paulina, see *PLRE* I, p. 675; Kahlos 1994 and 2002, pp. 23-27, 62, 71-78, 81 f., 146-50, 155-57; Piérart 1997; Polara 2000, pp. 110-24; Martínez-Maza 2003; Smolak 2004; Consolino 2006, pp. 118-34, 137 f.; Cameron 2011, pp. 150, 153, 158, 301-7, 387, 478-80, 725; Di Luzio 2017; Massa 2018, pp. 72-74; Campedelli 2022). Symmachus recalls an illness that struck her while she was at her *villa* in Baiae (*Symm. epist.* I 48). In 385 AD, immediately after the death of her husband Praetextatus, Paulina supported the decision of the chief Vestal (*Virgo Vestalis Maxima*), Coelia Concordia (*PLRE* I, pp. 218 f.; Frei-Stolba 2003; Conti 2003, p. 217; Rüpke 2005, II, p. 901; Lizzi Testa 2007c, pp. 256 f.), to erect a monument to Praetextatus in Rome on behalf of the college of the Vestal Virgins. Since the monument's erection was a novelty that did not adhere to the *mos*, Symmachus objected to it, but his protests were in vain (*Symm. epist.* II 36, with Ceconi 2002, pp. 266-81). While the Senate was petitioning the emperor Valentinian II for monuments to be put up in honour of Praetextatus, the chief Vestal erected one herself to him in a public place (*Symm. rel.* 12 and 24). Paulina thanked the chief Vestal, Concordia, dedicating a monument to her in turn, the inscription of which was found on the Esquiline hill (*CIL* VI 2145 = *ILS* 1261 = *LSA* 1510 = *EDR* 151259). In the same period, Jerome polemically ridiculed the claim made by the widow Paulina that her dead husband Praetextatus had ascended to the stars, stating that if the pagan senator was anywhere, he was in hell (*Hier. epist.* 23, 3 and 39, 3; for this polemic, see McRae 2021; concerning the notion of astral ascension in late

antique thought, see Selter 2006). Paulina's public glorification of her husband had clearly stirred up passions in Rome, not just with her fellow pagans, but with the Christians as well.

In ll. 1-2, Pizzicolti's transcription shows a difference between the *gentilicium* of the daughter Paulina, Aconia and that of her father Catullinus, Aconis, which seems to be the genitive of Aco. In 1887, R. Cagnat stated that Aco (genitive Aconis) was the family name of two men named Catullinus: the proconsul of Africa in 317/318 AD (*PLRE* I, p. 187 Catullinus 2, based on *CIL* VIII 14453, l. 2: [*procon*]sulatu Aconis Cat[ullini]), who is Paulina's grandfather, and his son, the praetorian prefect of 341 AD and consul of 349 AD, who is Paulina's father (*PLRE* I, p. 187 Catullinus signo Philomatius 3, based on *CIL* II 2635, and on *Chronogr. a.* 354, *MGH AA IX, chron. min.* I, p. 68: Aco Catullinus with his *signum* Philomatius; the possibility of Aco being a *signum* is of course excluded). Cagnat's interpretation is by no means certain. The family name Aconius /-ia is attested over sixty times in Latin epigraphy, while Aco after the first name is rare. Paulina's family name is Aconia, and it is excluded that her father might have been an Aco / Aconis, an anomalous family name without the suffix -ius (an Aco perhaps father of an Aconia in *SupplIt.* XXIII, p. 376, nr. 31 = *AE* 2007, 503, 1st Century AD). Documents issued by the imperial chancellery use the family name Aconius for Paulina's grandfather and father during their public offices (*CTh* VIII 12, 2; VI 22, 2; XII 1, 24). In our opinion Aco must be an abbreviation of the *gentilicium* Aconius (so also Jacques 1986, pp. 155 f.).

Aconius Catullinus (*PLRE* I, p. 187), father of Paulina (l. 2), was *praeses Gallaciae* before 338 AD, *vicarius Africae* at least between July 27th 338 AD (*CTh* XV 1, 5) and August 29th 339 AD (*CTh* XI 36, 4). He is attested as praetorian prefect by only one constitution, *CTh* VIII 2, 1 = *CTh* XII 1, 31, of June 24th 341 AD. He became prefect of Rome between July 6th 342 AD and April 11th 344 AD (*Chronogr. a.* 354 above, see Chastagnol 1962, pp. 121-23) and ordinary consul in 349 AD (*CLRE*, pp. 232 f.). With regard to Catullinus' praetorian prefecture, A. Chastagnol (1968, pp. 335 f., 352) and later *PLRE* consider that he was the successor of Antonius Marcellinus (*PLRE* I, pp. 545 and 548 f.) in the prefecture of Italia Illyricum Africa (Crete is a province of the prefecture of Marcellinus, see *PPRET* 21). If Catullinus was prefect of Italia Illyricum Africa, the prefectural inscription of Traiana in honour of Constans Augustus (*PPRET* 22), made by three prefects, in order Antonius Marcellinus (Italia Illyricum Africa), Domitius Leontius (Oriens) and Fabius Titianus (Galliae), must be dated to between February 25th and June 24th 341 AD. According to Chastagnol and *PLRE*, after February 25th Titianus

left the urban prefecture to become the prefect of Gaul; the prefect Catullinus, who is not among the prefect dedicators of the monument in Traiana, is attested on June 24th as praetorian prefect and would have succeeded Marcellinus. This hypothesis is weakened by two elements: Marcellinus was praetorian prefect and ordinary consul in 341 AD (*CLRE*, pp. 216 f.) and it is unlikely that he would have been dismissed from the prefecture in the first months of his consulship; there is no anniversary of the emperor Constans in the first half of 341 AD to justify the prefectorial monument of Traiana. As also assumed by Barnes (1987, p. 18; 1992, p. 256; Davenport 2020, pp. 226 f.), Catullinus in our opinion was praetorian prefect of Gaul in 340/341 AD, before Fabius Titianus (who is first attested on June 30th 343 AD in *CTh* XII 1, 36). Catullinus took office sometime after August 29th 339 AD, when he was still *vicarius Africae*; he may have been appointed praetorian prefect of Gaul by Constans after his victory over his brother Constantine II in April 340 AD or by the latter. Catullinus later obtained the prefecture of Rome on July 6th 342 AD. At the time of the creation of the Traiana inscription in honour of emperor Constans, Catullinus had been dismissed and replaced by Titianus at the head of the prefecture of Gaul: the Traiana inscription can thus be dated to between the Summer of 341, after Catullinus' dismissal, and the end of 342 AD. In this period, on December 25th 342 AD the *Decennalia* of Constans began, and on September 9th 341/342 AD, both his and his brother Constantius' *Quinquennalia* as Augusti were celebrated.

In l. 3 Paulina's famous husband, Vettius Praetextatus, is mentioned with the *gentilicium* and *cognomen*, without the *signum* Agorius. The pagan senator was probably born between 310 and 320 AD, married Paulina in 344 AD, and enjoyed a long and full career, albeit a slow one. After having held the traditional magistracies of Rome in his youth, *quaestor candidatus* and *praetor urbanus*, he was *corrector Tusciae et Umbriae*, then *consularis Lusitaniae* in the decade 350/360 AD, before 362 AD. Between 362 and 364 AD, he held a long proconsulate of Achaia at the behest of the emperor Julian (Groag 1946, pp. 45-48); he became prefect of Rome between the Summer 367 and the Summer 368 AD (Chastagnol 1962, pp. 171-78), governing the city with impartiality even during the clashes between the Christian supporters of Damasus and Ursinus (Kahlos 2002, pp. 115-23; Lizzi Testa 2004, pp. 159-69; Reutter 2009, pp. 31-56). Fifteen years of *otium* then followed, years which were steeped in cultural and religious activity, during which he carried out numerous diplomatic missions on behalf of the Senate of Rome to the courts of the emperors Valentinian I and Gratian. The senator and his wife

became a shining model of traditional behaviour for the western aristocracy. In 383 or 384 AD, shortly before or after the assassination of the emperor Gratian, Praetextatus was appointed praetorian prefect. Scholars believe that his prefecture was that of Italia Illyricum Africa (on the possibility that his prefecture consisted of two separate posts, see Porena 2020a, pp. 113-17 and Porena 2020b, p. 156, and see PPRET 77). In the Autumn of 384 AD Praetextatus left the praetorian prefecture and was appointed consul for the following year (*CLRE*, pp. 304 f.), but he died suddenly in December 384 AD (the senator is remembered as the appointed consul in all inscriptions made in his honour after his death, because it was the most prestigious honour of his career; on Praetextatus and his career, see in brief Seeck 1883, pp. LXXXIII-XC; Nistler 1910; Ensslin 1954b; *PLRE* I, pp. 722-24; Kuhoff 1997; extensively Kallhos 2002; see also PPRET 77). His death shook the inhabitants of Rome, arousing conflicting manifestations of obsessive exaltation of the deceased, or condemnation by Christians (on Praetextatus' death see Vera 1983a, pp. 140-42, who dates the death between December 8th and 10th 384 AD; Cecconi 2002, pp. 266-81, who dates it to between October and the first half of November 384 AD; see also Kahlos 2002, pp. 151-71). The inscription in honour of Paulina lists the cults practised by the woman, but it highlights only her husband's (and father's) civil career, not their public priesthoods and the practice of foreign and initiatic cults, because the centre-figure of the monument is Paulina.

The reconstruction of Praetextatus' career allows us to date the inscription. The senator died as *consul designatus* and the inscription remembers him thus: the *terminus post quem* of the base is the end of 384 AD. There are two possibilities: either Praetextatus was still alive when the inscription was prepared, i.e. between September and November 384 AD, or more likely that the inscription was made after the senator's death, not before 385 AD. The *terminus ante quem* is difficult to establish, and could be placed before or after the death of the widow, Paulina. As mentioned, F. Mitthof and H. Niquet (*CIL* VI, p. 4760) suggest the year 387 AD, because they deem Praetextatus' base in Palazzo Altamps (see PPRET 79), dated in February 387 AD, to be simultaneous, even though the creation of the two monuments at the same time is not certain.

The reference to the prefectures (both Roman and praetorian) and to the ordinary consulship, which were held by Paulina's father and her husband alike, underlines the equal prestige of the two families. It therefore explains why Paulina was not inferior in rank to her husband (PPRET 77, side d, l. 1: [*Sple*]ndor parentum). There is a well-chosen and deliberate parallelism be-

tween the synthesis of the two *cursus honorum*, of the father Catullinus and of the husband Praetextatus: both are remembered in the function of *praefectus*, without the specification *praetorio* or *urbi*, and of *consul ordinarius* (the first effective, the second designated). However, the offices of *praefectus* are indicated with different formulas: *ex praef(ecto)* for Catullinus, *praef(ecti)* for Praetextatus. The *ex praefectis praetorio* attested in the 4th Century inscriptions were actually prefects, not honorary ones (see PPRET 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 48, 55, 61, 73, 74). While in Greek epigraphy the 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 written after dismissal from the praetorian prefecture, see PPRET 10, 59, 70, 77, 79, 80, 92, 93; for those written after the death of the senator, see PPRET 10, 26, 64, 65, 66, 77; these texts give the title as *praefectus praetorio*). Moreover, in the inscription in honour of Paulina, the formulas *ex praef(ecto)* and *praef(ecti)* seems irrational. 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 (see above all *CTh XV 14, De infirmandis suo 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 the rank obtained by the previous legitimate emperor, signalled this by inserting the indication of the legitimate praetorian prefecture they had held as «*ex praefecto praetorio*» (see PPRET 48). Perhaps Aconius Catullinus was appointed praetorian prefect by Constantine II, or by Constans and retained the rank after the war in April 340 AD; or, more probably, he retained his rank after the usurpation of Magnentius in 350/353 AD at the behest of Constans (in 349 AD Catullinus was consul). Praetextatus, who was appointed praetorian prefect by Gratian before August 383 AD or shortly thereafter by Valentinian II, died before Italy and its aristocracy were embroiled in the usurpation of Maximus (it is also possible that the inscription in honour of Paulina was engraved before Maximus invaded Italy, as PPRET 79).

INITIATIONS INTO THE MYSTERIES

In ll. 4-7 – more than half of the inscription – Paulina's intense religious life is glorified. Unlike her husband, she was excluded from the priesthood

and from active participation in the public cults of the city of Rome (the exclusion was based on her sex, see Scheid 1991 and 2003; Raepsaet-Charlier 2018). However, she appears to be intimately associated with initiatic cults at the behest and under the guidance of Praetextatus, an expert in *religio* and also an initiate (see Kahlos 2002, pp. 62-90; concerning the late cults and mysteries in Rome see Alvar 2008; Cameron 2011, pp. 132-72; Sfameni 2012; Bremmer 2014, pp. 154-65). The pagan couple projects a sense of harmony and concord, while at the same time obtaining visibility and social consensus, by carrying out their religious duties together. In these mystery cult practices Praetextatus is the master and Paulina his devoted disciple (see PPRET 77, side b, l. 4; side d, ll. 16-17; 13-17; 22-32). This constructive relationship overcomes any male/female contradictions within the religious sphere (see North 2013). The inscription from the basilica of Santi XII Apostoli and the funerary altar celebrate Paulina and proudly list her religious achievements. It should be noted that they are divided on the one hand into initiations received in Greece into Hellenic mysteries, and on the other to mysteries celebrated in Rome and linked to the Phrygian cults of the Magna Mater, Egyptian cults of Isis, Greek cults of Hecates and Demeter, which probably adhered to the Greek rite.

Paulina's first three consecrations took place during her visits to Greece and may perhaps be related to her stay in Greece from 362-364 AD. At that time Praetextatus was *proconsul Achaiae* and was engaged in the protection of cults involving night sacrifices, which had been forbidden by the emperor Valentinian I (see Zos. IV 3, 2-3; Plassart 1926, pp. 444-46, nr. 85 = *AE* 1928, 48 = *SEG* XV (1958), 322 = *LSA* 839 = Roesch 2007, nr. 418; Himer. *or.* 51 *Colonna* refers to Praetextatus' relatives who would have accompanied him to Greece, including almost certainly his wife Paulina). The inscription recalls the ancient and glorious Greek locations of those mystery cults:

– l. 4 *sacratae apud Eleusinam deo Iaccho, Cereri et Corae* (= PPRET 77, side a, ll. 5-6 husband: *sacratus Libero et Eleusi[ni]is*; l. 20 wife: *sacrata Cereri et Eleusiniis*): in Eleusis, in Attica North of Athens, the mystery rites of the cycle of Demeter (= Ceres) and Persephona (= Corae) took place, in which Roman aristocrats and emperors had been participating for centuries (see Massa 2020; on Iacchus see Jiménez San Cristóbal 2012).

– l. 5 *sacratae apud Laernam deo Libero et Cereri et Corae*: in Lerna, in Argolis immediately South of Argos, Paulina was initiated into rites for Demeter Prosymna and Dionysios Saotes. The rites commemorated the descent of the two deities into Ades to look for Persephone (daughter of Demeter) and Semele (mother of Dionysios). They were rites linked to those of

Eleusis (on this set of Dionysian mysteries, see Brenner 2014, pp. 1-20 e 100-9).

– l. 6 *sacratae apud Aeginam deabus*: these mysteries took place on the island of Aegina in the Saronic Gulf (*Pausan.* II 30, 2; Brenner 2014, pp. 97-99); the inscription on the *frons* of the funerary altar explains that the multiple (triple) deity worshipped by Paulina is Hecate (PPRET 77, side a, l. 21: *sacrata apud Aeginam Hecatae*). The goddess connected the passage between the three worlds (sky, earth, underworld) and so bore therefore the Latin epithet *Trivia* and the Greek epithet Τριποδῖτις or Τριμύρφη. Hecate is represented in the figurative arts either with three bodies or three heads, but she is identified with the goddess (*deabus*) pertaining to the three levels: Selene/Luna (Moon) on the sky, Demeter or Artemis/Diana on the earth, and the chthonian Hecate in the lower world (see Serafini 2015). The rites of the triple Hecate consisted of purifications and expiations. These mysteries to which Paulina was consecrated in Aegina are different from the Hecate priesthoods performed by Praetextatus and Paulina in Rome (below l. 7). The triple nature of the cult, which multiplies the figure of the goddess, is also indicated in the poem engraved on the funerary altar (PPRET 77, side d, l. 28: *trina secreta*).

Then in the last two lines the inscription lists the mystery cults to which Paulina was initiated in Rome:

– l. 6 *tauroboliatae* (= PPRET 79, col. 1, l. 5 husband: *tauroboliato*; PPRET 77, side a, l. 6 husband: *tauroboliatus*; l. 22 wife: *tauroboliata*; side d, ll. 26-27: *tu Dindymenes Atteos qui antistitem teletis honoras taureis consors pius*): the sacrifice of a bull which was linked to the cult of the Magna Mater (Cybele/Dindymene with Attis) was widely practised by the 4th Century pagan aristocracy of Rome (concerning two altars to Attis dedicated in Rome and Ostia by the former praetorian prefect Volusianus Lampadius, *tauroboliatus*, and on the obligation to repeat the rite every twenty years, see PPRET 36 and 40). The cult of Cybele / Magna Mater was added the civic cults of Rome in 204 BC and the *simulacrum* of the goddess had a temple on the Palatine. The ritual of the *taurobolium* only formed part of the worship of Cybele from the 2nd Century AD onwards (the earliest known altar dates to 160 AD, *CIL XIII* 1751). However, from the 4th Century AD, the *taurobolium* became a private ‘elitarian’ cult, reserved for members of the Roman aristocracy (concerning the *taurobolium*, see McLynn 1996; Van Haepere 2014; for the cult of the Magna Mater in Rome and in the West, see Sfameni Gasparro 1985; Dubosson-Sbriglione 2018; Van Haepere 2019a).

– l. 6 *isiacae* (= PPRET 79, col. 1, l. 7 husband: *neocoro*; PPRET 77, side a, l.

7: *neocorus*): this is the only evidence of Paulina's devotion to Isis, although Praetextatus was νεωκόρος, the high-priest of the temple of (Isis and) Serapis in Rome (Bricault 2014a, pp. 348 f.; 2018, p. 184, n. 163). In the inscription chiselled on the funerary altar there is no mention of Paulina's religious initiation to the cult of Isis. Probably that cult was too widespread and common and Paulina's role not so eminent and 'elitarian' to be mentioned in the epitaph. The reception of Isis into the metropolis of Rome and among the Romans was contradictory: the presence of this 'foreign and popular goddess' in Rome and in Roman cities was extensive, both in the *domus* and in publicly accessible sanctuaries, and was nourished by exoticism and 'Egyptomania' (see Versluys 2007; Swetnam-Burland 2015), but the goddess remained alien to the pantheon of gods in the city of Rome (concerning the cult of Isis, see Bricault 2013; 2014b; Brenner 2014, pp. 110-25; Bonnet, Bricault, Gomez 2020; regarding the Isiac presence in Roman cities from the Republican Age to Late Antiquity, see Versluys 2004; Scheid 2009; Coarelli 2018; on the topography of this cult in the 4th Century AD city of Rome, see Ensoli 2000). The worship of Isis, a mother, protectress, and giver of life goddess, shows similarities with the Roman Ceres and Cybele, and with Hecate (the two inclined torches), whose rites are evoked in the famous diptych of the Nicomachi and Symmachi (see PPRET 92). In this diptych the two priestesses who perform the rites show great affinity with Paulina's pagan attitudes.

– l. 7 *hierophantriae deae Hecatae* (= PPRET 79, col. 1, l. 8 husband: *hierofantae*; PPRET 77, side a, l. 7: *hierophanta*; l. 22 wife: *hierophantria*; side d, l. 28: *Hecates ministram trina secreta edoces*): in Rome Paulina and her husband Praetextatus are priest and priestess of the cult of Hecate, a deity who did not belong to the pantheon of city gods (concerning hierophantes/-tria, «the who shows the sacred», see Clinton 2004; Van Haepere 2004).

In l. 7 the text transcribed by Pizzicolli appears incorrect: GRAECO SACRANEAE does not make sense and is never attested. The integration that I have proposed (see above and below) follows and develops a suggestion of F. Mitthof and H. Niquet (see *CIL* VI, p. 4759): the adjective *graeus* is superfluous for the preceding deity, Hecate, whereas it is appropriate for the following deity, Ceres; the word *sacraneus/a* does not exist, while *consecraneus* or *consacraneus/a* (in epigraphic texts) is well attested (see *ThlL* IV, col. 378) and indicates those who are united by participation in the same cult, even initiatory, or in a sodality, but are not the priests of that cult. Furthermore, in Paulina's poem engraved on the back of the funerary altar (PPRET 77, side d, l. 29) she claims to be initiated by her husband into the *sacra Cereris-*

que Graiae: the expression on the inscription in honour of Paulina by the Basilica of Santi XII Apostoli seems to me to be identical to the expression on the altar and indicates Paulina as *συνμύστης* = *consecraneae* of the cult of Greek Ceres, i.e. the Greek Demeter. After the list of Paulina's initiations into Greek or foreign cults in Rome, the inscription's author probably wanted to mention in l. 7 Paulina's participation in the cult of Demeter in Rome, but worshipped with a Greek rite, and different from the Roman goddess Ceres (for a similar interpretation, see Fowden 1998, p. 552). It is highly plausible, therefore, that Pizzicolli interpreted the text engraved on the stone at l. 7 in a personal way, misreading the original and correct: *hierophantiae deae Hecatae, Graiae consecraneae deae Cereris*, and transforming the words *Graiae consecraneae* into the untenable *Graeco sacraneae*.

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