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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,
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CONTENTS

PIERFRANCESCO PORENA, <i>Introduction</i>	1
ABBREVIATIONS	8
1. <i>Inscription in honour of Diocletian Aug. from Oescus by the praet. prefects Hannibalianus and Asclepiodotus (289/291 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	11
2. <i>Inscription in honour of Constantius I Caes. from Brixia by the praet. prefects Asclepiodotus and Hermogenianus (296/298 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	16
3. <i>Fragmentary inscription in honour of Maximian Aug. from the Roman Forum by two praet. prefects (298/305 AD) - P. PORENA</i>	21
4. <i>Inscription (1) in honour of Maxentius from the Roman Forum by his praet. prefect Rusticianus (310/311 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	27
5. <i>Inscription (2) in honour of Maxentius from the Roman Forum by his praet. prefect Rusticianus (310/311 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	31
6. <i>Fragmentary inscription in honour of a tetrarchic Caesar (Maximinus Daia?) from Perinthus Heraclea by a praet. prefect (307/308 AD) - P. PORENA</i>	35
7. <i>Constantine's 'Quinquennalia' medallion possibly engraved by his praet. prefect Vitalianus (310 AD) - P. PORENA</i>	42
8. <i>Inscription for Constantine and Licinius celebrating the reconstruction of Tropaeum Traiani supervised by the praet. prefects Petronius Annianus and Iulius Iulianus (314/315 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	46
9. <i>Inscription in honour of Crispus Caes. from Ephesus by the praet. prefects Petronius Annianus and Iulius Iulianus (317, 326 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	51
10. <i>Inscription in honour of Iunius Bassus Theotecnius from Aqua Viva (Falerii Novi) mentioning his father's praet. prefecture (364 AD) - P. PORENA</i>	55
11. <i>Fragment of inscription mentioning probably Iunius Bassus praet. prefect from Tarracina (318/334 AD) - P. PORENA</i>	64
12. <i>Inscription (1) in honour of Constantine Aug. from Ancyra by his praet. prefect Fl. Constantius (324/327 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	68
13. <i>Inscription (2) in honour of Constantine Aug. from Ancyra by his praet. prefect Fl. Constantius (324/327 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	73
14. <i>Building inscription celebrating a construction in the Aila harbour (Palae-stina), undertaken by Constantine and supervised by his praet. prefect Fl. Constantius (324/326 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	76
15. <i>Greek dedicatory epigram of the Great Church of Antioch built by Con-</i>	

CONTENTS

<i>stantine under the supervision of his praet. prefect Fl. Constantius (325/327 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	80
16. <i>Building inscription of the Ain Rchine arch (Proconsularis) under the supervision of the collegium of five praet. prefects (332 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	85
17. <i>Inscription in honour of Constantine II Caes. (in Latin) from Tubernuc by the collegium of five praet. prefects (Antioch's twin inscr.) (336 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	90
18. <i>Inscription in honour of Constantine II Caes. (in Greek) from Antioch by the collegium of five praet. prefects (Tubernuc's twin inscr.) (336 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	94
19. <i>Inscription in honour of the praet. prefect C. Caelius Saturninus 'signo' Dogmatius from Rome by his son C. Caelius Urbanus (334/336 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	99
20. <i>Inscription in honour of Fabia Aconia Paulina from Rome, mentioning her father, the former praet. prefect Catullinus, and her husband, the praet. prefect Praetextatus (384/387 AD) - P. PORENA</i>	103
21. <i>Greek inscription in elegiac distichs honouring the praet. prefect Antonius Marcellinus by the 'boule' of Gortyn (340/342 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	117
22. <i>Inscription in honour of Constans Aug. from Augusta Traiana by the collegium of three praet. prefects (341/342 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	122
23. <i>Two fragments of prefectural letters (in Greek) from Delphi addressed to the Apollo's priest Felicianus by the collegium of three praet. prefects (342/344 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	127
24. <i>Bronze statue base in honour of the praet. prefect Domitius Leontius decreed by the Council of Phoenicia and made by the 'ordo' of Berytus with imperial permission (344 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	133
25. <i>Inscription in honour of the praet. prefect Furius Baburius Caecilianus Placidus from Puteoli by the 'Regio Palatina' (343/346 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	138
26. <i>Bilingual epitaph in Latin (a) and Greek (b) hexameters of the praet. prefect Maiorinus from Buṣr al-Hariri (Syria) by his nephew (346/365 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	144
27. <i>Gilded statue base from Chytri (Cyprus) in honour of the praet. prefect Fl. Philippus by Constantius II Aug. and Gallus Caes. (352 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	153
28. <i>Copy of a letter by Constantius II Aug. to Marinus ('vicarius Asiae?') from Ephesus ordering that a series of gilded statues be erected in honour of the praet. prefect Fl. Philippus (352 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	161
29. <i>Greek inscription in honour of the praet. prefect Fl. Philippus by the 'boule' of Perge (352 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	171

CONTENTS

30. *Monumental Greek inscription on the architrave of the Theatre of Hierapolis (Phrygia) commemorating its restoration supervised by the praet. prefect Fl. Philippus (352 AD) - E. ANGIUS* 174
31. *Speech of Constantius II Aug. to the Senate of Constantinople containing a request to erect a series of gilded statues in honour of the praet. prefect Fl. Philippus (fr. from Perge) (352 AD) - P. PORENA* 181
32. *Inscription in honour of the praet. prefect Vulcaci Rufinus set up in the vestibule of his 'domus' in Rome by the people of Ravenna (347/352 AD) - E. ANGIUS* 204
33. *Inscription celebrating the enlargement of the 'horrea' in Savaria by the praet. prefect Vulcaci Rufinus (346/350 AD) - E. ANGIUS* 212
34. *Fragmentary inscription relating to building works in Portus (Ostia) probably made by the praet. and urban prefect Ulpius Limenius (347/349 AD) - P. PORENA* 217
35. *Greek Inscription in honour of a praet. prefect of Constantius II Aug. and Julian Caes. by the region of Batanea (Phoenices Libanensis) (358/360 AD) - P. PORENA* 223
36. *Dedication of an altar for the Magna Mater and Attis in Rome by the son of the praet. prefect C. Ceionius Rufius Volusianus 'signo' Lampadius (390 AD) - E. ANGIUS* 229
37. *Inscription commemorating the restoration of the Baths of Caracalla supervised by the former praet. prefect C. Ceionius Rufius Volusianus 'signo' Lampadius (365 AD) - E. ANGIUS* 237
38. *Inscription from the Baths of Caracalla in honour of the emperor Valentinian I by the former praet. prefect C. Ceionius Rufius Volusianus 'signo' Lampadius (365 AD) - E. ANGIUS* 242
39. *Inscription commemorating the restoration of the 'Castellum Aquae Claudiae' in Rome by the former praet. prefect C. Ceionius Rufius Volusianus 'signo' Lampadius (365 AD) - E. ANGIUS* 247
40. *Dionysus' statue base from 'Attideum' at Ostia (Rome) by the former praet. prefect C. Ceionius Rufius Volusianus 'signo' Lampadius (365/377 AD) - E. ANGIUS* 252
41. *Inscription from Ostia (Rome) commemorating the restoration of thirteen bridges by the former praet. prefect C. Ceionius Rufius Volusianus 'signo' Lampadius (365 AD) - E. ANGIUS* 258
42. *Inscription of a public building burned down in Paphos (Cyprus) then restored by the praet. prefect Strategius Musonianus (354/358 AD) - E. ANGIUS* 264
43. *Greek inscription in honour of the praet. prefect Strategius Musonianus*

CONTENTS

	<i>by the 'boulè' and the 'dèmos' of Hierapolis (Phrygia) (354/358 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	271
44.	<i>Greek inscription on the architrave of the 'Dodekatheon' of Hierapolis (Phrygia) commemorating a restoration supervised by the praet. prefect Strategius Musonianus (354/355 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	275
45.	<i>Inscription in honour of the praet. prefect Q. Fl. Maesius Egnatius Lollianus 'signo' Mavortius by his son Placidus Severus and his daughter-in-law Antonia Marcianilla from his 'domus' on the Aventine hill (Rome) (355/356 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	281
46.	<i>Gilded statue base from Trajan's Forum (Rome) in honour of the praet. prefect Fl. Taurus rehabilitated by the emperors Valentinian I and Valens (364/367 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	288
47.	<i>Greek inscription in honour of Hilarion, wife of the praet. prefect Vindaeonius Anatolius, by the 'boulè' of Perge (357/360 AD) - E. ANGIUS</i>	295
48.	<i>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. (355/360 AD) - P. PORENA</i>	302
49.	<i>Inscription of the emperor Julian on the 'cursus publicus' from Iulia Concordia made by the praet. prefect Claudius Mamertinus (362/363 AD) - A. BERNIER</i>	313
50.	<i>Inscription in honour of the emperor Julian from Ancyra by the praet. prefect Secundus Salutius (362 AD) - A. BERNIER</i>	319
51.	<i>Gilded statue base from Trajan's Forum (Rome) in honour of the praet. prefect Secundus Salutius by Valentinian I and Valens (366/367 AD) - A. BERNIER</i>	323
52.	<i>Greek inscription in honour of the praet. prefect Secundus Salutius by the 'boulè' of Pisidian Antioch (367/368 AD) - A. BERNIER</i>	328
53.	<i>Julian's constitution (CTh I 16, 8) addressed to the praet. prefect Secundus Salutius and fragments of the prefectorial edict from Amorgos (362 AD) - A. BERNIER</i>	332
54.	<i>Inscription in honour of the praet. prefect Fl. Sallustius from Trajan's Forum (Rome) by the provincials of Hispaniae (364 AD) - A. BERNIER</i>	341
55.	<i>Burial inscription for Maximilla from Rome made by Luceia, daughter of the praet. prefect Viventius (389 AD) - A. BERNIER</i>	346
56.	<i>Fragmentary constitution of Valentinian I addressed to the praet. prefect Probus from Trinitapoli (Apulia, Italy) (368/375 AD) - P. PORENA</i>	353
57.	<i>Greek inscription in elegiac distichs honouring the praet. prefect Probus from Athens by the 'proconsul' An(a)tolius (368/382 AD) - P. PORENA</i>	372

CONTENTS

58. Greek inscription in honour of the praet. prefect Probus from Gortyn decreed by the Cretan 'koinòn' and made by the 'consularis' Aristides (372/375 AD) - P. PORENA	381
59. Inscription in honour of the praet. prefect Probus from Rome (Pincio) made by the Council of Venetia and Histria (378 AD) - P. PORENA	391
60. Inscription in honour of the praet. prefect Probus from Capua made by the city 'regiones' and 'collegia' (381/383 AD) - P. PORENA	413
61. Greek inscription in honour of the former praet. prefect Probus from Gortyn decreed by the 'boulè' and made by the 'consularis' Asclepiodotus (382/383 AD) - P. PORENA	426
62. Fragmentary inscription in honour of the praet. prefect Probus from Trajan's Forum in Rome (384/390 AD) - P. PORENA	438
63. Inscription in honour of the praet. prefect Probus from Verona (385/390 AD) - P. PORENA	448
64. Burial verse inscription of the praet. prefect Probus from Rome (St. Peter's basilica) (390/394 AD) - P. PORENA	465
65. Inscription in honour of the praet. prefect Probus from Rome by his sons Anicius Probinus and Anicius Probus (395/405 AD) - P. PORENA	484
66. Inscription in honour of the praet. prefect Probus from Rome by his son Anicius Hermogenianus Olybrius and by his daughter-in-law Anicia Iuliana (395/405 AD) - P. PORENA	492
67. Inscription in honour of Valentinian I, Valens and Gratian from Cherson by the praet. prefect Domitius Modestus (370/375 AD) - A. BERNIER	500
68. Greek inscription relating to building works in Nakida (Niğde, Cappadocia) made by the praet. prefect Domitius Modestus (370/377 AD) - A. BERNIER	506
69. Fragmentary inscription commemorating a restoration in Aquileia supervised by a praet. prefect, likely Decimius Hilarianus Hesperius (379 AD) - A. BERNIER	510
70. Inscription in honour of Tyrrania Anicia Iuliana, wife of the praet. prefect Q. Clodius Hermogenianus Olybrius, from Rome (379/395 AD) - A. BERNIER	521
71. Opisthographic collar of a slave of the praet. prefect Q. Clodius Hermogenianus Olybrius from one of his properties in Rome (377/378 AD) - A. BERNIER	530
72. Another opisthographic collar of a slave of the praet. prefect Q. Clodius Hermogenianus Olybrius from one of his properties in Rome (377/378 AD) - A. BERNIER	536
73. Greek inscription in honour of the former praet. prefect Fl. Hypatius from	

CONTENTS

	<i>Gortyn, decreed by the Cretan 'koinòn' and made by the 'consularis' Asclepiodotus (382/383 AD) - P. PORENA</i>	542
74.	<i>'Tabella immunitatis' of the former praet. prefect Postumianus from Rome (384/400 AD) - A. BERNIER</i>	552
75.	<i>Inscription in honour of the praet. prefect Maternus Cynegius from Alexandria (Aegyptus) by Theodosius and Arcadius (384/387 AD) - A. BERNIER</i>	558
76.	<i>Greek inscription in elegiac distichs honouring the praet. prefect or the 'vicarius' Aphthionius decreed by the 'boulè' of Gortyn and made by (the 'consularis?') Aristides (376/377 AD) - P. PORENA</i>	564
77.	<i>Funerary altar of the praet. prefect Vettius Agorius Praetextatus and of his wife Aconia Paulina, from Rome (384/385 AD) - P. PORENA</i>	571
78.	<i>Fragmentary inscription in honour of the praet. prefect Vettius Agorius Praetextatus from the Roman Forum (384/385 AD) - P. PORENA</i>	597
79.	<i>Inscription in honour of the deceased praet. prefect Vettius Agorius Praetextatus from Rome (Pal. Altemps) (387 AD) - P. PORENA</i>	606
80.	<i>Inscription in honour of the deceased praet. prefect Vettius Agorius Praetextatus from Rome (Pal. Massimo alle Colonne) (384/450 AD) - P. PORENA</i>	619
81.	<i>Greek translation of a constitution of Valentinian II addressed to the praet. prefect Principius from Anaia (Asia) (386/450 AD) - A. BERNIER</i>	642
82.	<i>Greek inscription in honour of Honorius from Aphrodisias by the praet. prefect Fl. Eutolmius Tatianus (388/392 AD) - G. FRANCESCHINI</i>	653
83.	<i>Greek inscription in honour of Arcadius from Aphrodisias by the praet. prefect Fl. Eutolmius Tatianus (388/392 AD) - G. FRANCESCHINI</i>	660
84.	<i>Greek inscription in honour of Valentinian II from Aphrodisias by the praet. prefect Fl. Eutolmius Tatianus (388/392 AD) - G. FRANCESCHINI</i>	666
85.	<i>Greek inscription in honour of Valentinian II, Theodosius I, Arcadius, Honorius from Side by the praet. prefect Fl. Eutolmius Tatianus (388/392 AD) - G. FRANCESCHINI</i>	672
86.	<i>Greek inscription in honour of Valentinian II, Theodosius I, Arcadius, Honorius from Antinoupolis by the praet. prefect Fl. Eutolmius Tatianus (388/392 AD) - G. FRANCESCHINI</i>	677
87.	<i>Greek (verse?) inscription in honour of the praet. prefect Fl. Eutolmius Tatianus from Sidyma (391/400 AD) - G. FRANCESCHINI</i>	683
88.	<i>Greek inscription from Myra (Lycia) on (weights and) measures on the model established by the praet. prefect Fl. Eutolmius Tatianus (388/392 AD) - G. FRANCESCHINI</i>	699
89.	<i>Greek verse inscription in honour of Proculus, son of the praet. prefect Fl. Eutolmius Tatianus, at the mouth of the River Lycus (Phoenicia) (382/383 AD) - G. FRANCESCHINI</i>	712

CONTENTS

90. Greek inscription commemorating the works on the Canopus canal (Aegyptus) carried out by the will of the praet. prefect Fl. Eutolmius Tatianus (388/390 AD) - G. FRANCESCHINI	722
91. Greek verse inscription in honour of the praet. prefect Fl. Eutolmius Tatianus from Aphrodisias by a descendant of the same name (rehabilitation) (430/450 AD) - G. FRANCESCHINI	731
92. Posthumous inscription in honour of Virius Nicomachus Flavianus senior former praet. prefect from Rome by Q. Fabius Memmius Symmachus (402 AD) - G. FRANCESCHINI	744
93. Posthumous inscription rehabilitating the praet. prefect Virius Nicomachus Flavianus senior from Trajan's Forum (Rome) by Appius Nicomachus Dexter (431 AD) - G. FRANCESCHINI	754
94. 'Locum' in the Flavian Amphitheatre in Rome reserved to the praet. prefect Virius Nicomachus Flavianus senior (380/394 AD) - G. FRANCESCHINI	774
95. Burial inscription of Saturninus, 'centenarius' in the office of the praet. prefecture of Illyricum, from Concordia Sagittaria (376/450 AD) - A. BERNIER	778
96. Fragmentary inscription in honour of a praet. prefect from the Roman Forum (400/450 AD) - A. BERNIER	783
97. Inscription in honour of a praet. prefect decreed by the 'ordo' and people of Leptis Magna (330/400 AD) - A. BERNIER	793
98. Fragmentary inscription in honour of a praet. prefect from Trajan's Forum in Rome (340/450 AD) - A. BERNIER	799
99. Fragments of a monumental inscription in honour of a ruler by a praet. prefect, found in the Roman Forum (312/337 AD?) - A. BERNIER	805
100. Fragmentary inscription in honour of a ruler from Berytus by a praet. prefect (340/345?) - A. BERNIER	811
101. Fragmentary Greek inscription in honour of a praet. prefect by the 'boulè' and the 'dèmos' of Laodicea on the Lycos (284/450 AD) - A. BERNIER	818

BIBLIOGRAPHY	823
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PROSOPOGRAPHICAL INDEX, by ANDREA BERNIER

I. Praetorian Prefects mentioned in the Greek or Latin text of PPRET inscriptions	939
II. Praetorian Prefects not mentioned in the Greek or Latin text of PPRET inscriptions	941
III. Other civil, military and ecclesiastical dignitaries	942

FRAGMENTARY INSCRIPTION IN HONOUR
OF A TETRARCHIC CAESAR (MAXIMINUS DAIA?)
FROM PERINTHUS HERACLEA BY A PRAET. PREFECT

EDITIONS: De Rossi 1888, p. 369, n. 4; *ILS* 665; *CIL* III 12326; Porena 2021b
LINKS: *EDCS* 31200897; *EDCS* 31300267; *EDH* 068273; *LSA* 1125; *TM* 495338
PLRE: I, p. 1003 (...us) - REVISED
PRAETORIAN PREFECTS: [- -]us
DATE OF THE INSCRIPTION: 307/308 AD

PROVENANCE AND LOCATION

Ancient city: Perinthus-Heraclea. Modern city: Marmara Ereğlisi (Turkey - Türkiye Cumhuriyeti). Province: Europa. Diocese: Thracia. Regional prefecture: not regional before 326 AD.

Provenance: Ciriaco Pizzicolli (Ancona 1391-Cremona 1452) copied the inscription on the site of the ancient Thracian city of Perinthus-Heraclea at the end of July 1444 (cod. Vat. Lat. 5250, f. 3r). Already lost in the second half of the 19th Century. Current location: lost (between 1444 and 1902). Ancient location: public space.

TYPE AND MATERIAL OF THE SUPPORT AND TEXT LAYOUT

Type of support: statue base (cod. Vat. Lat. 5250, f. 3r). Material: marble.

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

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

Inscribed field: One inscribed field (*frons*). Fragmentary because of two lacuna and two possible erasures.

Writing technique: chiselled. Language: Latin. Rhythm: prose. Palaeography: unknown.

TEXT CATEGORY: Honorary inscription for a tetrarchic Caesar, perhaps Maximinus Daia

LATIN TEXT

a) Transcription from the manuscript of the «Commentaria» by Ciriaco de' Pizzicolti (cod. Vat. Lat. 5250, f. 3r)

Diis auctoribus ad rei publicae amplificandae
 gloriam procreato pi n(ost)ro iovio
 maximo
 ti nobilissimo Caesari VS vcm praef.
 5 praetor.

b) Edition from *CIL* III 12326

DIIS · AVCTORIBVS
 AD · REI · PVBLICAE · AMPLIFICANDAE
 GLORIAM PROCREATO
 5 PI ////////////////////////////////////NOSTRO
 IOVIO MAXIMO
 ////////////////////////////////////TI
 NOBILISSIMO CAESARI
 ////////////////////////////////////VS
 V · eM · PRAEF · PRAETOR

c) Reconstruction by Porena 2021b

Diis auctoribus
 ad rei publicae
 amplificandae
 gloriam procreato
 5 pi[issimo domino]
 nostro Iovio
 [[Galerio Valerio]]
 [[Maxim[in]o]]
 [[victoriosissimo?]]
 10 et nobilissimo Caesari
 [[- -]]us v(ir) em(inentissimus)
 praef(ectus) praetor[io]
 [d(evotus) n(umini) m(aiestati)q(ue) eius].

CRITICAL EDITION

See below.

TRANSLATIONS

– English (Text c): «By the authority of the gods generated and destined to the glory of expanding the empire, to the most pious our master Iovius, Galerius Valerius Maximinus, [most victorious ?] and most noble Caesar, [- -]us, praetorian prefect of eminentissimus rank, devoted to his divine spirit and majesty».

– French (Texte c): «Par l'autorité des dieux engendré et destiné à la gloire de l'expansion de l'empire, au très pieux seigneur notre Jovien, Galerius Valerius Maximinus, [très victorieux ?] et très noble César, [- -]us, le très éminent préfet du prétoire, dévoué à sa divinité et à sa majesté».

– Italian (Testo c): «Per l'autorità degli dèi generato e destinato alla gloria di espandere l'impero, al piissimo signore nostro Giovio, Galerius Valerius Maximinus, [vittoriosissimo ?] e nobilissimo Cesare, [- -]us eminentissimo prefetto del pretorio devoto al nume e alla maestà sua».

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

The fragmentary inscription in Latin from the city of Perinthus-Heraclea (Marmara Ereğlisi, Turkey; cf. Sayar 1998) is dedicated by a praetorian prefect to a Caesar, whose epithet is *Iovius*. The monument dates to the tetrarchic or post-tetrarchic age, 293-324 AD. The inscription was executed between March 293 AD and the end of 309 AD, or between March 317 AD and the end of 324 AD, since we know that the Caesars *Iovii* were only active in these two periods (cf. also U. Gehn in *LSA* 1125).

The original inscription is lost. The only transcription to come down to us was made by the Italian merchant and traveller Ciriaco Pizzicolti (1391-1452) in July 1444, while he was ambling among the ruins of the ancient city. The text was inserted by Ciriaco into his *commentaria* of the journey through Thrace, Propontis and Samothrace in the second half of 1444 (cf. Bodmer, Mitchell 1976). By 1514, the original manuscript was already lost, but this section of the *commentaria* was transcribed in a 16th Century manuscript – Vat. Lat. 5250, f. 3r – by an unknown copyist, probably taken from a copy of Ciriaco Pizzicolti's original *commentaria*, or from one of the many manuscripts derived from the traveller's work. Ciriaco states that he was copying the inscription from a marble base, but says nothing about the size of the base, shape and size of the letters, nor about its location among the ancient buildings. In the second half of the 19th Century, when Mommsen, Hirschfeld and von Domaszewski were working on the edition of *CIL* III,

the inscription was already lost. In 1888, G.B. De Rossi published the transcription from Vat. Lat. 5250, f. 3r: this transcription, the only one remaining, does not follow the layout of the original Latin inscription, and contains several lacunae. So Dessau in 1892 (*ILS* 665) and Mommsen in 1902 (*CIL* III 12326) tried to reconstruct the layout of the text. The examination of the surviving words of the inscription as it was copied by Pizzicolli makes it possible to provide a new reconstructive hypothesis of the honorary inscription. The key-elements are:

a) the recipient of the honorary inscription is one single Caesar, as shown by the use of the singular (*procreato, nostro, Iovio*, and above all *nobilissimo Caesari*); Dessau thought that the inscription was dedicated to an Augustus and a Caesar, but significantly he did not attempt to integrate the surviving text; an inscription in honour of both an Augustus and a Caesar is very rare (see Porena 2021b), and the use of the singular for the honoured Caesar is decisive in concluding that our monument with its inscription was made for only one Tetrarchic Caesar;

b) this Caesar held the epithet *Iovius*, followed by a term transcribed as *maximo*, which is placed after the Caesar's eulogy and after the formula *dominus noster*, and before the title *nobilissimus Caesar*: the word *maximo* occupies the space where the honoured Caesar's name was;

c) the dedicant is a single praetorian prefect *eminentissimus*;

d) the final part contains the usual formula of devotion;

e) the long initial praise and the titulature of the Caesar, as well as the rank and the titulature of the high official – chiselled by means of a few abbreviations – are easily discernible, but the names of the two figures were not read by Ciriaco; the names of the Caesar and of the praetorian prefect are missing, in all probability erased (so already De Rossi 1888 and Dessau, commentary to *ILS* 665).

The most important item of the transcription by Pizzicolli (or by a copyist of his work) is the sequence of the words *Iovio* and *maximo*, followed by a space without writing. The *Iovius maximus* nexus is never attested. The attribute *maximus* in our inscription cannot refer to a surname of victory (because no evidence of the ethnic name was on the stone), neither to the office of *Pontifex*, nor to other attributes; finally no tetrarchic Caesar held the epithet *maximus*. One plausible hypothesis is that the adjective *maximo* of the manuscript *Vat. Lat.* 5250, isolated in a single line in Pizzicolli's transcription, could hide a bad reading of the *cognomen* of the *Caesar Iovius*: *MAXIMIANO*, that is Galerius, or *MAXIMINO*, that is Maximinus Daia. It is possible that the rubbing out of the Caesar's name led Ciriaco to read

maximo an adjective: [[*Maxim[ian]o*]], or [[*Maxim[in]o*]]. It is likely that the *maximo* = [[*Maxim[in]o*]] was preceded by the names *Galerio* and *Valerio*. Should this indeed be the case, then four elements plead for Maximinus Daia being the most plausible solution:

a) the *cognomen Maximino* paleographically comes closer to *maximo* than the *cognomen Maximiano*;

b) Perinthus-Heraclea is located on the European coast of the Marmara Sea, an area that passed under the control of Licinius Augustus in the Spring of 311 AD. During the war against Maximinus Daia in early 313 AD, the whole area was much fought. If, as hypothesized, the difficulty in reading the names of the recipient and the dedicator on the stone in question was the result of an erasure, this could be the effect of Licinius' reprisal against the monuments in honour of Maximinus Daia, by then defeated, and indeed against the prefect who had put them up;

c) the absolute ablative *Diis auctoribus* is unique, and never recurs elsewhere in Latin epigraphy. In the tetrarchic ideology, Diocletian and Maximian are generated by the highest divinities (Jupiter and Hercules) and are creators of divinities, *auctores* of the Caesars (Marotta 2007; Cecconi 2018; Kolb 2018). The concept is exalted in the inscriptions of the Greek-speaking areas during the first and second Tetrarchy. The Caesar is *pi[issimus]*: the eulogy and the *pietas* of the Caesar reflects the tetrarchic religious atmosphere in which our Caesar *Iovius* is exalted for his mission to expand the *imperium* with arms and for his total submission to the will of the Augusti *Iovii*. From the end of 306 AD, Galerius had witnessed the disobedience of Constantine and Maxentius and the assassination of Severus Augustus: the tetrarchic system had gone into crisis because of the revolt of the young sons of the Tetrarchs. In Thrace, in the *pars* of the *Iovius* Galerius, Maximinus Daia was the only Caesar devoted to the tetrarchic system defended by the *senior Augustus*. The praetorian prefect of Galerius could exalt the obedience of Maximinus Daia during the crisis of the late 306/late 309 AD (in 310 AD Maximinus Daia became Augustus);

d) during the period 284-324 AD, each Augustus had only one praetorian prefect flanking him: when peace reigned between the Augusti, the praetorian prefects formed a united prefectural college as a manifestation of the unity of the *res publica*, mirroring the unity of the imperial college and the consular pair (see PPRET 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23; cf. Feissel 1991). When the solidarity between the Augusti disappeared, only the single praetorian prefect of each Augustus could erect a monument in honour of his Augustus or possibly his Caesar in the region, directly under his master's sole

control (for an honorary inscription to Maxentius Augustus of the imperial college by his sole one praetorian prefect see PPRET 4, 5; for a dedication to Constantine, cited as only Augustus see PPRET 12, 13). The honorary inscription for a Caesar *Iovius* in Thrace by a single praetorian prefect is limited to a short chronological period.

The anonymous praetorian prefect who commissioned the Perinthus-Heraclea monument was *vir eminentissimus*. Whatever his identity, it seems highly likely that he was in office in the Eastern and Illyrian area, the *pars* of the *Iovii*, before January 310 AD, since from that moment on, Tattius Andronicus and Pompeius Probus, the prefects of Galerius and Licinius Augusti, were active in the region (*PLRE I*, Andronicus 7, p. 66 and Probus 6, p. 740). The two *equites* were promoted to the senatorial order via the ordinary consulate of 310 AD and thus became *viri clarissimi*, whereupon they united to form a prefectural college (*CLRE*, pp. 154 f.). Moreover in the first half of 310 AD, the last tetrarchic Caesar, Maximinus Daia, was also acclaimed Augustus by his troops and recognized by Galerius: the monument seen by Pizziccoli on the Straits was executed before the end of 309 AD. The studies of A. Stefan (2004, 2005, 2006) and S. Corcoran (2006) have shown that from the months immediately following the elevation of Licinius to Augustus at Carnuntum by Galerius and Diocletian on November 11th 308 AD, there was a change. Henceforth, the two Caesars of the imperial college imposed by Galerius, Maximinus Daia and Constantine, had the title *fili Augustorum* (always plural), and were no longer referred to as *nobilissimus Caesar*. The inscription of Perinthus-Heraclea, made in Galerius' *pars*, celebrates a *nobilissimus Caesar*, and it must be prior to the imposition of the title *filius Augustorum* at the beginning of 309 AD for the Caesars of the 'fourth Tetrarchy'. Finally, the isolation of the praetorian prefect outside a prefectural college cannot concern the period of the 'second' and 'third Tetrarchy' (from May 1st 305 AD to September 307 AD), when at least two Augusti had nominated prefects (Constantius I and Galerius, Galerius and Severus), but the phase of the 'crisis of the third Tetrarchy' between September 307 AD (assassination of Severus Augustus) and November 11th 308 AD (Licinius is Augustus), when unity in the imperial and in the praefectural college ceased. In this phase, the imperial and prefectural college, under the aegis of the *Iovii* was set up by Galerius Augustus and Maximinus Daia *nobilissimus Caesar*, flanked by the sole praetorian prefect of Galerius. The honorary inscription by only one prefect, a *vir eminentissimus*, in Galerius' *pars* may have been made when Maximinus Daia was *nobilissimus Caesar* between the end of 307 AD (after the death of Severus Augustus in September) and the end of 308 AD (before November 11th).

It is difficult to identify the praetorian prefect, whose name only the desinence *-us* survives. Three prefects are known in the East in 306/310 AD: Flaccinus (Porena 2003, pp. 194-213), Tattius Andronicus and Pompeius Probus (Porena 2003, pp. 189-94). All three could be Galerius Augustus' praetorian prefects. In this 'puzzle' Flaccinus was in office in 305/306 AD and he may well have been the man behind the Perinthus-Heraclea inscription in 307/308 AD, although he could have been replaced by Andronicus between 306 and 307 AD. The order of enumeration of the two prefects-consuls of 310 AD makes it less likely that in 307/308 AD the prefect-awarder is Pompeius Probus, appointed after Andronicus.

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