

A SEVERAN GOVERNOR OF UPPER MOESIA

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One often assumes that the compilers of *l'Année Epigraphique* will have noted and reproduced all inscriptions of importance, particularly such as have been published in journals whose contents are subjected to regular scrutiny for possible notice in *A. E.* But there is always the chance that, for one reason or another, a particular issue may fail to be taken into account, and so it was with *Spomenik LXXI* for 1931. That volume contained a number of very interesting inscriptions which fully deserved to be brought before a wider public; those of them which attest legionaries were duly taken into account by Giovanni Forni in his valuable survey, *Il Reclutamento delle Legioni da Augusto a Diocleziano* (1953), though he did not have occasion to reproduce their texts. But some inscriptions which relate to the *auxilia* have been less fortunate; they were missed both by Walter Wagner, *Die Dislokation der römischen Auxiliarformationen in den Provinzen Noricum, Pannonien, Moesien und Dakien von Augustus bis Gallienus* (1938), and by Konrad Kraft, *Zur Rekrutierung der Alen und Kohorten an Rhein und Donau* (1951). One of those inscriptions deserves all the more attention because it can be shown that it records a previously unknown governor of Upper Moesia.

The inscription in question, no. 186 at p. 81, comes from Timacum Minus; its text, as recorded, is as follows:

[imp(eratori) Caes(ari) / L(ucio) Sept]imio / [Seve]ro Pio / [Pertin]aci Aug(usto) / [Ara]b(ico) A[diab(enico)] Part(hico) / Maximo p(ontifici) m(aximo) tr(ibunicia) / [pot(estate)] VII [im]p(eratori) XI co(n)s(uli) II / [p(atri) p(atriciae) pro]co(n)s(uli), coh(ors) II Aur(elia) / [D(ardanorum)] (milliaria) eq(uitata) d(ono) d(edit), C. Gabin[io] --

The restoration [D(ardanorum)] is certain, for the place had already yielded more than a dozen inscriptions of the *coh. II Aurelia Dardanorum*, one of several auxiliary units raised by Marcus Aurelius; the date, given by the seventh tribunician year of Septimius Severus, is A. D. 199. The question which arises is the status of the man whose *praenomen* and *nomen* alone survive, immediately after the mention of the cohort.

On dedications by auxiliary units it is most commonly the case that they mention the commander of the unit, the governor of the province, or both; and

when both of them are mentioned, the name of the governor regularly precedes that of the unit's commander. Now in the majority of cases the two names are each given with either a preposition or a verb to define their status: for the governor, *per* or *sub* or the like, for the commander *instante* or *curante*, both men in addition having their status defined — *leg. Aug. pr. pr.*, or *praef.* (or whatever rank the particular command may involve). But in a number of cases we find the governor's name in the ablative absolute, his title alone indicating his part in the dedication; I have noticed examples of this usage in Dalmatia, Mauretania, Lower Moesia and Numidia, on texts ranging in date between the time of Hadrian and that of Aurelian.¹ There can be no reasonable doubt, therefore, that the C. Gabinius of the present inscription can be taken as the consular governor, in A. D. 199, of Upper Moesia.

The question arises whether he can be equated with some other senator of those names and more; and fortunately there is one ready to hand, in the proconsul of Asia, C. Gabinius Barbarus Pompeianus, attested by a Greek inscription from Euhippe in Caria, first published by M. Louis Robert, and reproduced in *A. E.* 1953, 90:

Ἄγ·θῆ Τύχη — Γάιος Γαβίνιος Βάρβαρος Πεννητιανὸς ἀνθύπατος λέγει...
... τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν αὐτοκράτορος Ἀντωνεῖνου...

M. Robert pointed out that the emperor Antoninus must be Caracalla, and the date of the proconsulship will therefore have fallen within the period A. D. 212/217; a senator who was already consular in A. D. 199 should have become proconsul of Asia early in that period, though I do not see that we have evidence to indicate the precise proconsular year in this case.

If we can accept the identification just proposed, there remains the question of the consular's relationship with the equestrian Q. Gabinius Barbarus, who rose to be procurator of three Augusti and prefect of Sardinia (*CIL X* 7585 = *ILS* 1360). His case has been discussed in M. H.-G. Pflaum's magistral survey, *Les carrières procuratoriennes équestres sous le haut-empire romain* (1960/1961) under no. 265, pp. 708—712, taking into account not only the inscription from Euhippe but also two texts from Venafrum (*CIL X* 4860 and 4861 = *ILS* 1136): these record a former equestrian officer, L. Gabinius L. f. Ter(etina) Cosmianus, his sons — one of whom may be inferred with confidence to have been the procurator Q. Gabinius Barbarus —, and a grandson, Gabinius Vindex Pompeianus. M. Pflaum came to the conclusion, with evident hesitation, that the Caracallan proconsul should be the same as the grandson of Cosmianus, and that his full nomenclature was C. Gabinius Barbarus Vindex Pompeianus. Yet it seems difficult to accept that view, primarily on a consideration of the chronology involved.

There is no doubt that Q. Gabinius Barbarus was prefect of Sardinia under Septimius Severus and his sons. C. Gabinius Vindex Pompeianus, taken by M. Pflaum to have been the nephew of the procurator and son of the latter's elder brother, Gabinius Asper, and thus the grandson of Cosmianus, can surely not have been a senator, and already of consular standing, as early as A. D. 199. It seems more reasonable to suppose that our governor of Upper Moesia belonged to an earlier generation of the family: perhaps an elder brother of

the procurator? After all, there are plenty of cases on record in which an elder son entered upon a senatorial career, while his younger brother remained, like his father, a member of the equestrian order.²

¹ Cf., for example, *CIL VIII 2488* (El-Outhaya): *imp. Caesares M. Aurelius Antoninus et L. Aurelius [Commodus Aug.] Germanici Sarmatici fortissimi amphitheatrum vetustate corruptum a solo restituerunt per coh. VI Commag(enorum), A. Iulio Pompilio Pisone Laevillo leg. Aug. pr. pr., curante Aelio Sereno praef(ecto)*.

² Cf. Arthur Stein, *Der römische Ritterstand* (1927), *passim*. It is remarkable that Arthur Stein failed to take note of the text from Timacum Minus in his monograph on *Die Legaten von Moesien*

(1940); hitherto, the only reference to it which I have been able to trace is in my son Anthony Birley's book, *Septimius Severus, the African Emperor* (1971), 331, where he notes that C. Gabinius Barbarus may be taken to have succeeded L. Fabius Cilo and preceded Q. Anicius Faustus in the governorship of Upper Moesia. And it should be noted that Gabinius Barbarus must be added to the list of those senatorial supporters of Severus who came from Italy, and not from Africa or the East.

GUVERNER ZGORNJE MEZIJE IZ OBDOBJA SEPTIMIJA SEVERA

Povzetek

Spomenik 71 (1931) ni bil upoštevan v *Année épigraphique*, čeprav vsebuje več važnih napisov. Eden teh, št. 186 na str. 81 iz mesta *Timacum Minus* spričuje, kot se dá dokazati, prej neznanega konzularnega guvernerja Mezije *Superior* v letu 199 po Kr. Bil je to C. *Gabinius Barbarus Pompeianus*, čigar domus je bila *Venafrum* v Italiji in ki je pozneje postal *proconsul* v Aziji pod Karakalo, zgodaj v razdobju med 212 in 217. Članek obravnava njegovo razmerje do drugih članov iste družine in predlaga alternativno rešitev k oni, ki jo je dal H.-G. Pflaum.