

RICCARDO BERTOLAZZI*

THE MAN WHO SAVED LAMUS? APROPOS
OF A GALLIENIC INSCRIPTION FROM ROUGH CILICIA**

■ *Abstract*

An inscription from Lamus in western Rough Cilicia informs us that the town built up new walls under Gallienus and dedicated them to the emperor. The inscription also mentions the governor of Cilicia, Voconius Zeno, who had previously been «secretary for the documentation of the Augustus and saviour». Scholars have usually interpreted the epithet «saviour» (σωτήρ) as referred to Gallienus, but an analysis of similar inscriptions set up during this period suggests that it was Voconius Zeno whom the inhabitants of Lamus regarded as their «saviour». It is difficult to understand whether Zeno played a role as a military commander, defending Cilicia from the numerous invasions documented throughout Gallienus' reign in Asia Minor. Conversely, there are good reasons to maintain that Zeno helped Lamus build the walls rapidly, thereby earning the gratitude of its citizens.

Keywords: Crisis of the Third Century, Gallienus, Lamus, Rough Cilicia, Voconius Zeno.

As is well known, the so-called Crisis of the Third Century reached its peak during the reign of Gallienus as sole emperor (260-268). After the Persians captured his father Valerian at Edessa (260) and Gallia and Britain became virtually independent under the leadership of Postumus (same year), usurpations and invasions forced Gallienus to campaign in Italy and the Danubian provinces almost every year until he died in 268¹. One of the consequences of this situation of constant warfare was that even provinces which were relatively far from the threatened borders of the empire and had

* Università di Verona; riccardo.bertolazzi@univr.it.

** I thank the anonymous reviewers whose suggestions helped improve and clarify this manuscript.

¹ On the reign of Gallienus in general, the most recent monograph is M. GEIGER, *Gallienus*, Frankfurt am Main-Bern 2013. See also E. MANNI, *L'impero di Gallieno. Contributo alla storia del III secolo*, Roma 1949; L. DE BLOIS, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, Leiden 1976; J.J. BRAY, *Gallienus. A Study in Reformist and Sexual Politics*, Kent Town 1997. See also M. CHRISTOL, *L'empire romain du III^e siècle. Histoire politique (de 192, mort de Commode, à 325, concile de Nicée)*, Paris 2006², pp. 156-182; A. GLOTZ, U. HARTMANN, *Valerianus und Gallienus*, in *Die Zeit der Soldaten-Kaiser. Krise und Transformation des Römischen Reiches im 3. Jahrhundert n. Chr. (235-284)*, edited by K.-P. Johne, vol. I, Berlin 2008, pp. 223-295.

until then enjoyed a state of relative peace began to experience incursions and depredations. Since the emperor could not always help by detaching troops from his field army, many cities had to rely on their forces to face the enemy. Thus, for instance, Palmyrene troops drove the Persians out of Syria and Mesopotamia under the command of Septimius Odaenathus, who became *corrector* of the East as a result²; in Greece, a coalition of cities recruited a militia of citizens and deployed it at the pass of Thermopylae to repel an invasion of Goths³. More frequently, however, local communities had to barricade themselves behind walls, which they often reinforced or, in some cases, hastily built from scratch⁴. These circumstances are particularly well documented in Asia Minor, for numerous Gothic raids ravaged the coasts of this region between 261 and 268⁵. It is then no surprise that important cities such as Ephesus, Miletus, Nicaea, Prusias ad Hypium and Satala reinforced their defences during this period⁶.

The archaeological and epigraphic evidence informs us that new walls also appeared in Lamus, a town of more modest size in western Rough Cilicia, the remains of which are now located in the district of Gazipaşa – the ancient Selinus/Traianopolis – near the hamlet of Adanda, in the province of Antalya. Thanks to an inscribed lintel which is still placed above the gateway in the wall (Fig. 1), we know that Lamus dedicated this work to Gallienus at a time not precisely specified⁷.

² On Odaenathus (PIR² S 472; PLRE I, *Odaenathus*), see L. BORTOLUSSI, *L'ascesa di Odenato a Palmira e il conflitto con l'Impero Sasanide alla metà del III secolo d.C.*, «Rivista Storica dell'Antichità», 43 (2013), pp. 223-241, who analyses his family and political career; on Odaenathus' contribution to the Persian war, see L. DE BLOIS, *Odaenathus and the Roman-Persian War of 252-264 A.D.*, «Talanta», 4 (1974), pp. 7-23; U. HARTMANN, *Das palmyrenische Teilreich*, Stuttgart 2001, pp. 129-161; for the title of *corrector*, D.S. POTTER, *Palmyra and Rome: Odaenathus' Titulature and the Use of the Imperium Maius*, «ZPE», 113 (1996), pp. 271-285.

³ This event, which scholars have variously placed in the early or late years of Gallienus' reign as sole emperor, is narrated by George Syncellus' *Ecloga Chronographica* (466.1-7). One can find further details in a recently published palimpsest attesting to a fragment of a historical work which is probably to be identified with Publius Herennius Dexippus' lost *Scythica* (G. MARTIN, J. GRUSKOVÁ, *Dexippus Vindobonensis? Ein neues Handschriftenfragment zum sog. Herulereinfall der Jahre 267/8*, «Wiener Studien», 127 [2014], pp. 101-120). On the chronological issues affecting these texts, see C. MALLAN, C. DAVENPORT, *Dexippus and the Gothic Invasions: Interpreting the New Vienna Fragment (Codex Vindobonensis Hist. gr. 73, ff. 192v-193r)*, «The Journal of Roman Studies», 105 (2015), pp. 215-220; R. SUSKI, *Dexippus and the Repelling of the Gothic Invasion in the Years 267-268. A New Piece of Evidence (Codex Vindobonensis Hist. Gr. 73, ff. 192v-193r) with an Explanation of an Error Committed by the Author of the Historia Augusta (Gall. 13, 7)*, «Eos: Commentarii Societatis Philologiae Polonorum», 104 (2017), pp. 303-315. As for the resistance which cities in the Roman East put up against barbarian invasions, see L. MECELLA, Πάντα μὲν ἦν ἀναρχά τε καὶ ἀβοήθητα: *le città dell'Oriente romano e le invasioni barbariche del III secolo d.C.*, «Mediterraneo Antico», 9 (2006), pp. 241-266, stressing that provincial communities often organised their defence with either little or no support at all from imperial authorities.

⁴ On this topic, see the list of building initiatives in S. RAMBALDI, *L'edilizia pubblica nell'Impero Romano all'epoca dell'anarchia militare (235-284 d.C.)*, Bologna 2008, pp. 72-75.

⁵ For an overview of these events, see M. SALAMON, *The Chronology of Gothic Invasions into Asia Minor in the III Century AD*, «Eos: Commentarii Societatis Philologiae Polonorum», 59 (1971), pp. 109-139; S. MITCHELL, *Anatolia: Land, Men, and Gods in Asia Minor. The Celts in Anatolia and the Impact of Roman Rule*, Oxford 1995, pp. 235-239.

⁶ RAMBALDI, *L'edilizia* cit., pp. 73-74, as well as pp. 232 no. 219 (Ephesus), 234 no. 224 (Miletus), 238-240 nos. 231 (Nicaea), 232 (Prusias) and 233 (Satala).

⁷ *AEP* 1915, 51 = *SEG* 20, 90; see also S. HAGEL, K. TOMASCHITZ, *Repertorium der westkilikischen*



Fig. 1. The lintel still placed above the gate in the walls of Lamus
(TOWNSEND - HOFF, *Lamos* cit., p. 22 Fig. 9).

This inscription is also of some interest in that it mentions a *praeses* of equestrian status, Voconius Zeno⁸, who replaced the governor of senatorial rank who would usually rule Cilicia as a *legatus Augusti pro praetore*⁹. The purpose of this paper is to re-examine this text, suggesting a new reading which, although being only slightly different from the traditional one, may indicate that the inhabitants of Lamus regarded Voconius Zeno as an official who was particularly worth honouring in these times of deep crisis.

Inscripfen, Wien 1998, p. 14 no. 6; RAMBALDI, *L'edilizia* cit., p. 241 no. 236 (for the text see below). For a description of the walls and other remains of the ancient city, see R.F. TOWNSEND, M.C. HOFF, *Lamos in Rough Cilicia: An Architectural Survey*, «Olba», 18 (2009), pp. 1-22.

⁸ On this individual (PIR² V 923; PLRE I, *Zenon* 9), see A. ROSENBERG, *Ein Document zur Reichsreform des Kaisers Gallienus*, «Hermes» 55 (1920), pp. 319-321; H.-G. PFLAUM, *Les carrières procuratoriennes équestres sous le Haut-Empire romain*, Paris 1960-1961, p. 924 no. 348; B.E. THOMASSON, *Laterculi praesidum*, vol. I, Göteborg 1984, p. 292 no. 28; B. RÉMY, *Les carrières sénatoriales dans les provinces romaines d'Anatolie au Haut-Empire (31 av. J.-C.-284 ap. J.-C.)* (Pont-Bithynie, Galatie, Cappadoce, Lycie-Pamphylie et Cilicie) (Varia Anatolica II), Istanbul 1989, p. 357 no. 325; HARTMANN, *Das palmyrenische Teilreich* cit., p. 193; K. FELD, *Barbarische Bürger. Die Isaurier und das Römische Reich* (Millennium-Studien 8), Berlin-New York 2005, p. 122; T. GERHARDT, U. HARTMANN, «Fasti», in *Die Zeit* cit., p. 1113.

⁹ A dedication to Gordian III (CIL, III 6783) from Posala/Losta mentions a *provincia Isauria*, of which Lamus was presumably part. Even though some scholars maintain that this *provincia* was an actual imperial province which Gordian III detached from Cilicia (FELD, *Barbarische Bürger* cit., pp. 86-87; T. GLAS, U. HARTMANN, *Die Provinzverwaltung*, in *Die Zeit* cit., pp. 643-644), it seems more correct to identify it with one of the three administrative eparchies (Cilicia, Isauria and Lycaonia) into which Cilicia was subdivided since at least the reign of Antoninus Pius, as recently argued by M. VITALE, *Provinciae als beschlussfassende Instanzen in Inschriften von Baetica bis Anatolien*, in *Kaiserkult in den Provinzen des Römischen Reiches. Organisation, Kommunikation und Repräsentation*, edited by A. Kolb and M. Vitale, Berlin-Boston 2016, pp. 360-362. On the three eparchies of Cilicia, see M. VITALE, *Eparchie und Koinon in Kleinasien von der ausgehenden Republik bis ins 3. Jb. n. Chr.* (Asia Minor Studien 67), Bonn 2012, pp. 307-313.

The inscription, which flanks an eagle standing on ox's head, with wings outstretched and a victory wreath in its beak, reads:

Αὐτοκράτορι Καίσαρι Πουβλίῳ Λικιννίῳ
 Γαλλιηνῶ Εὐσεβεῖ Σεβαστῶ,
 ἐπὶ Οὐοκωνίου Ζήνωνος, τοῦ διασημοτάτου
 ἡγεμόνος, ἐπὶ παιδείας τοῦ Σεβαστοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος,
 5 τὸ ἔργον κατεσκεύασεν ἡ πόλις ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων,
 προνοία καὶ προστασία Μ(άρκου) Αὐρ(ηλίου) Ταριανοῦ Ταμαννίος (!),
 τοῦ ἀξιολογώτατου λογιστοῦ καὶ κτίστου τῆς ἰδίας πατρίδος.

«To the Emperor Caesar Publius Licinius Gallienus Augustus. Under the authority of the *vir perfectissimus* and governor Voconius Zeno, secretary for the documentation of the Augustus and saviour, the town realised the work at its own expense under the administration and supervision of Marcus Aurelius Tarianus Tamannius, *eminentissimus* curator and founder of his own native city»¹⁰.

R. Paribeni and P. Romanelli were the first scholars to note this lintel during a survey of ancient monuments in southern Anatolia carried out in 1914, which resulted in a substantial contribution to *Monumenti Antichi*¹¹. While briefly commenting on the new text (Fig. 2), Paribeni and Romanelli observed that the office ἐπὶ παιδείας held by Voconius Zeno was a translation of the Latin *a studiis*, which indicated the head of the imperial archives who assisted the emperor in his judicial function¹². Some years later, A. Rosenberg re-examined the inscription, accepting Paribeni and Romanelli's interpretation and pointing out that Voconius Zeno was an *eques* acting as governor in a province which emperors traditionally entrusted to the care of senatorial legates¹³. Finally, G. Bean and T.B. Mitford, who saw the monument while surveying ancient sites in Rough Cilicia in the early 1960s, corrected a few inaccuracies in the reading by Paribeni and Romanelli, offering a new version of the text, which is the one reported above¹⁴.

¹⁰ On the correspondence between διασημότατος and the equestrian title *vir perfectissimus*, see H.J. MASON, *Greek Terms for Roman Institutions: A Lexicon and Analysis* (American Studies in Papyrology 13), Toronto 1974, p. 36. As for ἀξιολογώτατος and *vir eminentissimus*, see MASON, *Greek Terms* cit., pp. 23, 44. To the best of my knowledge, Aurelius Tarianus' second *cognomen* is not documented elsewhere, which makes it difficult to understand its correct accentuation. Considering that the name Marcus Aurelianus Tarianus is reported in the genitive case, Ταμαννίος might be a stonemason's mistake for Ταμαννίου.

¹¹ R. PARIBENI, P. ROMANELLI, *Studi e ricerche archeologiche nell'Anatolia Meridionale*, «Monumenti antichi pubblicati per cura della Reale Accademia dei Lincei», 23 (1915), coll. 6-274, here coll. 167-169 (*AEp* 1915, 51).

¹² There seem to be no bilingual documents attesting to the equivalence between ἐπὶ παιδείας and *a studiis*, but this title is well documented during the second and third centuries CE. See H.-G. PFLAUM, *Les carrières procuratoriennes équestres*, vol. III, Paris 1960-1961, pp. 1022-1023 with a tabulation of the known holders of this post, as well as the considerations expressed by E. VAN'T DACK, *A studiis, a bibliothecis*, «Historia», 12.2 (1963), pp. 177-184.

¹³ ROSENBERG, *Ein Document* cit.

¹⁴ G.E. BEAN, T.B. MITFORD, *Sites Old and New in Rough Cilicia*, «Anatolian Studies», 12 (1962),

ΑΥΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡΙΚΑΙΣΑΡΙ	ΠΟΥΛΒΑΙΩΛΙΚΙΝΝΙΩ
ΓΑΛΛΙΗΝΩΕΥΣΕΒΕΙ	ΣΕΒΑΣΤΩ
ΕΠΙΑΥΟΚΩΝΙΟΥΖΗΝΩΝΟΣ	ΤΟΥΔΙΑΣΗΜΟΤΑΤΟΥ
ΗΓΕΜΟΝΟΣΣΠΙΠΑΙΔΕΙΑΣ	ΤΟΥΣΕΒΑΣΤΟΥΚΑΙΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ
ΤΟΕΡΓΟΝΚΑΤΕΣΚΕΥΑΣΕΝ	ΗΠΟΛΙΣΕΚΤΩΝΙΑΙΩΝ
ΠΡΟΝΟΙΑΚΑΙΠΡΟΣΤΑΣΙΑΜΑΥΡ	ΤΑΡΙΑΝΟΥΤΑΜΑΝΝΙΟΥΣ
ΤΟΥΑΞΙΟΛΟΓΩΤΑΤΟΥΛΟΓΙΣΤΟΥ	ΚΑΙΚΤΙΣΤΟΥΤΗΣΙΑΔΙΣΠΑΤΡΙΔΟΣ

Fig. 2. Facsimile of the text by R. Paribeni and P. Romanelli
(PARIBENI - ROMANELLI, *Studia* cit., coll. 167-168).

All these scholars have regarded the epithet σωτήρ in l. 4 as referred to Gallienus, thereby assuming that Voconius Zeno was «the secretary *a studiis* of the Augustus and Saviour». Although this reading has unanimously been accepted ever since, one might wonder why the inhabitants of Lamus did not place σωτήρ immediately after the title Augustus (Σεβαστός) if they wanted to address Gallienus as their «saviour». This is what happened, for example, in the nearby Iotape, where the populace dedicated a temple to Trajan by calling him αὐτοκράτωρ Νέρουα Τραϊανὸς Καῖσαρ Σεβαστός Γερμανικὸς Δακικὸς, ὁ κύριος σωτήρ καὶ εὐεργέτης τοῦ κόσμου («emperor Caesar Nerva Trajan Augustus Germanicus Dacicus, the lord saviour and benefactor of the cosmos»)¹⁵. The same pattern occurs in inscriptions honouring emperors whose reigns are closer in time to Gallienus'. In Perga (Pamphylia), the city council honoured Gordian II and Gordian III as «saviours», respectively addressing them as αὐτοκράτωρ Καῖσαρ Μ. Αντώνιος Γορδιανὸς Σεμπρονιανὸς Ῥωμανὸς Ἀφρικανὸς Εὐσεβῆς Εὐτυχῆς Σεβαστός, σωτήρ πάσης οἰκουμένης («Marcus Antonius Gordianus Sempsonianus Romanus Africanus Pius Felix Augustus, saviour of the whole world») and Μ. Αντώνιος Γορδιανὸς Εὐσεβῆς Εὐτυχῆς Σεβαστός, σωτήρ τῆς οἰκουμένης («Marcus Antonius Gordianus Pius Felix Augustus, saviour of the world»)¹⁶. In the Lamus inscription an ample blank space follows the word Σεβαστῶ, so there is no reason to think that the epithet σωτήρ was placed after τοῦ Σεβαστοῦ in l. 4 owing to lack of space in l. 2. Therefore, it seems more likely that the «saviour» of Lamus was Voconius Zeno rather than Gallienus.

To be sure, it was either protective deities or emperors who were usually honoured as *soteres*¹⁷. Yet while both communities and individuals would often attribute

p. 207 (*SEG* 20, 90). The authors read ΠΟΥΒΑΙΩ instead of ΠΟΥΛΒΑΙΩ in l. 1 and ΕΠΙ ΟΥΟΚΩΝΙΟΥ instead of ΕΠΙ ΑΥΟΚΩΝΙΟΥ in l. 3.

¹⁵ *AEp* 1915, 52 = *AEp* 1965, 319. He is probably identical with the Aurelius Marcianus whom the council and the people of Rhodes honoured with another statue (*SEG* 47, 1256). Here Marcianus is simply addressed as «general» (στρατηλάτης) and «benefactor» (εὐεργέτης).

¹⁶ Gordian II: *IGRR*, III 791 = *I.Perge* 281. Gordian III: *CIG*, 4342b = *IGRR*, III 792 = *I.Perge* 282. Further inscriptions attesting to the awarding of the epithet σωτήρ to Gordian III are *TAM*, II 830 from Idebesus in Lycia (Μάρκον Αντώνιον Γορδιανόν, τὸν σωτήρα τῆς οἰκουμένης) and *AEp* 2007, 1546 = *SEG* 57, 1457 from Termessus in Pisidia (αὐτοκράτορα Καίσαρα Μάρκον Αντώνιον Γορδιανόν Εὐσεβῆ Εὐτυχῆ Σεβαστόν, τὸν σωτήρα τῆς οἰκουμένης).

¹⁷ On the use of this epithet in general, see A.D. Nock, *Soter and Euergetes*, in *The Joy of Study: Papers*

this epithet to Antonine and Severan emperors, its attestations became rarer and rarer throughout the central decades of the third century¹⁸. We can still find four dedications where Gordian III appears as *soter*, but then only one in the case of Philip the Arab and, later, no occurrences at all under Decius, Trebonianus Gallus, Aemilianus, Valerian and Gallienus¹⁹. During this period there were, on the other hand, generals and governors whom local communities honoured as *soteres*²⁰. Indeed, one of the best-known examples belongs to the reign of Gallienus. The city of Philippopolis, in Thrace, gave honour to Marcianus, one of Gallienus' generals, by erecting a statue on the base of which it engraved the following text: Τὸν διασημότατον / Μαρκιανόν, προτήκτο/ρα τοῦ ἀνεικήτου δεσπό/του ἡμῶν Γαλλιανοῦ Σεβ(αστοῦ), / τριβούνον πραιτωριανῶν / καὶ δοῦκα καὶ στρατηλάτην. / Ἡ λαμπροτάτη Θρακῶν / μητρόπολις Φιλιππόπο/λις καὶ ἑαυτῆς εὐεργέτην / καὶ σωτήρα ἀνέστησεν. («To Marcianus, *vir perfectissimus*, protector of our unconquered lord Gallienus Augustus, praetorian tribune, *dux* and general. The most illustrious Philippopolis, metropolis of the Thracians, set up [this monument] to its benefactor and saviour»)²¹. The Marcianus honoured here is in all probability to be identified with Lucius Aurelius Marcianus, one of Gallienus' closest collaborators to whom the emperor entrusted the defence of the southern Balkan provinces by appointing him *praeses* of the two Moesiae – or, perhaps, of Thrace – towards the end of his reign²². Thanks to the *Historia Augusta* (*Gall.* 13.10; *Claud.* 6.1, 18.1) and Zosimus (1.40.1), we know that Marcianus repelled an invasion of Scythians who had ravaged these areas²³. This circumstance earned him much grat-

on *New Testament and Related Subjects Presented to Honor Frederick Clifton Grant*, edited by S.L. Johnson, New York 1951, pp. 127-148 = *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World*, edited by Z. Stewart, vol. II, Oxford 1972, pp. 720-735. With specific reference to emperors, A. MASTINO, *Orbis, κόσμος, οἰκουμένη: aspetti spaziali dell'idea di impero universale da Augusto a Teodosio*, in *Popoli e spazio romano tra diritto e profezia*. Atti del III Seminario internazionale di studi storici, Roma 21-23 aprile 1983 (Da Roma alla terza Roma. Documenti e studi 3), Napoli 1986, pp. 63-162 *passim*. S. Bönsch-Meyer, *Dialogangebote. Die Anrede des Kaisers jenseits der offiziellen Titulatur* (Impact of Empire 39), Leiden-Boston 2021, pp. 69-70, 82-83 and *passim*.

¹⁸ See the list of emperors honoured with this epithet in MASTINO, *Orbis, κόσμος* cit., pp. 154-155.

¹⁹ Gordian III: see ft. 16 above. Philip the Arab: *SEG* 17, 613 (Attalaea).

²⁰ See the lists provided by D. ERKELENZ, *Keine Konkurrenz zum Kaiser – Zur Verleihung der Titel Κτίστης und Σωτήρ in der römischen Kaiserzeit*, «Scripta Classica Israelica», 21 (2002), pp. 72-75 and E. MEYER-ZWIFFELHOFFER, *Zum Regierungsstil der senatorischen Statthalter in den kaiserzeitlichen griechischen Provinzen* («Historia» Einzelschriften 165), Stuttgart 2002, pp. 333-334. See also A. FILIPPINI, G.L. GREGORI, *Adversus rebelles. Forme di ribellione e di reazione romana nelle Spagne e in Asia Minore al tempo di Marco Aurelio*, «Mediterraneo Antico», 12.1-2 (2009), pp. 55-96 and especially p. 89 with particular reference to governors honoured as *soteres* during the third century.

²¹ *AEP* 1965, 114 = *IGBulg*, V 5409.

²² On Marcianus (*PIR*² M 204; *PLRE* I, *Marcianus* 2), see B. GEROV, *La carriera militare di Marciano, generale di Gallieno*, «Athenaeum», 43 (1965), pp. 333-354; THOMASSON, *Laterculi* cit., pp. 146 no. 146, 175 no. 65; MECCELLA, Πάντα cit., pp. 250-252; GERHARDT, HARTMANN, *Fasti* cit., pp. 1120, 1150, 1188; GLOTZ, HARTMANN, *Valerianus* cit., pp. 283-287; C. DAVENPORT, *A History of the Roman Equestrian Order*, Cambridge 2019, pp. 537-538.

²³ In the recently published fragment of Dexippus' *Scythica* (see ft. 3 above) a certain Marianus fought against «Scythians» who had invaded Achaia. This is in all likelihood the same person mentioned by the *Historia Augusta* in *Gall.* 6.1 (*pugnatum est in Achaia Mariano duce contra eosdem Gothos, unde victi per Achaeos recesserunt*) but whose name is usually emended from *Mariano* to *Mar<c>iano*. G. Martin and J. Grusková's suggestion that, in the new fragment, Μαρτιανός should be emended to Μαρ<κ>τιανός (MARTIN, GRUSKOVÁ, *Dexippus* cit., pp. 111-112) has found no favour among scholars (MALLAN, DAVENPORT, *Dexippus* cit., pp. 210-212; I. PISO, *Bemerkungen zu Dexippos Vindobonensis (I)*, «Göttinger Forum für

itude among local communities, including Philippopolis, where people regarded him as their benefactor and *soter*. What is more, a lamentably lacunous inscription reused in the late Roman walls of Ancyra, the capital of Galatia, informs us that an individual whose identity is lost «completed the construction of the entire city wall from its foundations in times of famine and barbaric raids» (σύμπαν τὸ τεῖχος ἐν σπειροδείᾳ, κὲ βαρβαρικαῖς ἐφόδοις ἐκ θεμελίων εἰς τέλος ἀγαγόντα); he also performed other services which prompted the council and the populace to honour him as «the benefactor and saviour of their community» (τὸν ἑαυτῶν εὐεργέτην κὲ τοῦ ἔθνους σωτήρα)²⁴. Since another fragmentary inscription reused in the same location says that it was a governor who oversaw the construction of the city walls (τοῦ λαμπροτάτου ἡγεμόνος, ἀρξάμενου συμπληρώσαντος κὲ ἀφιερῶσαντος τῆ μητροπόλι τὸ τεῖχος)²⁵, this was in all likelihood the same person whom the council and the populace honoured²⁶. Although it is impossible to date these last two texts to a specific period, the reference to «times of famine and barbaric raids» fits particularly well the period in which Gallienus ruled, or at least the times of severe crisis characterising the central decades of the third century²⁷. In any case, it appears clear that, during these years, local communities could decide to attribute the title *soter* to governors and generals, chiefly on account of merits which these had acquired by setting up defences against barbaric raids.

Identifying the danger which Lamus incurred and against which Voconius Zeno might have provided help remains problematic, not least because Asia Minor was under multiple threats throughout the whole reign of Gallienus. Following the defeat of Valerian in the Battle of Edessa of 260 and his falling into captivity, the Persian king Shapur I invaded several eastern Roman provinces, including Cilicia. Thanks to Shapur I's Ka'be-ye Zartosht inscription, we know that his army captured many cities in this province: while advancing along the coast of Rough Cilicia, so we are told, Persian troops sacked Kelenderis, Anemurion, Antiochia ad Cragum and Selinus, also making forays into the internal areas of Isauria before eventually moving to Cappadocia²⁸. Insofar as Shapur omitted Lamus in the detailed list of cities captured by him

Altertumswissenschaft», 18 (2015), pp. 210-211; SUSKI, *Dexippus* cit., p. 308; W. ECK, Marianus, vice agens proconsulis Achaiae, in *Dexippus Vindobonensis*, «ZPE», 208 [2018], pp. 248-250), who prefer to consider Marianus and Marcianus two different persons.

²⁴ CIG, III 4015 = IGRR, III 206 = E. BOSCH, *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Ankara im Altertum*, Ankara, 1967, p. 351 no. 289 = RAMBALDI, *L'edilizia* cit., p. 242 no. 238 = *I.Ankara*, I 120; see also *I.Ankara*, II p. 42.

²⁵ SEG 6, 65 = BOSCH, *Quellen* cit., p. 353 no. 290 = *I.Ankara*, II 316.

²⁶ We could identify him with the *clarissimus* Aurelius Dionysius Argaeinus mentioned in two other fragments re-employed in the walls (CIG, III 4051 = BOSCH, *Quellen* cit., p. 355 no. 292 = *I.Ankara*, II 318; BOSCH, *Quellen* cit., p. 355 no. 293 = *I.Ankara*, II 319), as S. Mitchell and D. French suggest in *I.Ankara*.

²⁷ Cf. FILIPPINI, GREGORI, *Adversus rebelles* cit., p. 89. Notably, an inscription engraved on a fragmentary lintel which might have belonged to one of Ancyra's city gates mentions the name of Gallienus (*I.Ankara*, II 315 bis).

²⁸ ŠKZ, M. P. 18-19, Pa. 13-15, Gr. 30-32 (§27-28). For the text, see P. HUYSE, *Die dreisprachige Inschrift Šābubrs I. an der Ka'ba-i Zardušt (ŠKZ)*, vols. 1-2 (Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum 3.1.1-2), London 1999. On the itinerary followed by Shapur's forces, see the discussion in E. KETTENHOFEN, *Die römisch-persischen Kriege des 3. Jahrhunderts n. Chr. nach der Inschrift Šābubrs I. an der Ka'be-ye Zartošt (ŠKZ)* (TAVO-Beihefte B 55), Wiesbaden 1982, pp. 106-122; P. HUYSE, X. LORiot, *Commentaire à deux voix de l'inscription dite des «Res Gestae Divi Saporis»*, in *La «crise» de l'Empire romain de Marc Aurèle à*

during the 260 campaign, his army might have preferred not to attack this centre, possibly on account of its sheltered position on the top of a mountain. Even so, the fear of a Persian attack may have urged the inhabitants to begin the construction of walls when the invasion was still underway²⁹. However, it is unlikely that Voconius Zeno was *praeses* of Cilicia at this time, for his previous appointment was «*a studiis* of the Augustus». This information suggests that he had worked for some time as the head of the imperial archives when Gallienus was sole emperor, hence after 260.

The following years' events provided further occasions for building up walls. According to the *Historia Augusta* (*Tyr. Trig.* 26), the Isaurians took advantage of the situation of uncertainty created by the Persian invasion to elect a leader of their own choice, Trebellianus, who had himself proclaimed emperor despite his reputation as a leader of pirates (*archipirata*). He was later defeated and killed by Camiseolus, a general of Gallienus otherwise unknown (same passage). Although no other sources record the existence of Trebellianus³⁰, some scholars have interpreted the construction of the walls of Lamus as a defence against him³¹. Others have instead discounted the whole story as fiction, sometimes admitting that it might have something to do with an actual resurgence of brigandage in times of widespread turmoil³².

Despite the problems mentioned so far, the most dangerous and constant threat that the cities of Asia Minor faced during this period were Gothic raids. The first one occurred in 258, when the Goths barged their way into Pontus, reaching Trapezus and then invading Bithynia, where they looted Cius, Nicaea, Apamea, Myrcia and Prusa. Later, between 261 and 262, Gothic raiders ravaged the Hellespont and proceeded to sack cities along the Aegean coast, including Ephesus – where they plundered and burned the Temple of Artemis –, and other communities in the inner part of Asia. Further invasions took place in 266 and 267-268, probably on a minor scale but still penetrating in depth so much that they threatened Asia, Bithynia and Cappadocia³³. Nonetheless, Asia Minor did not remain utterly undefended among such chaos. The *Historia Augusta* (*Gall.* 7.3) notes that the Goths who devastated Asia in 261-262 were eventually «routed by the courage and skill of Roman *duces*» (*Romanorum ducum*

Constantin. Mutations, continuités, ruptures, edited by M.-H. Quet, Paris 2006, pp. 307-344; P. PILHOFER, *Die Geschichte des «Rauben Kilikiens» unter den Römern*, «Klio», 102.1 (2020), pp. 105-106.

²⁹ I. KARAMUT, J. RUSSELL, *Nephele: A Recently Discovered Town of Coastal Rough Cilicia*, «Journal of Roman Archaeology», 12 (1999), p. 370; PILHOFER, *Die Geschichte* cit., p. 106. Since it was the city (ἡ πόλις) which erected the walls, it seems difficult to maintain that these belonged to a fortified camp built on the ruins of Lamus after the Persians had devastated this centre, as suggested by K. FELD, *Isaurien*, in *Die Zeit* cit., pp. 793-794.

³⁰ In truth, his name appears also in Eutropius' *Breviarium* (9.8.1), but the person mentioned here is the usurper Regalianus. See H.W. BIRD, *The Breviarium ab Urbe Condita of Eutropius. Translated with an Introduction and Commentary*, Liverpool 2011², p. 139; B. BLECKMANN, J. GROSS, *Eutropius. Breviarium ab Urbe Condita. Ediert, übersetzt und kommentiert*, Paderborn 2018, p. 239.

³¹ BEAN, MITFORD, *Sites* cit., p. 40; C. MUTAFIAN, *La Cilicie au carrefour des empires*, vols. 1-2, Paris 1988, pp. 223, 225; N. LENSKE, *Assimilation and Revolt in the Territory of Isauria, from the 1st Century BC to the 6th Century AD*, «Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient», 42 (1999), p. 420; RAMBALDI, *L'edilizia* cit., p. 241; TOWNSEND, HOFF, *Lamos* cit., p. 15.

³² FELD, *Barbarische Bürger* cit., pp. 123-125; FELD, *Isaurien* cit., pp. 794-795; K.-P. JOHNE, *Die Historia Augusta*, in *Die Zeit* cit., pp. 49-50; PILHOFER, *Die Geschichte* cit., pp. 107-108.

³³ On these events, see ft. 5 above.

virtute ac ductu vastati), whereas those who invaded Bithynia in 266 were defeated in a naval engagement (*Gall. 12.6: navali bello superati*).

The reference to generals (*duces*) campaigning in Asia Minor is particularly noteworthy since we know that Gallienus made ample recourse to generals of equestrian status who received the title *dux* and commanded vexillations³⁴. The Lucius Aurelius Marcianus mentioned above was honoured as such in Philippolis. In this case, though, the title *dux* (δούξ) was followed by the archaic word στρατηλάτης. This title denotes a senior general, but it was rarely used before the third century CE³⁵. Something similar appears in an inscription from Verona, which informs us that Gallienus ordered the fortification of this city and entrusted the supervision of the works to a *dux ducum*, a «general of generals»³⁶. As no occurrences of this expression are documented under previous rulers, it could be the case that Gallienus created a new sort of hierarchy among his generals. In other words, groups of generals (*duces*) could work together under the command of a senior general placed above them. It is consequently attractive to think that the *duces* who according to the *Historia Augusta* fought the Goths in Asia Minor could be part of such a system³⁷. It would likewise be attractive to regard Voconius Zeno as one of them, which could indeed justify the epithet *soter* acquired in Lamus. Nevertheless, his previous appointment as *a studiis* indicates that his career had had a focus on administrative and legal matters rather than military affairs. Also, the inhabitants of Lamus neither called him δούξ nor στρατηλάτης, titles which Gallienus typically gave to individuals who had risen through the ranks of his field army and earned positions as *protectores* of the emperor³⁸.

That said, the merits earned by Voconius Zeno could be connected to the realisation of the walls. For this work must have fostered a sense of security among the inhabitants of Lamus, who were living in a period in which no place in Asia Minor was immune from raids. The inscription also specifies that the city made use of its resources to carry out the works, which Marcus Aurelius Tarianus Tamannius, a λογιστής chosen from amongst the citizens of Lamus, supervised. In the Greek-speaking world, this title corresponds to the Latin *curator rei publicae*, a special commissioner appointed by the emperor to sift through civic budgets in case of bankruptcies, mismanagements of public funds or, sometimes, to make sure that a local community would com-

³⁴ DE BLOIS, *The Policy* cit., pp. 34, 37-38; DAVENPORT, *A History* cit., pp. 537-538.

³⁵ MASON, *Greek Terms* cit., pp. 13, 87. See also DAVENPORT, *A History* cit., pp. 528, 538.

³⁶ *CIL*, V 3329 = A. BUONOPANE, *Un dux ducum e un vir egregius nell'iscrizione di porta Borsari a Verona* (*CIL*, V 3329), in *Est enim ille flos Italiae. Vita economica e sociale nella Cisalpina Romana*. Atti delle Giornate di studi in onore di Ezio Buchi, Verona 30 novembre-1 dicembre 2006 Roma 2008, pp. 125-136 (*AE* 2008, 264).

³⁷ Although the presence of *duces* in Asia Minor is not otherwise documented under Gallienus, a late third-century inscription from Termessus, in Pisidia, attests to a letter with which a *dux* requested local notables to send him recruits (M. BALANCE, C. ROUECHÉ, *Appendix 2. Three Inscriptions from Ovacik*, in *Mountain and Plain. From the Lycian Coast to the Phrygian Plateau in the Late Roman and Early Byzantine Period*, edited by R.M. Harrison and W.D. Young, Ann Arbor 2001, pp. 87-112 [*SEG* 51, 1813]). According to the editors, this text could date to the period 270-280, when a series of uprisings took place in Isauria, threatening the cities of southern Anatolia. See also C. BRÉLAZ, *Lutter contre la violence à Rome: attributions étatiques et tâches privées*, in *Les Exclus dans l'Antiquité*. Actes du colloque organisé à Lyon les 23-24 septembre 2004, edited by C. Wolff, Lyon-Paris 2007, p. 236.

³⁸ See DAVENPORT, *A History* cit., pp. 533-540.

plete a public work³⁹. It was usually a city which would request the appointment of a *curator*/λογιστής whenever it appeared that its council and magistrates were unable to overcome a situation of impasse. The provincial governor then played an important role, for he could suggest the names of people suitable for this position to the emperor. These were usually senators or knights from the community's region since they would possess a good knowledge of local affairs.

It is also essential to remember that the construction of city walls would require permission from the emperor, or at least from the governor. Juridical sources are quite clear on this point. According to Ulpian, city walls could neither be restored nor connected to other structures without authorisation from the governor or the emperor (*Dig.* 1.8.9.4). Herennius Modestinus – a student of Ulpian whose activity as a juriconsult dates to a period between the reigns of Severus Alexander and Gordian III – quotes a rescript of Marcus Aurelius to stress that permission to construct walls was to be required to the *praeses*, who would then consult with the emperor (*Dig.* 50.10.6)⁴⁰. In light of this, the citizens of Lamus might have submitted a request to build new walls to Voconius Zeno or, alternatively, to Gallienus. In the latter case, Voconius Zeno could have vouched for the petitioners in his reports to the emperor or even deliver their request if, for example, there was not enough time for them to send an embassy to the imperial court, or if the voyage appeared too risky or even too expensive in times of social and economic distress⁴¹. Whatever the truth, the intervention of Voconius Zeno must have been instrumental in ensuring that the erection of walls in Lamus could swiftly be accomplished⁴². As a sign of respect and gratitude, the

³⁹ On the role of these officials in the West, see G. CAMODECA, *Ricerche sui curatores rei publicae*, in ANRW II 13, 1980, pp. 453-534; F. JACQUES, *Les curateurs des cites dans l'occident Romain: de Trajan à Gallien*, Paris 1983; G. CAMODECA, *I curatores rei publicae in Italia: note di aggiornamento*, in *Le quotidien municipal dans l'Occident romain*, edited by C. Berrendonner, L. Lamoine and M. Cébeillac-Gervasoni, Paris 2008, pp. 511-520; J. MATA SOLER, *Presencia y actividades de los curatores civitatum en la Bética de los Severos*, «Cuadernos de Arqueología de la Universidad de Navarra», 27 (2019), pp. 3-9. On their presence in the East, see G.P. BURTON, *The Curator Rei Publicae: Towards a Reappraisal*, «Chiron», 9 (1979), pp. 465-487; F. CAMIA, *I curatores rei publicae nella provincia d'Acaia*, «MEFRA», 119 (2007), pp. 409-419; É. GUERBER, *Curateurs de cités et bonheurs civiques*, in *The Politics of Honour in the Greek Cities of the Roman Empire*, edited by A. Heller and O.M. van Nijf, Leiden-Boston 2017, pp. 291-316. See also R. BERTOLAZZI, *Septimius Severus and the Cities of the Empire* (Epigrafia e Antichità 47), Faenza 2020, pp. 50-55, 126-130, 194-197 with specific reference to the diffusion of *curatores r. p.* under Septimius Severus. A λογιστής was also appointed to oversee the realisation of the new walls of Nicaea (*I.Iznik* 11-12), the construction of which began under Gallienus and was completed under Claudius Gothicus (RAMBALDI, *L'edilizia* cit., pp. 238-239 no. 231).

⁴⁰ For an overview of Modestinus' life and works, see G. VIARENGO, *Studi su Erennio Modestino: profili biografici*, Torino 2009; EAD. *Studi su Erennio Modestino: metodologie e opere per l'insegnamento del diritto*, Torino 2012; F. MERCOGLIANO, *Modestino: un approccio biografico*, «Index», 41 (2013), pp. 188-194.

⁴¹ On the correspondence between emperors and governors, see F. MILLAR, *The Emperor in the Roman World, 31 BC-AD 337*, London 1977, pp. 213-228.

⁴² According to Paribeni and Romanelli, four statue bases were re-employed in the tower flanking the gate: PARIBENI, ROMANELLI, *Studii* cit., col. 169 no. 117 (reporting a dedication to Antoninus Pius but lost according to BEAN, MITTFORD, *Sites* cit., p. 208), coll. 169-170 nos. 118-119 (attesting to dedications to Caracalla and Geta, respectively; the monument was still present *in situ* according to TOWNSEND, HOFF, *Lamos* cit., pp. 12-13) and no. 120 (reporting a dedication to a local athlete). The reuse of honorary and funerary monuments to build fortifications is particularly well documented during the Crisis of the Third Century and testifies to the urgency with which these constructions were realised (RAMBALDI, *L'edilizia* cit., p. 125).

inhabitants awarded Zeno the epithet of «saviour» and their fellow-citizen Tarianus Tamannius that of «founder of his own native city» (κτίστης τῆς ἰδίας πατρίδος).

To sum up, there are good reasons to think that Voconius Zeno «saved» Lamus. The custom of awarding the epithet *soter* to Roman emperors began to disappear after the Severan age and after the Crisis of the Third Century began to worsen rapidly. While Gallienus was busy elsewhere, the defence of Asia Minor was mostly left to the initiative of local communities, which could collaborate with provincial governors and generals sent by the emperor. Given our state of knowledge, it is impossible to say whether Voconius Zeno fulfilled military duties while defending the cities of his province from barbaric raids. It appears instead that the inhabitants of Lamus expressed appreciation for his administrative work, which was in keeping with his former appointment as *a studiis*. Ensuring that the walls of Lamus were quickly built up may have been a sufficient reason for the inhabitants to give him the epithet *soter*, especially at a time when many cities in Asia Minor were experiencing pillages and devastations.

As RAMBALDI, *L'edilizia* cit., p. 99 observes, the fear of being sacked may have led many cities to hurriedly fortify themselves without waiting for the imperial authorities to approve their work. The reuse of the statue bases listed above is undoubtedly revealing of the fact that the inhabitants of Lamus strived to complete their walls as rapidly as possible. Notwithstanding this, they were careful to mention the names of both the provincial governor and the λογιστής who had supervised the works, thus indicating that they had followed the standard legal procedure.

ALBERTO CAFARO*

PRIMVS ESSE: RIVENDICARE UN PRIMATO NELLE ISCRIZIONI DALLE PROVINCE OCCIDENTALI

■ Abstract

This paper deals with the use of the term *primus* in the inscriptions from the Western provinces, between the Augustan and the Severan age. This expression has attracted much scholarly attention, as it was used to identify the ‘firsts’ in a given community. The élites in Rome and Italy used to boast such a distinction, and this custom gradually spread across the provinces. Through the collection of the available evidence and the analysis of those who styled themselves as *primi*, this paper aims at investigating the epigraphic culture and the mentality of the local élites in the Western provinces.

Keywords: *primus* / *prima*, first / firsts, local élites, Western provinces, early imperial age.

In un’iscrizione accuratamente concepita e destinata a tramandarne le gesta, C. Cornelio Gallo, *eques* di origine provinciale e uomo forte del regime augusteo¹, scelse di qualificarsi come *primo* prefetto di Alessandria e d’Egitto². Si trattava della stessa distinzione con cui Plinio il Vecchio avrebbe più tardi tratteggiato il profilo di L. Cornelio Balbo, che in un’epoca in cui perfino il diritto latino era concesso con moderazione, aveva rivestito il consolato – *primo* fra tutti gli stranieri³. In entrambi i testi, *primus* è termine centrale per comprendere figure che – pur avendo profondamente contribuito alla stabilizzazione del principato augusteo – non appartenevano alla *nobilitas* della Tarda Repubblica. In questo senso, i rispettivi primati rappresentavano in

* Università di Siena e Università di Pisa; alberto.cafaro@unisi.it. Desidero ringraziare Marco Buonocore, Giovanni Salmeri e Federico Santangelo per i preziosi commenti ad una versione preliminare di questo contributo.

¹ R. SYME, *The origin of Cornelius Gallus*, «Classical Quarterly», 32 (1938), pp. 39-44 = *Roman Papers I*, a cura di R. Syme, E. Badian, Oxford 1979, pp. 47-54.

² CIL III, 14147.5 = *DESSAU* 8995; linee 1-2: *C(aius) Cornelius Cn(aei) fil(ius) Gallus [eq]ues Romanus post rege[s] / a Caesare dei vi (sic) filio) devictos praefect[us Ale]xandreae (sic) et Aegypti primus*; *PIR*² C 1369.

³ PLIN. NH 7.136: *fuit et Balbus Cornelius maior consul (...) primus externorum atque etiam in Oceano genitorum usus illo bonore, quem maiores Latio quoque negaverint*; come è noto, anche il nipote di Balbo poté vantare una straordinaria carriera (*ex privato consularis* – *VELL.* 2.51.3; *PIR*² C 1331).