

OB MERITA :THE EPIGRAPHIC RISE AND FALL OF THE
CIVIC PATRONA IN ROMAN NORTH AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

SARAH BOND: Ob Merita: The epigraphic rise and fall of the civic patrona in Roman North Africa

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Approximately twelve hundred inscriptions attest to civic patrons within the Roman Empire, but only eighteen indicate that women received the honorary title of ‘patron of the community’ (*patrona civitatis*). The extant inscriptions are confined geographically to Italy, Africa Proconsularis, and Numidia, and are dated to between A.D. 180 and 350. The epigraphic record is the only evidence for the existence of civic *patronae*. This paper explores the interrelations, economic capabilities, and political ties of these women, focusing on the North African *patronae civitatis*. The epigraphic appearance of civic *patronae* was a product of a change in the institution of patronage to fit the economic needs of certain communities in Italy and North Africa, and their epigraphic disappearance denotes yet another shift in the mediation and commemorations of civic patronage. The ecclesiastical institutions that began to absorb communal responsibilities continued to commemorate female patrons, but in a more inconspicuous manner.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AE	<i>L'Année Epigraphique</i> (Paris, 1888-).
ANRW	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i> , edd. H. Temporini and W. Haase (Berlin, 1972-).
AlbaPomp	G. Mennella - S. Barbieri, <i>La documentazione epigrafica della città e del territorio</i> , in: <i>Alba Pompeia</i> (Alba, 1997) 569-612.
Barb.	G. Barbieri, <i>L'albo senatorio da Settimio Severo a Carino (193-285)</i> , (Studi pubblicati dall'Istituto Italiano per la Storia Antica, Fasc. 6) (Rome, 1952).
CIL	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i> I-XVI (Berlin, 1863-).
CLE	<i>Carmina Latina Epigraphica</i> . edd. F. Bücheler and E. Lommatzsch, (Leipzig, 1930).
Dougga	<i>Dougga, Fragments d'histoire. Choix d'inscriptions latines éditées, traduites et commentées de Dougga (I^{er}-IV^{ème} siècles)</i> . edd. M. Khanoussi and L. Maurin (Bordeaux and Tunis, 2000).
EDR	<i>Epigraphic Database Roma</i> . Rome. University of Rome and the International Federation of Epigraphic Databases dir. S. Panciera
FIRA	<i>Fontes Iuris Romani Antejustiniani. Pars Prima: Leges</i> , ed. S. Riccobono (2 nd ed) (Florence, 1941).
FOS	M.T. Raepsaet-Charlier, <i>Prosopographie des femmes de l'ordre sénatorial (I-II s.)</i> (Leuven, 1987).
HD	<i>Epigraphische Datenbank Heidelberg</i> , Heidelberg, Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, dir. G. Alföldy
IL Afr	<i>Inscriptions latines d'Afrique (Tripolitaine, Tunisie et Maroc)</i> ed. R.Cagnat, A.Merlin, L.Chatelain (Paris, 1923).
IL Alg	S. Gsell, E. Albertini, J. Zeiller, H.-G. Pflaum, and L. Leschi (edd.) <i>Inscriptions latines de l'Algérie I-III</i> (Paris, 1922-2003).
ILCV	E. Diehl, <i>Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres</i> (Berlin, 1925-1967).
ILM	<i>Inscriptions latines au Maroc</i> , ed.L. Chatelain (Paris, 1942).

ILMMálaga	E. Serrano Ramos and R. Atencia Pérez, <i>Inscripciones latinas del museo de Málaga</i> (Madrid, 1981).
ILPBardo	Z. Benzina ben Abdallah, <i>Catalogue des Inscriptions Latines Paiennes du musée du Bardo</i> (Rome, 1986).
ILS	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae</i> ed. H. Dessau I-III (2 nd ed.) (Berlin, 1954).
ILTun	<i>Inscriptions latines de la Tunisie.</i> ed. A. Merlin (Paris, 1944).
InscrAqu-1-3	<i>Inscriptiones Aquileiae</i> ed. J. Brusin I-III (Udine, 1991-1993).
Inscr. It.	<i>Inscriptiones Italiae</i> (Rome, 1931-).
IRT	<i>The Inscriptions of Roman Tripolitania</i> , edd. J.M. Reynolds and J.B. Ward Perkins (Rome, 1952).
PIR ²	<i>Prosopographia Imperii Romani</i> , edd. E. Groag, A. Stein, and L. Peterson. I-VI (Berlin and Leipzig, 1933-).
PLRE	<i>Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire</i> edd. A. H. M. Jones, J. R. Martindale, J. Morris I-III (1971-1992).
RE	A. Pauly and G. Wissowa, <i>Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft: neue Bearbeitung</i> , edd. Wilhelm Kroll, Kurt Witte, Karl Mittelhaus, Konrat Ziegler (Stuttgart, 1894-1980).
RIC	<i>The Roman Imperial Coinage: I-V.</i> edd. H. Mattingly and E.A. Sydenham VI-VIII; edd. C.H.V. Sutherland and R.A.G. Carson (London, 1923-81); XII edd. C.H.V. Sutherland and R.A.G. Carson (London, 1984).
SupIt-1(-18)	<i>Supplementa Italica</i> I-XVIII (Rome 1981-2000).
TP, TPSulp	G. Camodeca, <i>L'Archivio Puteolano dei Sulpicii</i> (Naples, 1992).

Chapter 1

Introduction

From among the roughly twelve hundred inscriptions that attest to civic patrons within the Roman Empire, eighteen indicate that women received the honorary title of ‘patron of the community’ (*patrona civitatis*).¹ The extant inscriptions are confined geographically to Italy, Africa Proconsularis, and Numidia, and are dated to between A.D. 180 and 350.² The epigraphic record is the only evidence for the existence of civic *patronae*. The only literary mention of an individual *patrona* refers to Vibia Aurelia [P17], the sole *patrona civitatis* from the imperial family.³ The absence of *patronae civitatis* in the literary record is not especially surprising. The strong political and military focus of ancient historians resulted in many social aspects of Italian and provincial life being precluded from the historical narrative. As Dixon has noted, literary examples of female patronage were used

¹ Appendices A and A.1 cite the eighteen inscriptions under each *patrona civitatis* [P1-17]. Vibia Aurelia is the only known patroness of multiple communities: Thibilis and Calama. Nicols notes that over 1200 individuals are known to have been municipal patrons between 50 B.C. and A.D. 327 (1989: 118). Nicols does not justify his reasoning for stopping at A.D. 327, but there were still municipal patrons in the mid and late fourth century, predominantly in North Africa. I have counted over 50 *patroni civitatis* between A.D. 327 and the late fourth century. cf. Warmington (1956) 40-45; Harmand (1957) 222-84.

² Note Figure 1 for a Map of North Africa.

³ Philostratus notes Marcus Aurelius’ young daughter, Vibia Aurelia Sabina, in his account of the trial of Herodes (*Vit. Soph.* 2.559). Vibia Aurelia was only three at the time, and not yet *patrona* of Thibilis or Calama.

predominantly as illustrations of female excess or in regards to the imperial family.⁴ Unlike the literary record, epigraphic accounts of female patronage indicate the communal prestige and significance of elite women as benefactresses, priestesses (*flaminicae*, *sacerdotes publicae*), patronesses of clubs (*patronae collegii*), and *patronae civitatis*. Numerous building inscriptions, statues, and honorary plaques indicate that elite women of the first and second centuries became an increasingly integral part of the economic foundation of Roman communities, and were honored in the manner that communities honored male benefactors, *flamines*, *sacerdotes*, *patroni collegii*, and *patroni civitatis*. Civic councils courted these women in the same ways that wealthy men had been, with honors. In return for these accolades and honorary titles, both men and women were obliged to give generously towards building projects, feasts, and games for the community.

Although my focus will be primarily upon the surviving evidence for civic *patronae* in North Africa, wider changes in the institution of patronage, the legal status of women, and the economy of the Roman Empire will be investigated in order to explain their appearance and disappearance in the epigraphic record. While the possible lacunae and biases of the epigraphic record must be considered, prosopography, dedicatory language, and the literary record will be used to support the epigraphic evidence. A prosopographical study of the surviving civic *patronae* and the use of *patria* in their dedications indicates an apparent habit among North African communities to co-opt native women from a small number of families

⁴ Dixon (2001) 100. Note Pliny's opinion of Ummidia Quadratilla: "She kept a troupe of pantomime actors and used to indulge them more freely than was suitable in a lady of rank" (*Ep.* 7.24.5). Fronto notes that Faustina the Younger, the wife of Marcus Aurelius and daughter of Antoninus Pius, established an alimentary scheme from the inheritance she received from her aunt, Matidia (*Ad Am.* 1.14). Coins were minted between 161-176 with Faustina on the obverse and *Fecunditas* with small children around her on the reverse (*RIC* 679). Faustina was part of the imperial encouragement of alimentary schemes begun under Trajan.

within the senatorial order (*clarissimae*) as civic *patronae*, a habit that is less apparent among the civic *patronae* of Italy. As concerns their qualifications and duties, evidence for a family history of benefaction and an examination of the language used in the dedications for these *patronae* will be considered in order to establish that euergetism was the primary motivation for communities to bestow the title of patron on women. The honorary positions and dedicatory language with which other benefactresses were commemorated supports this claim.

It is possible that the epigraphic appearance of civic *patronae* was then the product of a change in the institution of patronage to fit the economic needs of certain communities in Italy and North Africa. The changes in origin and social status of the known North African civic *patroni* between 12 B.C. and A.D.200 supports this apparent shift.⁵ These inscriptions indicate that Roman senators serving as proconsuls and *legati* in first century North Africa were predominantly favored as *patroni*. However, during the second century A.D., wealthy *equites* and elite men appear to have been favored as *patroni civitatis*. This shift is roughly contemporary with the epigraphic appearance of the first *patrona civitatis*, and together, the patronage inscriptions of North Africa indicate a communal change in the use of ‘civic patronage’. While the honor of *patronus civitatis* appears to have been originally bestowed on imperial administrators in order to establish a political connection, the economic stagnation and increasing burden on municipal decurions in the second and third centuries may have caused local councils to seek out women for economic support.⁶

⁵ For a listing of the civic patrons of North African communities, see B.H. Warmington “The municipal patrons of Roman North Africa”, *PBSR* 22 (1954) 39-55.

⁶ L. Domitius Ahenobarbus (*PIR*² D 128), the proconsul of Africa in 12 B.C., is the first known patron of an African community, the *pagus* of Gurza (*CIL* VIII 68). Proconsuls of

The final question to be answered is then the epigraphic disappearance of the *patrona civitatis*. Just as their epigraphic appearance denotes a shift in the use of civic patronage, their epigraphic disappearance indicates another shift, this time in the mediation and commemoration of patronage. In the fourth century, ecclesiastical institutions began to take over many of the responsibilities for building projects, feasts, and festivals that had previously been funded by the elite class. Elite men and women still patronized the community, but in a more indirect manner. Patronage came in the form of donations to the church, the erection of church buildings, and the funding of mosaics, and was mediated by the Church. Patronage was also commemorated by means of a different medium than the early imperial period. While the Church still honored their patrons with clerical positions in a way similar to town councils bestowing honorary offices, the ostentatious statues and large public dedications previously used to court patrons were not in line with the Church ideals of modesty and simplicity.⁷ Women continued to play an integral role as *patronae* of the Church, but were honored more discreetly. In the fourth and fifth centuries, civic patronage in North Africa continued on. It was only the honorary title of *patrona civitatis* that declined.

Africa, such as Marcus Licinius Crassus Frugi (*PIR*² L 189), appear to have been especially popular candidates for the honor of civic *patronus* in the late first century B.C. to the first century A.D.

⁷ Concerning the rise of female religious patronage in Late Antiquity, see Arjava (1996) 250-6. Arjava notes that “now aristocratic women donated vast amounts of property for the relief of the poor and for the building of churches and monasteries. Their piety and wealth earned due respect just as in pagan times” (251). Also note Consolino (1989) 969-91.

Chapter 2

Scholarship Concerning Female Patronage

Although recent scholarship has devoted attention to Roman benefactresses, these studies have largely focused on Italy and the East; considerably less scholarship has addressed the prominence of women as patrons and benefactors in western provinces such as Africa Proconsularis, Numidia, Tripolitania, and Mauretania.⁸ This bias is principally due to the preponderance of evidence for female benefaction in the Italic and Eastern regions. However, the epigraphy does provide evidence for the economic and social prominence of women in these regions of North Africa. The ten North African dedicatory inscriptions [P1-10] identifying women as municipal *patronae* between A.D. 180 and the early fourth century, and numerous building dedications where women are attributed as benefactors, best indicate the social and economic position of elite women in these provinces. Taken together with the rest of the material record in North Africa, this testimony can be utilized to elucidate further

⁸ cf. C. Eilers, *Roman Patrons of Greek Cities* (2002) focuses largely on patronage in the East during the early empire. Note also R.A. Kearsley, "Women in Public Life in the Roman East," *Tyndale Bulletin* 50: 2 (Nov.1999)189-211; P. Gauthier, *Les Cités grecques et leurs bienfaiteurs (IV^e-I^{er} siècle avant J.-C.): Contribution à l'histoire des institutions* (Athens and Paris, 1985); M.T. Boatwright, "Plancia Magna of Perge: Women's role and status in Roman Asia Minor" in *Women's History & Ancient History* ed. S.B. Pomeroy (1991) 249-272. The book also includes numerous other illuminating and informative essays on Greek and Roman women. For female patronage in Italy, note K. McDonnell's unpublished dissertation concerning female patronage in Isola Sacra, Aquileia, and Pompeii (UNC-CH, 2005) and R. Duthoy, 'Le profil social des patrons municipaux en Italie sous le Haut-Empire', *AncSoc.* 15-17 (1984-6) 121-54.

the various trends in urbanism, municipal administration, economic conditions, and religious ideology that occurred in North Africa between the second and fourth centuries.

There were certainly variants between North Africa and the Roman East geographically, socially, and politically, but there was also a large degree of cultural exchange between the areas. Theories concerning Eastern benefactresses will be considered as possibly applicable to North African female elites as well. Van Bremen's study of the economic stature of women in the East is pivotal to understanding women's use of wealth more broadly. Her assertion that personal wealth, used in a masculine way, allowed women to attain offices in the East, is certainly a hypothesis that may be applied to the North African *patronae*.⁹ Veyne's argument that female magistrates took office when Greek cities began to decay is also influential in my evaluation of North African civic *patronae*.¹⁰ These studies indicate that the appearance of *patronae civitatis* in North Africa and Italy follow a larger trend within the Empire during the second century A.D. of extending traditionally male honors to wealthy women.¹¹

Part of my concern is to revise a current argument that civic *patronae* occur in the late second and third centuries largely as a product of the Severan attitude towards women.¹² I draw attention to the evidence of North African women as prominent civil benefactresses before Septimius Severus, and to inscriptions indicating that civic *patronae* predated the

⁹ R. Van Bremen, "Women and wealth" in *Images of Women in Antiquity*, edd. A. Cameron and A. Kuhrt (London, 1983) 223-43.

¹⁰ Veyne (1976) 357.

¹¹ Note Raepsaet-Charlier (2001) 261-267.

¹² Nicols (1989) 122-5.

Severans. In my analysis of the surviving inscriptions citing civic *patronae* and benefactresses from North Africa, several benefactresses, civic *patroni* and the six *patronae civitatis* from Italy will be used as points for comparison and contrast. Through this lens, the socio-economic status and abilities of elite women in North Africa both before and after the Severans may be contextualized and compared with other women within the empire.

There are in fact evident parallel trends in female euergetism and municipal patronage that together attest to the growing, independent economic status for women in North Africa beginning in the first century A.D. Although it may be appealing to see a deeper, primarily political function behind the civic *patronae* of North Africa on account of their status as *clarissimae* (as Hemelrijk has proposed), there is strong evidence that their primary role was economic.¹³ It is true that the *clarissimae* of a municipality had strong connections to imperial administrators, but it should also be considered that these women exceeded most local elites in their economic capabilities as well.¹⁴ Lepelley maintains that:

few instances survive in the African epigraphical record of public buildings or benefactions in the dark years of the third century crisis, or under Constantine and his sons when city revenues suffered heavily from confiscations. The same happened in the fifth century. Every reduction in the income either of private individuals or of the cities led to the disappearance of many features of the classical municipal system.¹⁵

The same may be said of *patrocinium publicum* (the patronage of cities) as a classical municipal institution. North African *patroni* and *patronae* follow economic trends rather than

¹³ Hemelrijk (2004) 222.

¹⁴ Note Ulpian's definition of *clarissimae*: *Dig.* 1.9.8.

¹⁵ Lepelley (2001) 98.

political ones, and were more vulnerable to economic turmoil in the provinces than to the political confusion at the center.¹⁶

The broader importance of patronage as an economic and social cement has been well established. Saller's *Personal Patronage Under the Early Empire* is a seminal text for understanding the impact and prevalence of patronage in Roman society. Although Saller only endeavors to examine patronage between the Augustan and Severan periods, and thus leaves out of account the epigraphic evidence utilized in this study, his insightful analysis of personal patronage in North Africa lays a foundation upon which to understand the institution of patronage in the region. While his list of fifty-three North African patronage inscriptions focuses exclusively on personal patron-client relationships in North Africa, rather than municipal patronage, it certainly establishes patronage as permeating Roman society at every socio-economic level.¹⁷ It should also be noted that while Saller admittedly neglects civic patronage and freedmen, with the exception of imperial women, he largely neglects females as personal patrons as well.¹⁸

¹⁶ Nicols simply notes that it is “beyond the scope to this paper” to review thoroughly why exactly these women were co-opted as patrons. He attributes the practice predominantly to the Severan model of women, Hellenistic influences, and political ties (1989) 128, 132-3.

¹⁷ Saller (1984) Table III: 195-199. Fifty-one of the fifty-three noted patronage relationships are between individuals rather than a collective, organized group. However, two examples of *collegia* adopting *patroni* are noted, one as the patron of the *Fulviani mairores* in Muzuc (*CIL* VIII 12065=Saller 4) and the other as the patron of the *fullones* in Gigthis (*IL Afr.* 22=Saller 36). In Saller's preface, he recognizes that “municipal patronage falls outside the scope of this work” as does the patronage of freedmen (viii).

¹⁸ The majority of epigraphic evidence attesting to women as personal patrons (i.e. not as patrons of *collegia* or *municipa*) is admittedly between freedmen and their *patronae*. However, there is still evidence of women as patrons to Roman men and women. Consider Claudia Marcellina, a senatorial woman living in Verona in A.D. 30. that had a statue erected for her by two local elite (*CIL* V 3338 = *ILS* 1031: *PIR*² C 1104 ; c.f. *CIL* V 3356 = *ILS* 2710; *CIL* V 3337; P. Setala (1977) 77-78).

While female patrons within North Africa and Italy are mentioned in comprehensive studies of civic patronage, an attempt to explain the epigraphic rise and decline of *patronae civitatis* in the first through fourth centuries is lacking.¹⁹ Women are listed within the modern registers of municipal patrons, but are incorporated into the institution of municipal patronage as a whole, rather than treated as a group in their own right. Peripheral approaches to the subject of *patronae* have been conducted by evaluating the honorary language used by Italian towns for female benefactors, an approach which is useful in evaluating and comparing the language used for North African *patronae*.²⁰ Scholarship on female patronage in other geographic areas and time periods provide a base for comparison, but it is Nicols' 1989 article, "*Patrona Civitatis*: Gender and civic patronage" and Hemelrijk's 2004 article, "City Patronesses in the Roman Empire" that specifically focus on the examination of civic *patronae*.²¹ Although Nicols argues that Severan women and Hellenistic influence largely caused the rise of the *patrona civitatis*, he does not attempt to explain their epigraphic decline or to explore their familial connections. Hemelrijk's exceptional analysis of the institution of female patronage attempts to elucidate the role and function of these *patronae*, but does not address the implications of their distribution in the epigraphic record. Nicols and

¹⁹ L. Harmand, *Le Patronat sur les collectivités publiques* (1957); B.H. Warmington, "The Municipal Patrons of Roman North Africa" *BSR* 22 (1954) 39-55.

²⁰ E. Forbis, "Women's public image in Italian honorary inscriptions.", *AJP* 111: 4 (Winter, 1990) 493-512. See especially the list of honorary inscriptions: 508-512.

²¹ J. Nicols, "*Patrona Civitatis*: Gender and civic patronage" in *Studies of Latin Literature*. ed. C. Deroux (Bruxelles, 1989) 117-142. E. Hemelrijk, "City patronesses in the Roman Empire" in *Historia* 53:2 (2004) 209-241.

Hemelrijk focus on the civic *patronae* in a largely abstract manner, making a more prosopographical analysis of these women necessary.

Saller (1996) concurs with Nicols that “the achievement of status was vulnerable” as concerns *patronae*, and that these women were largely dependant on the political and social status of their male relatives.²² However, Saller himself has noted that “the Roman practice of partible inheritance left many elite women with large fortunes and the discretion to dispose of them as they pleased. This could be translated into social power, attracting deference...”²³ While the civic *patrona* Julia Memmia [P6] was from a consular family, she expended her own money to build the bath complex and porticoes in Bulla Regia, independent of any male relative, and long after the death of her father. There appears to be no immediate imperial administrator connected to Julia Memmia at the time. Although these women did belong to the elite *ordines* within the Empire, they had financial and social capabilities apart from their male relatives. The reasons for the cooption of *patronae* no doubt varied in each case, however, their economic capabilities would have been more attractive than their possible political influence.²⁴ There were often multiple civic patrons in a community at one time, perhaps co-opted for different reasons. Why then would councils go indirectly through a female relative in order to establish a political connection?

²² R. Saller “Status and Patronage: Status and competition” in *CAH XI*²: 28 (1996) 832.

²³ Saller (1996) 833. Also note Fagan (1999: 160) for the dependance of women on the status of their male family members.

²⁴ Hemelrijk (2004: 220-1) is hesitant to tie civic patronage with civic munificence.

Chapter 2

Defining Civic Patronage

This study intends to present a historical supplement to, and at times an amendment of, the currently accepted theories surrounding women explicitly honored by communities (*coloniae, municipiae, res publicae, civitas, plebs urbana*) as their *patrona*. By limiting my analysis to those women called *patrona* by a community, I have excluded women in other areas of the Empire who, while hailed alternatively as ‘daughter’ of the city or ‘first woman’ (*prima*), may have held a position comparable to civic patrons within their communities.²⁵ The semantic requirement of ‘*patrona*’ and the establishment of the dedication as decreed by a local council limits the social relationship evaluated to a singular type of regulated Roman social relationship, that between a patron and the community: *patrocinium publicum*.²⁶ The procedure for the co-optation of *patroni* and their duties are illustrated in the literary as well as epigraphic record.

²⁵ Plancia Magna was hailed as “daughter of the city” of Perge (*AE* 1958, 78; *AE* 1965, 209) and an inscription from Baetica hails Junia Rustica as ‘first woman of the municipality’ (*prima in municipio*) (*CIL* II 1956 = *ILS* 5512 = *ILMMalaga* 6. Both women were responsible for major benefactions within their respective communities. For Plancia Magna, see Boatwright (1991) 249-272; (1993) 189-207. For Junia Rustica, see Donaire (2004) 873-891.

²⁶ cf. Dio. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 2.9-11; Gelzer (1969) 139: “The entire Roman people, both the ruling circle and the mass of voters whom they ruled, was, as a society, permeated by multifarious relationships based on *fides* and personal connections, the principal forms of which were *patrocinium* in the courts and over communities...”

In a letter to Calpurnius Fabatus, his grandfather-in-law, Pliny the Younger informs his wife's family that he and his wife, Calpurnia, will be delayed in visiting them because he feels it his necessary *officium* to first visit Tifernum, a town that had co-opted him as patron.

Neighboring our estates is a town (called Tifernum on the Tiber), which co-opted (*cooptavit*) me as patron (*patronum*) when I was nearly still a boy--their zeal being greater than their judgement...and so that I might pay back thanks (for it is most shameful to be outdone in friendly love) I built a temple at my own cost in this town.²⁷

Pliny's letter illustrates the relationship between municipal patron and municipality, and exemplifies one duty expected of a patron. Patrons were always wealthy, and were often responsible for civil building projects such as temples, baths, or even fora.

Although L. Domitius Ahenobarbus was co-opted as patron of Gurza in Africa Proconsularis over a century before Pliny was co-opted by Tifernum, in 12 B.C. Gurza dedicated a statue to him that echoes the same patronal terminology that Pliny expressed. The council and people of Gurza co-opted him as patron (*patronum cooptaverunt*) along with any future generations (*eos posterosque eorum*) of Ahenobarbi by means of a resolution passed by the *pagus* of Gurza. Ahenobarbus was the proconsul of Africa Proconsularis, wealthy, and closely connected to the imperial family, making him an attractive figure to the Gurzans.²⁸

²⁷ *Oppidum est praediis nostris vicinum (nomen Tiferni Tiberini), quod me paene adhuc puerum patronum cooptavit, tanto maiore studio quanto minore iudicio...In hoc ego, ut referrem gratiam (nam vinci in amore turpissimum est), templum pecunia mea exstruxi...* Plin. *Ep.* 4.1.4-5. Pliny's oversight of the building, cf. *ibid.* 3.4.2. The temple was begun ca. A.D. 96.

²⁸ *CIL* VIII 68=*ILTun* 202. L. Domitius Ahenobarbus (*PIR*² D 128) was a consul in 16 B.C. before becoming proconsul of Africa Proconsularis in 12 B.C. He was married to Antonia, the elder daughter of M. Antonius, was seen as moderate with his money (at least by Tacitus, cf. Tac. *Ann.* 4.44.1-2) and was also the patron of Buthrotum in the province of Achaia (*AE* 1985, 771).

Ahenobarbus is the first epigraphically attested patron of a municipality in North Africa, and provides an example of the rubric by which to determine the definition of a *patronus/a civitatis*.

The procedure for cooption is exemplified in the bronze fragments of a municipal charter from Malaca in Spain, a municipality granted *Latinitas* (Latin rights) by Vespasian. Its charter was promulgated under Domitian in A.D. 81-4.

61. Rubric concerning coopting a patron: No one should coopt a public patron for the municipal people of the municipality of Flavium Malacitanum or offer patronal right to him, unless by decree from the majority of the decurions that a decree will be made...²⁹

As is evident in the *lex Malacitana*, in the dedication to Ahenobarbus, and in Pliny's letter, the cooption of municipal patrons had certain conventions that I have likewise utilized in order to provide guidelines for the acceptance or rejection of certain inscriptions as indicating a municipal *patrona*.³⁰ First, the women must be referred to as a *patrona* or incorporated within a group of *patroni*; second, it must either be stated that they were patrons of the municipality (e.g. *patrona coloniae*, *patrona municipii*), which would infer a *decretum decurionum*, or the dedicator of the inscription must be the municipal *ordo* itself.³¹ Despite

²⁹ *CIL* II 1964=*ILS* 6089: '...[LXI] *r(ubrica) de patrono cooptando / ne quis patronum publice municipibus muni/cipii Flavi Malacitani cooptato patrocini/umve cui deferto nisi ex maioris partis de/curionum decreto quod decretum factum / erit...*'

³⁰ Nicols and Hemelrijk adopt this template as well. Nicols comments that municipal charters and imperial decrees delineated the format, and cites his own work on the *Tabulae Patronatus* (in *ANRW* II (1980) 13) and the *lex Ursonensis* (ca. 97/130) and *lex Malacitana* (1989) 119-20. Warmington does not specify his format for identifying patrons, and includes cases of *hospitium* along with "official" (i.e. by decree of the decurions) municipal patronage (1954) 39 cf. 41 no.1.

³¹ For dedications to the patroness of the municipality or colony note Table I: 2, 5 Patroness by decree of the decurions: Table I: 4. Patroness as inferred by the address of *patrona* and the dedicator being the municipal government: Table I: 11, 12.

these guidelines, it should be recognized that patronage was itself a highly flexible institution. Interpreted one way, the dedication to Ahenobarbus from Gurza could be seen as indicating female patrons as well, since his descendants are recognized. However, my methodology attempts to establish only those *patronae* directly and individually identified as such. The fact that no inscription survives formally referring to Pliny as *patronus* of any city in Italy again testifies the randomness of epigraphic survival.

As MacMullen has noted, the Latin term *patronus* is only awkwardly transliterated into Greek, and as he states, the Greeks lacked an exact equivalent for the institution.³² Patronesses of Greek cities were instead recognized for their benefaction (*euergeteia*) within a city rather than for patronage (*patrocinium*). The declaration of *patroni* or *patronae civitatis* should be viewed as an indication of Romanization, but it cannot be assumed that the failure to adopt this institution is indicative of a less Romanized area. The failure of Roman *patrocinium publicum* to be adopted and retained in all provincial areas is surely one reason why municipal *patronae* are only epigraphically attested to in Italy, Africa Proconsularis, and Numidia—places where the epigraphic habit was rich and the institution of civic patronage was perpetuated for many centuries.

³² MacMullen (1988) 82.

Chapter 4

The Epigraphic Habit and the Appearance of the Civic Patroness

The epigraphic record is not without biases, nor is it wholly representative. The sample of eighteen inscriptions examined in this paper is recognizably small, and it would be difficult to draw finite conclusions based on the epigraphic evidence alone.³³ As Macmullen and Meyer have argued, an increase in epigraphic testaments (in this case, the appearance of the epithet '*patrona civitatis*') is not *de facto* evidence for the emergence or decline of certain institutions, but is rather indicative of a rise and fall of epigraphy as a means of commemorating that institution.³⁴ As Macmullen reveals in his epigraphic sample, the frequency of Latin inscriptions in the Empire was at its height during Commodus and Septimius Severus.³⁵ As a result, there is a higher survival rate from that period, and in turn, possibly a higher rate of survival for inscriptions documenting civic *patronae*.

Meyer's assertion that epigraphy "depended on a belief in the value of Romanization" is also relevant to examining why *patronae* may rise and fall in the epigraphic record.³⁶ The

³³ The list is constantly increasing. From Nicols (1989) to Hemelrijk (2004), two more inscriptions were excavated indicating formerly unknown civic *patronae*. both from North Africa (P4; P8).

³⁴ Macmullen (1982); Meyer (1990) 74-5.

³⁵ Macmullen (1982) Table V: 243. His conclusions are based on a sample of 3,660 inscriptions: 1,970 datable to the half century, 922 datable to the century, and the rest datable to an imperial reign.

³⁶ Meyer (1990) 74.

numerous North African communities that received imperial favor in the second century may have felt obliged to display their *Romanitas* by adopting Roman institutions and commemorative habits. Does that mean that the epigraphic disappearance of the civic *patronae* represents a change in North African sentiment towards Roman institutions? This is possible, but it is more likely the result of a shift in the display of civic identity. Whereas a Roman identity had been advertised in the prosperous years of the second and early third century, the epigraphic commemoration of one's *Christianitas*, often through mosaic inscriptions, was the epigraphic trend of the late fourth and fifth centuries. The recent scholarship of Hemelrijk and Nicols, looking more abstractly at the concept of female patronage, excludes discussion of the epigraphic habit, but the trends in the mediums used for commemoration within the Roman Empire is certainly something to consider when examining these *patronae*.

Appendix (A) presents the most precise dating for the inscriptions indicating *patronae civitatis*. Nicols, noting that Seia and Abeiena are in the 190s and that Aradia Roscia was possibly co-opted in the fourth century, states that “from ca. 190 to 310 hereafter [will be] referred to as the “third century.”³⁷ Nicols is clearly focused more on the abilities of these women than their temporal distribution. Abeiena [P11] is certainly before 192, and Seia Potitia [P1] is also pre-Severan. There are many factors that may have contributed to the epigraphic testament of women as *patronae civitatis* beginning at this time. The phenomenon should not be seen as based solely upon the imperial “models” provided to municipalities by

³⁷ Nicols (1989) 120.

Julia Domna.³⁸ To be sure, the Severan women played the role of financial potentates, political mediators, and civil icons, but benefactresses and *flaminicae* already played this role on a local level, within Italian and provincial communities. The Severan women represent the strength—economic, social, and political—that elite women had gradually acquired over the course of the Principate. Imperial women such as Julia Mamaea and Julia Domna did not create the mold of the female patron; they were simply permitted a larger forum for their beneficence.

The first epigraphically attested North African *patrona civitatis*, Seia Potitia Consortiana [P1], came from a wealthy North African *clarissima familia*. Seia Potitia was co-opted as *patrona* of her hometown, Thibaris, around A.D. 190 and had a statue erected for her with the following dedication:

To the memory of the senatorial woman, Seia Potitiae Consortiana, patron, mother of Roscius Potitus Memmianus, a senatorial man, on account of her distinguished and innumerable generosity through which she enhanced the municipal order and her fatherland (*patriam*) with her donation, from the discerning municipal order, the community of the Thibaritans placed this here with public money.

The council of Thibaris recognized that the generosity of Seia Potitia was the reason for the statue, but also emphasized that she improved her '*patria*.' Although little is known about the career of her son, Roscius Potitus Memmianus, he appears to have been from Thibaris as well. From the name of her son, it is possible to deduce that the name of Seia Potitia's husband was likely Roscius. This marriage would have connected Seia Potitia to the Memmia and Aradia *gentes* in Bulla Regia, two prominent families with civic *patronae*

³⁸ "...honors accorded to the women of the Severan dynasty surely provided a model for municipalities to emulate" Nicols (1989) 139.

among their members.³⁹ Both Julia Memmia [P6], and later, Aradia Roscia [P10] were declared the ‘*patrona civitatis*’ of Bulla Regia, and can be connected to Furcilia Optata [P4], another *patrona* of Bulla Regia, and Calpurnia Aemiliana [P8], the *patrona* of Thibica. The dedication’s emphasis on the generosity and patriotism of the *patrona* are two trends in dedicatory language that will be investigated, but the strong familial connections between the civic *patronae* of North Africa begs another question: in North Africa, was the honorary title of ‘*patrona*’ customarily given only to certain women of prominent families? The city of Bulla Regia in Africa Proconsularis is evidence that this may have been the case.

³⁹ See Appendix B.

Chapter Five

A Family Tradition: Civic Euergetism and the Elite Families of Bulla Regia

5 [I u l] I A E M E [m] M I A [e]
 [P r i s] C A E R V F [a e] A E M I
 [i a n a] E F I D I A [a n a e] C L A R I S
 [s i m a e e t s a n c t i s] S [i m a e f] E M I N A E
 [C, M e m m i I] V L A L B I C O N S V L A R I S
 [v i r i p a r t] O N I E T A L V M N I F I L O B
 [p r a e c i] P V A M O P E R I S S V I T H E R M A R V M
 [m a g n i f i] C E N T I A M Q V A E T P A T R I A M
 [s u a m e x] X O R N A V I T E T S A L V T I C I V I V M
10 [- - - - -] I C O C O N S V L E R E
 [d i g n a t] A E S T
 [- -] B E N E E T E I V S
 [- - p a] T R O N A E E T...

To Julia Memmia Prisca Rufa Aemiliana Fidiana, a woman of a senatorial and most sacred family, daughter of Gaius Memmius [Fidus] Julius Albinus, a man of consular rank, patron of the municipality, and native, on account of the outstanding magnificence of her work, the baths, by which she both beautified her hometown and looked after the health of the citizens [---]ico, she was worthy [---] well and her [---] to the patroness and...

In the mid third century A.D., the colony of Bulla Regia⁴⁰ in Africa Proconsularis placed an honorary statue for their patron (*patrona*), Julia Memmia [P6], within the entrance to the large, newly constructed bath complex that Julia had erected for the city.⁴¹ The baths

⁴⁰ The city had become a free city under Augustus (Plin. *HN* 5.22), received the *ius Latii* under Vespasian, and been refounded as the *Colonia Aelia Hadriana Augusta Bulla Regia* under Hadrian (*CIL* VIII 25522). As such, Bulla Regia enjoyed full Roman status and tax exemption. For more on Bulla Regia, see Lepelley (1981) 87-90.

⁴¹ Refer to Appendix A for the civic *patronae* list P1-17. [P6]=Julia Memmia Prisca Rufa Aemiliana Fidiana.

were for public use, and were connected to a large portico that housed shops along the city's main road. Near the statue of Julia Memmia that stood in the vestibule was another, dedicated to Julia's father, C. Memmius Fidus Iulius Albius, who was the *patronus et alumnus* of Bulla Regia before his death (in the early third century).⁴² The statues were visual advertisements to the citizens and foreigners in Bulla Regia of the patronage, status, and origin of the Memmii. They perhaps also established a precedent for future Memmii and municipal patrons of Bulla Regia to uphold.

Julia Memmia was a member of the Julii Cereales and Memmii families, prominent senatorial families of African descent. The Memmii were originally from Bulla Regia, but also had ties to the cities of Carthage, Vina, and Gighthis within the province of Africa Proconsularis. The Memmii had attained senatorial status at the end of the Antonine era, and Julia's father had ennobled the family by attaining the consulship in A.D. 191/2. Although no record of his possible benefactions occurs in the archaeological remains of Bulla Regia, the city of Vina did honor him with a statue praising him as a "most rare friend" (*amico rarissimo*) and justifying the statue as "on account of the distinguished benevolence of his deeds" (*ob eximiam eius erga se benevolentiam*)—an allusion to euergetism of some kind.⁴³ It seems that Memmius' daughter, Julia Memmia, carried on the tradition of patronage and erected the baths for Bulla Regia from her own funds, a benefaction that likely cost over

⁴² *ILAfr.* 453. *PIR*² M 462 cf. Corbier (1982) 715. His *cursus honorum* is known by inscription on two statue bases, one in Bulla Regia (*CIL* VIII 25527) and another in Vina (*CIL* III 1528=*ILS* 9082; *ILS* 1110) and indicates that he was consul designate in A.D. 191. Broise and Thébert interpret the phrasing and form of the statue to indicate that it was erected for him *post mortem* as a tribute to Julia Memmia and the Memmian family (350). Warmington's date of 191/2 must be interpreting the statue as indicating that it was erected during Memmius' consulship.

⁴³ *CIL* VIII 12442=*ILS* 1110. Dated to c.191/2 since it mentions his consulship.

600, 000 sesterces, indicating the large personal wealth that she had at her disposal.⁴⁴

In terms of benefactions, Julia Memmia was not the first native civic patron to erect buildings in Bulla Regia; Marcus Tertullus, a senatorial man (*clarissimus vir*) from Bulla Regia and patron of the city (ca.196), left 30,000 sesterces in his will for his heirs to erect a temple for Diana, and was praised by the city as an *alumnus et patronus* who exercised distinguished liberality with his money (*eximiae liberalitatis*) towards his homeland (*in patriam*).⁴⁵ Marcus Rossius Vitulus, a relative of Julia Memmia by marriage, was also the *patronus et alumnus* of Bulla Regia between 209-211 and was praised along with the *Rossia gens* and his two sons “on account of their beneficent services” (*ob beneficia*).⁴⁶ In the early third century, Furcilia Optata [P4], a *patrona coloniae* and a member of the *Aradia gens* through her husband, Aradius Paternus, appears to have been co-opted as patron and honored with a statue. The decurions apparently attribute the honor as due to her extraordinary love towards the citizens and her fatherland (*singularis in cives et patriam amor*). Just as in the

⁴⁴ There is no co-patron or alternate money source mentioned, so that we can infer that the baths were erected *sua pecunia*. Duncan-Jones (1985) states that public baths, if extensive, were comparable to theaters in cost, c. 600,000 sesterces (29). Concerning the costs of baths, note Fagan (1999) 173-5.

⁴⁵ M. Tertullus: *PIR*² M 248. *CIL* VIII.25515: [*Pro salute Im*]p(eratoris) Caes(aris) divi M(arci) Antonini Pii Germanici Sarmat(ici) fil(ii) / divi Hadr(iani) adnepot(is) / [divi Antonini P]ii nepotis divi Traiani Part(hici) abnep(otis) divi Nervae adnepoti(s) / [L(uci) Septimi Severi P]ii Pertinacis Aug(usti) Arabici Adiabeni pont(ificis) max(imi) tribunic(ia) / [potestate III]I co(n)s(ulis) II p(atris) p(atriciae) et M(arci) Aureli Antonini Caes(aris) totiusq(ue) domus divin(ae) / [res p(ublica) coloniae B]ullens(ium) Regior(um) templum Dianae corolliticae / [quod ex testame]nto suo Marcius Tertullus c(larissimae) m(emoriae) v(ir) alumnus et patro/[nus] [rei publ(icae?) i]nter cetera eximiae liberalitatis suae in patriam / [documenta ex ~~HS~~ 3] mil(ibus) fieri iussit suscepta pecunia ab herede eius perfecit.

⁴⁶ *PIR*² R 102. The name of M. Rossius' son, Vitulus Iulianus (mentioned in the inscription) infers his mother was part of the *Iuliania gens* and was a contemporary of Julia Memmia (*ILTun.* 1248 = *IL Afr.* 455).

dedication to Seia Potitia in Thibaris, the city council of Bulla Regia the patriotism that these patrons exemplified through their generosity.⁴⁷

Later in the third century, Aradia Roscia Calpurnia [P10], a descendant of Julia Memmia, Marcus Rossius and Furcilia Optata, was also declared *patrona* of Bulla Regia and was decreed a statue. While the statue erected for her does not mention a benefaction, it stood directly in front of the theater at Bulla Regia, allowing for a possible connection with the various adornments added to it in the late third century. The dedicatory inscription read:

The town council erected this for their patron Aradia Roscia ---NE--- ---E---
Calpurnia Purgilla, a woman of the senatorial order, daughter of Publius
Aradius Roscus Rufinus Saturninus Tiberianicus.⁴⁸

The last epigraphically attested appearance of the Aradia *gens* is a City Prefect of Rome in 376.⁴⁹ In many ways the *Aradii* illustrate the extreme wealth and influence of some elite families in Africa and exemplify the close familial circle from which many benefactors and patrons of Bulla Regia came. The habit of co-opting native *clarissimi* as patrons also appears to have ended in the fourth century. M. Ceionius Iulianus, a *clarissimus* and proconsul of Africa, was co-opted as patron between 326-33 by virtue of his lineage (*a parentibus patrono*) and familial connection to Bulla Regia, but his dedication is the last epigraphic

⁴⁷ Furcilia Optata appears to have been a *patrona* of Bulla Regia (Hemelrijk (2004) no.11 and Corbier (1990: 827, 838)). The inscription has not been supplied by either source and remains unpublished, so that I am hesitant to utilize the data. However, Furcilia Optata's lineage and strong connection to Bulla Regia are reconstructed in Appendix B based on Hemelrijk and Corbier's references. For more on the Aradii and Optati, see Corbier (1981) 689-90.

⁴⁸ *CIL* VIII 14470=Table I:11.

⁴⁹ Birley (1988) 224-5.

evidence for native patrons in Bulla Regia.⁵⁰ The remaining, known *patroni* of Bulla Regia were all non-native *proconsulares Africae*.⁵¹

The final civic patrons of Bulla Regia were still *clarissimi*, but, unlike the native *patroni* and *patronae* of the city that preceded them, it does not appear that they erected any buildings within the city. The epigraphic record attests to only two reconstructions or building projects in the late third and early fourth century. During the reign of Diocletian and Maximian, L. Munatius Sabinus, a senatorial man from Bulla Regia, restored the dilapidated facades of some public buildings while serving as *curator rei publicae*, and in 361, the legate of Numidia, Flavius Atilius Theodotus, restored the city's *tabularium*.⁵² The prominent families of Bulla Regia who had been co-opted as patrons and helped to sustain the community with their euergetism in the late second and third centuries are no longer epigraphically attested in the fourth century. At this time, prominent families such as the

⁵⁰ M. Ceionius Iulianus signo Kamenius (*PLRE* p.476): *CIL* VIII 25525=AE 1906, 36: *Kamenii(!) / consularis / familiae viro / adque a paren/tibus patrono / Ceionio Iuliano / ampl(issimo) procons(uli) c(larissimo) v(iro) / vice sacra cog/no(s)cen[ti] / [sple]ndidissim[us] / [ordo Bull(ensium) Reg(iorum)] / [patrono posuit]*. Ceionius was also the patron of Madauros (*IAlg.* 4011; 4012). For another instance of a patron 'a parentibus' see *CIL* VIII 9260 = *CIL* VIII 14312 and Lepelley II (1981) 88-9. See especially Corbier (1990: 815-54) for the terms *patronus et alumnus* in inscriptions and the importance of parents' status for their progeny.

⁵¹ While two remain anonymous due to text corruption (both dated to ca. 336/7), the last, Antonius Marcellinus (ca.340) is addressed as patron along with his illustrious Italian family members (*illustris familiae*). Anonymous patron (1) (*PLRE* 37 p.1012) *ILAfr* 456; anonymous patron (2) (*PLRE* 41 p.1012): *CIL* VIII 25528; Antonius Marcellinus (*PLRE* p.548-9): *CIL* VIII 25524.

⁵² L. Munatius Sabinus (*Barb.* 1898a; *PLRE* Sabinus 15; Lepelley II (1981) 88): *CIL* VIII 25520=*ILS* 9358. Flavius Atilius Theodotus (*PLRE* p.905-6; Lepelley II (1981) 88; 90): *CIL* VIII 25521.

Aradii began to decline, and the church absorbed and performed many of the duties previously performed by municipal and senatorial elites within the community.⁵³

⁵³ The last attested representative of the Aradii attested is an urban prefect, Aradius Rufinus (*PIR*² A 1013a; *AE* 1970, 490), in A.D. 376 (Appendix B: Aradius Rufinus). See Lib. *Ep.* 737 for a letter written to Aradius Rufinus that is roughly contemporary. Also note Birley (1999) 224-5, Corbier (1982) 713 no.10 and Gilliam (1958) 240.

Chapter Six

Civil Munificence: The North African Ethos

At the end of the second century A.D., Tertullian hailed the prosperity of North Africa, exclaiming, ‘everywhere the community, everywhere life!’⁵⁴ Numerous building projects were undertaken at this time and the cities of North Africa grew under the patronage of the North African senatorial and equestrian *ordines* that grew correspondingly during the second century. North African men secured more positions in the imperial aristocracy in the second century than any other region outside of Italy.⁵⁵ The expansion in the imperial bureaucracy between the Trajanic and Severan eras offered an avenue for elite North Africans to attain distinction, citizenship, social advancement, and economic rewards. Epigraphy attests that in the mid-second century, North African municipalities began to extend *patrocinium publicum* to the members of these politically active and extremely wealthy “native” elites, encouraging the perpetuation of this patronage.

Economic prosperity and the eagerness of new North African *coloniae* and *municipia* to display their *Romanitas* encouraged building in North African cities. The number of inscriptions from the second century indicates the increased use of epigraphic commemoration to honor benefactors, decurions, and imperial officials; it is also at this time that civic *patronae* appear in the epigraphic record both in Italy and North Africa. If the

⁵⁴ Tert. *De An.* 30.3: ‘*Ubique res publica, ubique vita!*’

⁵⁵ Pelletier (1964) 511-31; Saller (1982) 145. This is based on a per capita study done by Pelletier.

epigraphic change can be taken to indicate a change in the traditional limits of civic patronage, municipalities began to co-opt largely wealthy *clarissimae*. Although civic *patronae* did occur in Italy, there appears to be a marked difference between Italian and North African *patronae*: while North African municipalities favored the cooption of native *clarissimae*, the epigraphic evidence does not reflect such a trend among the Italian *patronae*.⁵⁶ Though this apparent shift in civic patronage to include female elites may not have been legally restricted to *clarissimae*, there is only one epigraphic testament to an equestrian *patrona* in North Africa: Fabia Victoria [P9], the *patrona* of Cirta, Numidia. The wealth of elite women in North Africa and elsewhere within the Empire had increased dramatically between the late Republic and the Severans, making them prime resources for funding the building projects and public works that many cities wished to undertake.

⁵⁶ Here Boatwright's warning about Eastern women rings true. "Equally to be discounted are the explanations that the appearance of women in public is a sign of the economic and/or political decay of the Greek East. On the contrary, most of the inscriptions fall precisely in the period when the cities of Asia Minor were most thriving..."(1991) 259.

Chapter 7

Elite Women and Wealth in the Roman Empire

No community could afford to neglect the material resources which women commanded. That was the lasting dilemma of men in late antiquity: how to utilize women's wealth but not assign them tasks which required formal authority over their fellow citizens.⁵⁷

The civic *patronae* of Bulla Regia--Julia Memmia, Aradia Roscia, and Furcilia Optata--illustrate many facets of North African society in the second and third centuries. As it has been seen, these *patronae* represent a concentration of wealth and patronage honors within a select group of senatorial families—connected at varying degrees--in Bulla Regia and indeed within North Africa, the application of a traditionally male honorary title to women, and the apparent focus on native *patronae* in Africa Proconsularis and Numidia as opposed to Italy. More broadly, they exemplify the significant personal largesse of North African *clarissimae* and their attraction as possible civil benefactresses. The personal wealth of elite women must be discussed in order to understand why *patronae* appear epigraphically beginning in the second century, and in what ways they were able to patronize their cities.

Apuleius illustrated the wealth of some elite North African women when, in his *Apology*, he stated that his wife, Pudentilla, had control of 4,000,000 sesterces.⁵⁸ Apuleius

⁵⁷ Arjava (1996) 153.

⁵⁸ Apul. *Ap.* 71. Considering that it took 1,000,000 sesterces to qualify for the senatorial order, this is quite a sum. Pudentilla's family was rightfully worried that Apuleius was marrying Pudentilla for her wealth.

stated that her dowry was 300,000 sesterces, mentioned a piece of land which Pudentilla bought for 60,000 sesterces, and described the *sportula* she gave to the community for 50,000 sesterces.⁵⁹ She had a house on the sea, one at Oea (given to her by her sons), and a country house. All of her homes were lavishly decorated and had numerous servants. Pudentilla's donation of *sportula* to her hometown, in particular, indicates the expanding role of the wealthy female elite. Beginning largely in the first and second centuries A.D., wealthy women throughout the Empire began to take undertake the traditionally male roles of civil benefaction. Laws such as the *Lex Iulia Papia-Poppaea* allowed more freedom from tutelage, and as Claudius' extension of the *ius quattuor liberorum* exemplifies, women became increasingly recognizable figures in the social and economic fabric of Rome and the provinces.⁶⁰ The civic *patronae* examined in this paper are illustrative of this development, but they are not the singular testament to the co-option of women into traditionally male roles. Compare, for instance, the alimentary schemes established by Caelia Macrina and Pliny the Younger.

In A.D. 150, Caelia Macrina left money for the construction of a building (to which this inscription was originally attached) and also left funds for the alimentary scheme in the town of Tarracina, a wealthy port city in south central Italy. The scheme was a carefully

⁵⁹ Apuleius speaks at various times about the dowry (*Apol.* 92), land (101.5) the *sportula* (87), house at Oea (72), and servants (87) of Pudentilla. Note Hunik, "The enigmatic lady Pudentilla", *AJP* 119.2 (1998) 275-291 and A. Gutsfeld "Zur Wirtschaftsmentalität nichtsenatorischer provinzieller Oberschichten: Aemilia Pudentilla und ihre Verwandten.", *Klio* 74 (1992) 250-68.

⁶⁰ Ulp. 11.1, 18, 25, 27; Suet. *Aug.* 34-5; *Claud.* 19: Claudius extended this right to encourage female grain importers to increase commercial trade.

designed variant on the typical Trajanic alimentary scheme, providing money for more girls, over a longer period of time than the imperial model.⁶¹

Caelia Macrina, daughter of Gaius, allotted 300,000 sesterces in her will to be used [for the erection of this building]. She left [--] sesterces for its decoration and maintenance. For the populace of Tarracina, in memory of her son, Macer, she left 1,000,000 sesterces, so that the income from the money might be given to 100 boys [and to 100 girls] under the title of ‘alimenta’: 5 denarii each month to each citizen girl up to the age of 14, so that 100 girls and 100 boys may always receive it in succession.⁶²

Likewise, Pliny the Younger left money for the construction of buildings and to supplement the alimentary scheme in his native town of Comum.⁶³

...He left [--] sesterces in his will for the construction of baths with an additional 300,000 sesterces for decoration, and in addition to that 200,000 for upkeep...he likewise left to the municipality 1,866, 666 sesterces the income from which he desired to have applied thereafter to an annual banquet for the public. In his lifetime he gave 500,000 sesterces for the support of the boy and girls of the plebs...

⁶¹ For the Trajanic alimentary scheme, see Dio 68.5 and Plin. *Pan.* 26-8. For inscriptions concerning the scheme, see *CIL* XI 1147; VI 1492.

⁶² *CIL* X 6328=ILS 6278: *Caelia C(ai) f(ilia) Ma[c]rin[a] ex [test]amento [H]S C[CC(!)] fieri iussit in cuius ornatum / et tu[te]lam HS [3] reliq[u]id eadem in memoria[m] Macri fili(i) sui Tarricinensibus / HS M(milia) r[eli]quid ut ex reditu eius pecuniae darentur cen[t]um pueris alimentor[um] nomine sing(ulis) / mensib[us] si[ng](ulis) pueris colonis \ (denarii) V puellis colonis s[i]ng(ulis) in mens(es) sing(ulos) \ (denarii) IIII pueris usq(ue) ad annos XVI puellis / [usq(e) ad] annos XIII ita ut semper C pueri C puellae per successiones accipiant.*

⁶³ *CIL* V 5265=ILS 2927= AE 1947, 65: *...therm[as ex HS 3] adiectis in / ornatum HS CCC(milibus) [3 et eo amp]lius in tutela[m] / HS CC(milibus) t(estamento) f(ieri) i(ussit) [item in alimenta] libertor(um) suorum homin(um) C / HS XVIII(centena) LXVI(milia) DCLXVI rei [p(ublicae) legavit quorum inc]rement(a) postea ad epulum / [p]leb(is) urban(ae) voluit pertin[ere 3]s dedit in aliment(a) pueror(um) / et puellar(um) pleb(is) urban(ae) HS [D(milia) 3 et] in tutelam bybliothe/cae HS C(milia). cf. Plin. *Ep.* 7.18. Also note that a privately funded alimentary scheme existed in North Africa (*CIL* VIII.1641=ILS 6818). Also see his letter on the scheme: *Ep.* 7.18.*

Just as Julia Memmia had erected baths and porticoes for her native city, Caelia and Pliny also used their largesse to benefit their respective *patriae*.

Yet another traditionally male role that women began to play in the late first and second centuries is that of *patrona collegii*. An inscription from Picenum indicates the manner in which traditionally female epithets such as *sanctissima* and *piissima* continued to be applied to women, even when fulfilling roles outside of the *domus*.

Gaius Vetus Polus erected this for his most virtuous (*sanctissimae*) wife along with Gaius Vettius Polus, in honor of his mother, Alliena Berenice, daughter of Titus, the most pious patron (*piissimae patronae*) of the association of *fabri* and *centoniarium*. The place was designated by decree of the decurions.⁶⁴

Perhaps the most famous example of a patroness of a *collegium* is Eumachia, a *sacerdos publica*, benefactress, and *patrona* of the *collegium* of the fullers in Pompeii.⁶⁵ Eumachia inherited large sums of money from her husband, and continued to help manage the family's brick business after his death. Probably in an attempt to get her son elected, around A.D. 2, she erected a large building in the forum of Pompeii. Patrons of *collegia* often erected building for the associations they patronized, and were honored with statues, as the fullers honored Eumachia. Claudia Iusta was honored with a statue by the *dendrophoros* of Regium Iulum 'ob munificentiam' and Aemilia Synethia was honored for her benefactions by the *dendrophoros* of Brixia.⁶⁶ Already in the first century, wealthy women built buildings and

⁶⁴ CIL IX 5368 : *Allienae T(iti) f(iliae) / Berenice / C(aius) Vettius Polus / uxori / sanctissim(ae) et / C(aius) Vettius Polus / matri / pi(i)ssimae patr(ona)e / col(legia) fabr(um) et cent(oniariorum) / l(ocus) d(atu)s d(ecreto) d(ecurionum)*.

⁶⁵ ILS 6368.

⁶⁶ CIL X 7; CIL V 4388 = *Inscr.It.*-10-5, 932. Other *patronae collegii* that erected buildings: CIL X 810; 813. Statues erected for *patronae collegii*: CIL X 1786; II 1182; V 865, 2071, 7470.

funded feasts for associations as their *patrona*, why not then for their communities as a *patrona civitatis*?

Chapter 8

Benefactresses, *Patronae*, and the Expectation of Euergetism

The expectations for a civic *patrona* can perhaps be further illustrated by examining the role of women in North Africa as benefactresses and the language used to commemorate them.⁶⁷ A number of building inscriptions indicate that North African benefactresses also held the positions of *flaminica* and *sacerdos publica* within their cities. Dedications to these women often establish a connection between euergetism and the honorary offices they received. It is possible that this *quid pro quo* relationship also existed between community councils and elite women who received the honor of *patrona civitatis*. Furthermore, these benefaction inscriptions indicate a distinct vocabulary associated with euergetism that is also evident in the *patronae* inscriptions.

The benefactresses of Thugga in Africa Proconsularis provide a vivid picture of the role of elite women in a North African city that shifted from peregrine to Roman status. This small town in the *pertica Carthaginiensis* of Africa Proconsularis is the best archaeologically preserved site within the province.⁶⁸ In A.D. 36/7 a freedman of the *pagus* (town) named Licinius Tyrannus restored a temple there along with its statues, as well as a temple with

⁶⁷ Note Appendix E: The North African Benefactresses

⁶⁸ Broughton (1929) 213-16; Duncan-Jones (1985) 59: 29-31. As a result Thugga was exempt from taxes.

shrines to Ceres.⁶⁹ His wife, a freedwoman, also built a temple, this one to Concordia.⁷⁰ She appears to have been a *flaminica perpetua* (lifetime priestess), as was Julia Paula Laenatiana, who built a substantial temple to Minerva *sua pecunia* (from her own funds) between 146/160.⁷¹ Under Hadrian, Quintus Maedius Severus, along with his daughter, a *flamina perpetua* named Maedia Lentula, dedicated a temple of Fortuna. The temple cost over 70,000 sesterces.⁷² Although women continued on as benefactresses well into the Severan era and beyond, Thugga exemplifies the roles and abilities of elite women in North African towns before Septimius Severus became emperor.⁷³

Women were recognized sources of money and benefaction within North African municipalities, and they paid for priesthoods that were largely tied to their socio-economic position.⁷⁴ As can be seen in Thugga and other areas, *flaminicae* seem to have been expected

⁶⁹ AE 1969-70, 651; 448.

⁷⁰ AE 1969-70, 650: [V]eneri Concordiae sacrum / [Licinia] M(arci) l(iberta) Prisca Licini Tyranni uxor flamin[ica perpetua?] / [s(ua)]. She is noted as wife of Licinius Tyrannus, but this is a display of her familial association (as *liberta* denotes her social status) rather than a case of attributing the benefaction to him in any way. Although the bottom of the stone has been corrupted, the spaces seem to indicate the word '*sua*': *sua pecunia*. The temple was then probably erected from Licinia's own money, noteworthy especially for a freedwoman.

⁷¹ CIL VIII 26490; ILAfr. 518.

⁷² CIL VIII 26471 = ILTun. 1392 = Dougga 136 = AE 1904, 116. cf. Duncan-Jones (1985) 30.

⁷³ Other female benefactresses in Thugga: Nahania Victoria in 184 was a *flaminica* who dedicated a temple to Mercury (CIL VIII 26482); the *flaminica perpetua* Asicia Victoria, also a member of the Victorii, was a benefactor as well (CIL VIII 26593). Gabinia Hermonia built a temple to Caesar *sua pecunia* in 213/214 (ILAfr. 527), and a later *flaminica perpetua*. Botria Fortunata, built a temple to Tellus in 261 (CIL VIII 26558).

⁷⁴ Briand-Ponsart comments on the price of the flaminiate: 'Ces femmes possédaient une solide fortune, prouvée par le montant élevé des sommes honoraires qu'exigeait l'obtention des magistratures et sacerdoces de la cité. Par comparaison avec le montant des sommes

to enrich their cities with benefactions and to pay a *summa honoraria*, just as decurions paid the *summa honoraria* for their office and then undertook building projects promised before obtaining it. A statue base from Henchir in Africa Proconsularis around the second or third century indicates the link between benefaction and honorary offices.

The town council decreed a statue for Modia Quintia, daughter of Quintus Modus Felix, *flaminica perpetua*, who, because of the honor of the priesthood, adorned the portico with a marble pavement, coffered the ceilings and the columns, going beyond the original estimation of cost with a larger contribution and apart from the statutory entry fee also [erected] an aqueduct. By decree of the town council from town funds.⁷⁵

Though Nicols views the co-option of municipal *patronae* as a method for cities to strengthen their political ties with prominent senators, it is possible to deduce from other positions held by women in North Africa that there was a strong economic expectation tied to all municipal offices. Would the honorary position of *patrona* have been different? Dedicatory inscriptions commemorating the benefactions given as a result of public office had a distinct language, and as it will be shown, closely resembles the dedicatory language used for *patronae*.

Between A.D.168 and 170, the decurion Memmius Pecuaris Marcellinus and his wife Iunia Saturnina erected a temple for Capitoline Jupiter, built a gymnasium, donated sculptures, funded theatrical competitions, and held a feast for the *pagus et civitas* of Numiul in Africa Proconsularis.⁷⁶ A large marble tablet commemorates these benefactions and indicates that the couple erected the temple for their homeland (*patriae suae pago*), having promised to erect the building once they became *flamines* (*ob honorem flamon(i)*). The

honoraires dues pour les autres fonctions, il faut estimer celui du flaminicat selon toute probabilité à 20,000 sesterces' (1999) 16.

⁷⁵ *CIL* VIII 12317=*CIL* VIII 23888.

⁷⁶ *CIL* VIII 26121 = *AE* 1892,145.

temple was apparently small, and cost only 20,000 sesterces, a sum noted in the dedication as given with generosity (*liberalitas*).⁷⁷ In the late third century, Annia Aelia Restituta received five statues for a theater she had promised (costing 400,000 sesterces) to Calama in Numidia after becoming a *flaminica perpetua*. The first dedication notes that the statues were on account of the *liberalitas* of her promise, the erection of the theater, and her *merita*; the second emphasizes that the benefactions were from her own money, for the adorning of her homeland (*pecunia sua exornanda[e pat]riae*).⁷⁸ These inscriptions again exemplify the expectation of benefaction in return for public office, but they also illustrate the focus on the *patria* in North African dedicatory inscriptions for benefactors, as well as the language used to commemorate them.

Although the position of *flaminica* may have only required money and canvassing to attain, the *patronae* inscriptions indicate that the position of civic *patrona* in North Africa largely favored those in the senatorial order. The role of civic *patronus* had become open to equestrian and decurial men. However, the evidence suggests that even outside of Bulla Regia, the honorary title of *patrona* was reserved for women in prominent native families

⁷⁷ Cf. Vibia Asicianetis held games and feasts for receiving her flamine in Thugga. (...*ob flam(onium) HS C mil(ibus) n(ummum) patriae suae donaverit...*) (Dougga 73). The *flaminica perpetua* Botria Fortunata Victoria erected a temple from her own money ‘*ob summam honoris flaminatus*’ (Dougga 40).

⁷⁸ (1) *CIL VIII 5365 = CIL VIII 17495 = ILAlg. I 286: Anniae Aeliae Restitutae / flam(inicae) perp(etuae) ob in/signem liberalita/tem pollicitatio/nis eius HS CCCC(milium) n(ummum) / at theatrum faci/endum cui cum or/do ob eam causam sta/tuas quinque de pu/blico pon[i] censuis/set etiam ob merita / L(uci) Anni Aeli Clemen/tis flam(inis) Aug(usti) p(er)p(etui) patris / eius cui aere conla/to universi cives sta/tuam posuissent / [---] unive[rsus(?)] / [---] d(ecreto) d(ecurionum) also (2) *CIL VIII 5366 = ILAlg. I.287: Anniae Aeliae L(uci) fil(iae) Restit[u]/[t]ae flam(inicae) Augg(ustorum) [p(er)]/p(etuae) ob egregiam in / [s]uos cives libera/[l]itatem theatro / pecunia sua exor/nanda[e pat]riae / s[p]onte p[rom]isso / ad referendam gr[a]/tiam ordo univer/sus statua[s] n(umero) quinq(ue) de pu[bl](ico)] faciend[as] / decrevit.**

with a history of patronage and benefaction.⁷⁹ Oscia Modesta [P7], the patroness of Avioccala in Africa Proconsularis, illustrates many of the features of the North African *patronae* and of the benefactress.

Around A.D. 240/50 Oscia Modesta was commemorated with a statue in her native city of Avioccala in Africa Proconsularis. The inscription on the statue read:

The *civitas* of Avioccala erected this for Oscia Modesta Cornelia Patruina Publina, a woman of the senatorial order, a citizen and patron, on account of her distinguished services (*merita*) by which she enhanced her country (*patria*) of origin, by decree of the decurions, from public money.⁸⁰

At the same time that Oscia was patroness of Avioccala, her son, C. Arrius Calpurnius Quirina Longinus, was became consul (ca.238) and a patron of Avioccala,⁸¹ and her husband, Caius Arrius Calpurnius Frontinus Honoratus, served as suffect consul and later the patron of Antiochia Pisidia in the province of Galatia.⁸² Oscia married into the prominent Arria *gens*, and was connected by marriage to the Calpurnia *gens* that Calpurnia Ceia Aemiliana [P8] also belonged to. Marcus Flavius Oscius Honoratus, her grandson, later honored her with a statue, and the Arrii continued to be an influential family in Avioccala.⁸³ Oscia married into a

⁷⁹ Note Van Bremen's comment that "women could only act within the framework created by their male relatives. An imitation of socially accepted and honorable activities of men seemed all that was possible; and then only to a certain extent; the outer limits were formed by the types of activities of male benefactors, the inner ones by the ever present ideology of the modest, silent, loving wife" (1983) 236.

⁸⁰ *CIL* VIII 23832. cf. Appendix A.1: [P7].

⁸¹ *PIR*² A 1036. Patron of Avioccala: *CIL* VIII 23831.

⁸² *PIR*² A 1095. Patrona of Antiochia Pisidia: *AE* 1914,130.

⁸³ *PIR*² F 200; Statue dedicated to Oscia: *CIL* VI 147.

family of patrons, and the dedicatory inscription to her infers that she continued this patronage as a civic benefactor of her *patria*.

It would be difficult to interpret the phrase '*merita quibus illustrat originis suae patriam*' as referring to anything other than civic benefaction. Oscia could not defend her *patria* in court, nor could she protect it with any military force, as the military legate of Africa could. The primary role that a *patrona* could play was to continue the tradition of civil euergetism practiced within their families. The term '*merita*' in dedicatory inscriptions has been shown by Forbis to indicate benefactions, and it is by this method that Oscia could enhance her *patria* of Avioccata.⁸⁴ While the term *merita* explicitly indicates benefaction, not all dedicatory inscriptions to *patronae* explain the reason for co-option. In these cases, it may be beneficial to look at the history of benefaction within certain families in order to show a possible reason for co-option.

The excavation of an inscription in the ancient city of Thibica, not far from Thuburbo Maius, indicates that a prominent local *clarissima* named Calpurnia Ceia Aemiliana was decreed municipal patron by the citizenry of Thibica. The dedication is inscribed on a large marble statue base and is datable to the second quarter of the 3rd century, probably during the reign of Severus Alexander.

The citizenry of Thibica erected this for their patron, Calpurnia Ceia Aemiliana, a senatorial woman, wife of Quintus Aradus Rufinus, a senatorial man, by decree of the decurions.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Forbis (1990) 504.

⁸⁵ *AE* 1995, 1653.

The inscription tightens the social network from which the attested *patronae* came from; establishing a familial tie between the Calpurnia *gens* and the Aradii. It appears that if Aradia Roscia [P10] and Quintus Aradius Rufinus were indeed related, there is a link between Calpurnia Ceia Aemiliana and Aradia Roscia through this marriage. Aradia Roscia was, herself, the recognized *patrona* of the city of Bullia Regia in Africa Proconsularis, and was acknowledged as such in the late 3rd or early fourth century.⁸⁶ By the time that Aradia Roscia and Calpurnia Ceia Aemiliana were declared patrons by their respective towns, the Aradii had had a long history of patronage in Africa Proconsularis. Although there is admittedly no record of benefaction from these women, their families were known to be prominent benefactors and patrons. In 321, the great-grandson of Ceia Aemiliana, Q. Aradius Valerius Proculus, was simultaneously patron of Thaenae, Hadrumentum, Faustiana, Mididi, Zama Regia, and Cilium, and his brother built porticoes and a temple for the city of Carthage.⁸⁷

Another patroness, Aelia Celsinilla [P3] is an example of a *patrona* who was co-opted despite the defamation of her father, and perpetuated the patronage of her family in Thuburbo Minus and Bulla Regia. In the early third century, a statue was erected for Aelia Celsinilla in Thuburbo Minus. The dedication indicates the status of Aelia and possible reason for her association with the colony; her son, Aelius Celsinianus was serving as *curator rei publicae* there.

The *universus ordo* of the most splendid colony of VIII *Octavanorum Thuburbitanae* erected this for Aelia Celsinilla, a woman from a consular family, perpetual patron, mother of Celsinianus, a man from a consular family

⁸⁶ *CIL* VIII 14470. cf. *PIR*² A 1013; Barb.1970.

⁸⁷ *PIR*² A 1017. Thaenae: *CIL* VI 1685; Hadrumentum: *CIL* VI 1687; Faustiana: *CIL* VI 1688; Mididi: *CIL* VI 1689; Zama Regia: *CIL* VI 1686; Cilium: *CIL* VI 1684. Lucius Aradius Valerius Proculus Populonium, Quintus' brother, built a temple and porticoes for Carthage (*CIL* VIII 24521 = *AE* 1898, 8).

and curator.⁸⁸

Aelia is part of the Aelia *gens* that was certainly of African origin, and likely concentrated in Bulla Regia.⁸⁹ Her father was Aelius Celsus, a consul of the second century who was put to death between 196-7 by Septimius Severus, if the *Historia Augusta* can be believed.⁹⁰ She seems to have married a man named Agrius and had a son (mentioned in the inscription), (Aelius) Celsinianus. Despite the defamation of her father, Aelia continued to be a prominent woman within her community and to raise a son who would eventually become a consul himself. While the inscription on the statue base erected for Aelia does not indicate the reasons for her cooption, the wealth and prominence of the Aelii were well established and continued on into the third century. A third century statue base inscription from Bulla Regia in the temple of Apollo honored the benefactress of the temple, Agria Tannonia, noting her as the daughter of Aelius Celsinianus. Aelia Celsinilla was then the grandmother of the benefactress, Agria Tannonia.⁹¹ Agria continued the euergetism of the Aelii and Agrii in Bulla Regia, conduct that suggests the continued prominence of the family as benefactors. This history of patronage and benefaction by the Aelii is perhaps a reason for Aelia's cooption as *patrona* in Thuburbo Minus.

The emphasis on perpetuating the patronage of native, elite families is evident in the dedicatory inscriptions for Publilia Caeciliana [P5a], Publilia Numisiana,[P5b] and their brothers--the young grandchildren of the legate of Numidia, Petronius Iustus--and has been

⁸⁸ *IL Afr.* 414 = *AE* 1915, 37.

⁸⁹ *PIR*² A 290.

⁹⁰ *PIR*² A 158; *HA v. Sev.* 13.2-8.

⁹¹ *CIL* VIII 25523 and *AE* 1906,142.

exemplified linguistically by the use of the term *patrona perpetua* in the dedication to Aelia Celsinilla [P3]. The emphasis on continued patronage has also been illustrated by the cooptation of *patronae* from families with a history of civic patronage, as in the case of Julia Memmia [P6]. This patronage trend is apparent in a dedication on an immense marble plaque excavated in Utica at the foot of the acropolis.

The colony, Julia Aelia Hadriana Augusta Utica, erected this for Lucius Accius Julianus Asclepianus, a man of the senatorial order and of consular rank, curator of the community of Utica and for Gallonia Octavia Marcella, the daughter of Gaius and wife of Lucius, and for their daughters, Acciae Heuresis Venantius, and Accia Asclepianilla Castora, girls of the senatorial order.⁹²

Lucius Accius Iulianus Asclepianus was a *consul suffectus* at an unknown date during the second or third century, and a native of Utica.⁹³ His children, Accia Asclepianilla Castorea [P2b] and Accia Heuresis Venantium [P2c], and his wife, Gallonia Octavia Marcella [P2a], are named along with himself as patrons of Utica.⁹⁴ Lucius Accius Julianus appears to be the grandson of Accius Julianus, a suffect consul in the middle of the second century and a *clarissimus* of African descent. Accius Julianus' marriage to an elite woman from Saepinum led to an Italian branch of the family, the Neratii of Saepinum.⁹⁵ Although not much is

⁹² *CIL* VIII 1181.

⁹³ *PIR*² A 27 cf. *FOS* (1) p.26; Nicols (1989) 2; Hemelrijk (2004) 2,3,12. Nicols notes him as Barb. 615, but he is in fact Barb.1955. Concerning Lucius Accius' curatorship and the role of *curatores rei publicae*, see Lucas (1940) 60, 64.

⁹⁴ Accia Aclepianilla Castorea: *PIR*² A 29; Accia Heuresis Venantium: *PIR*² A 30; Gallonia Octavia Marcella: *PIR*² G 52.

⁹⁵ Accius Julianus: *PIR*² A 26; cf. *CIL* IX 245. See Appendix B for Neratii connection and also note Corbier (1982) 739.

known about the Accii in Utica, Accius Julianus' adlection into the Senate appears to have first established them as a family of the senatorial *ordo*.

As *curator rei publicae*, Lucius Accius would have been responsible for the oversight of building projects and many aspects of city planning. As Lucas has noted, the *curator* is often found in inscriptions to have erected buildings for the city while *curator*, but these were often men chosen from outside the community in which they served.⁹⁶ It is possible that, because Lucius Accius and his family were from Utica, the city saw an opportunity to maintain the benefactions he had bestowed as *curator*, and thus extended the honor of *patrocinium publicum* to his family. This is also a possible explanation for why Aelia Celsinilla [P3] was co-opted as patron of Thurburbo Minus during the curatorship of her son, Agrius Celsinianus. The language of honorary inscriptions is often ambiguous, and can only leave us to guess as to why many of these *patronae* were co-opted as patrons. Perhaps a look at the similarities in language and archaeological contexts between the North African and Italian *patronae* inscriptions, as well as an examination of the common economic conditions in North Africa and Italy at the time can further illuminate whether the main role of civic *patronae* was indeed as benefactresses.

⁹⁶ Lucas (1940) 64-8.

Chapter 9

North African Patronae: Adapting an Italian Model?

Eighteen *patronae* inscriptions is a recognizably small number with which to attempt to examine trends. However, since the occurrence of *patronae* is only epigraphically attested in two regions, North Africa and Italy, it may prove instructive to compare these *patronae* and to identify any possible similarities or differences. Among the instances of note are establishing indications of Italian parallels in honorary language, reasons for cooptation, and the social status of the Italian *patronae* compared to that of the *patronae* of North Africa.⁹⁷ These Italian *patronae* inscriptions may also serve to indicate possible reasons for lacunae in the epigraphic record, to exemplify the large personal wealth of many women in the Roman empire further, and to depict the capabilities of Italian women in the public sphere.

The first epigraphic evidence for a civic *patrona* in Italy is a dedication from Pisaurum. A large marble statue was erected here between 180 and 192 A.D. for an equestrian *flaminica* and *patrona* of the municipality named Abeiena Balbina [P11].

The Urban Plebs of Pisaurum erected this for Abeiena Balbina, daughter of Gaius, *flaminica* of Pisaurum and Ariminum, and patron of the municipality of Pitinum Pisaurum in this the year of the quinquennial of her husband, Petinus Aper, on account of their meritorious actions, and to whom [Commodus (?)] granted the *ius commune liberorum*. The location was given by decree of the decurions.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Hemelrijk establishes Laberia Hostilia Crispina as the first attested *patrona* (AE 1964, 106); however, she is addressed as such by the *mulieres Trebulanae*, not the *ordo* of the town (2004) 236-7. Thus I have excluded her from my list of *patronae*.

⁹⁸ CIL XI 6354=ILS 6655. The city had a history of declaring municipal patrons (cf. CIL XI 6332; ILS 5711; ILS 1187).

The statue was apparently erected while her husband was quinquennalis, but while noting their marriage, the dedication does not refer to him as a patron along with her. However it should be noted that the reason given for the statue is on account of *their* meritorious actions (*ob merita eorum*).⁹⁹ Both appear to have been natives of the town of Pisaurum, and only to have been in the decurial *ordo*. The dedication to Abeiena reveals a possible reason for the erasures on many patronage inscriptions, and also strongly parallels the language used for Oscia Modesta [P7], the *patrona* of Aviocala in Africa Proconsularis, and for many of the building benefactresses in North Africa.

As the inscription indicates, the couple was granted the right to inherit from each other in their wills (*ius liberorum commune*)—an indication that the pair either did not have any children or had less than the three required of Roman citizens in order to merit the right.¹⁰⁰ Before Carcalla, few women are attested to have received the grant without qualification; thus the statement of the grant can confidently be seen here as a status symbol. As a result of receiving the *ius liberorum*, Abeiena would have been free from male tutelage, had control over her own money. The grant also indicates she had few children who could inherit this wealth, if any. These were perhaps all reasons that the town of Pisaurum courted her as *patrona*. The granter of the right has been erased, but based upon the archaeological context and the granting of the *ius commune liberorum*, the inscription can be firmly dated to between 180 and 192, during the reign of Commodus. The erasure spacing seems to be

⁹⁹ No other dedication survives indicating Petinus Aper, but it would have been common to erect a statue for both benefactors.

¹⁰⁰ For the issuance of the *ius liberorum* note *Cod. Theod.* 8.17.4; 15.14.9. Evans Grubbs notes this inscription as an example of the *ius liberorum commune* and also supports its dating with a *terminus ante quem* of 192 on account of the erasure (2002) 40-2.

compatible with the reconstruction of “Caesar Marcus Aurelius Commodus Antoninus Augustus” at the bottom of the inscription and thus can establish a *terminus ante quem* of A.D. 192. Individual erasure was a means of eliminating the name of an emperor from a monument or record due to a *damnatio memoriae*, but monuments with imperial addresses were often destroyed or defaced as well.

Something that has gone unconsidered by recent scholarship on patronage in North Africa is that every emperor between Lucius Verus’ death in A.D. 169 and the accession of Septimius Severus in A.D. 193 received a posthumous *damnatio memoriae*, with the exceptions of Marcus Aurelius and Pertinax.¹⁰¹ Likewise, fifteen of the next thirty-three emperors or claimants who seized the purple in the time between Septimius Severus and Constantine suffered memory sanctions.¹⁰² As Varner has proven, there was a marked change in the practice of *damnatio memoriae* under Septimius Severus. During his reign, they were enforced against a great number of the former emperors and Septimius’ contemporary rivals.¹⁰³ Varner sees the greatest number of memory sanctions occurring during the Severan

¹⁰¹ Hemelrijk, Nicols, Saller, and Warmington do not identify memory sanctions as possible reasons for the destruction of patronage inscriptions, which largely survive as honorary statues. Note that Avidius Cassius, Commodus, Didius Julianus, Pescennius Niger, and Clodius Albinus all received memory sanctions.

¹⁰² Geta, Macrinus, Heliogablus, Maximinus Thrax, Pupienus, Balbinus, Trebonianus Gallus, Aemilianus, Carus, Numerianus, Carinus, Maximianus, Maximinus Daia, Maxentius and Licinius all received memory sanctions.

¹⁰³ Varner (2004) 156-199. Varner delves into Septimius’ damnations of the contestants for the position of *princeps*, Didius Julianus, Clodius Albinus, and Pescennius Niger and notes that he damned not only the men but their families. Thus the prominent Albini of North Africa would have been damned. Erasures of his name are evident: cf. *CIL* VII 17726 and *AE* 1926,144, both from Numidia.

era, an occurrence that may help to explain the relative paucity of patronal dedications preceding the Severans.

When considering how *damnatio memoriae* affected epigraphic survival in Italy and North Africa, consideration should be given to Harriet Flower's point that often "individual officials exhibited zeal in imposing sanctions locally in the hope of furthering their own careers in Rome."¹⁰⁴ Since patronal tablets and dedications often contained imperial references within them, and were frequently erected for families who enjoyed the *amicitia* of the emperor, memory sanction is at least one cause of lacunae in the epigraphic record.¹⁰⁵ While some towns, such as Pisaurum, may have wished to simply erase the name of the emperor(s), others may have simply destroyed the statue. All sixteen of the identified *patronae* are without imperial references, and only Vibia Aurelia [P17] has an emperor referred to, her father, Marcus Aurelius, and her "brother", Septimius Severus; neither of these emperors had memory sanction imposed upon him.¹⁰⁶ It is possible (but not beyond proof) that more *patronae* existed. The distinguished status of the *patronae* made connections with the emperor a possibility (as with Aelia Celsinilla's father, Aelius Celsus); hence inscriptions connecting them with sanctioned emperors might become vulnerable.

¹⁰⁴ Flower (2001) 60.

¹⁰⁵ For an example of a dedication by a municipal patron to the emperor, cf. AE 1985, 873 from Thamugadi in Numidia: *Imp(eratore) Caes(are) divi Traiani / Parthici fil(io) divi Nervae / nepote Traiano Hadriano / Aug(usto) pont(ifice) max(imo) trib(unicia) pot(estate) V co(n)s(ule) III p(atre) p(atriciae) / P(ublius) Metilius Secundus leg(atus) Aug(usti) pro pr(aetore) / patronus coloniae dedicavit / d(ecreto) d(ecurionum) p(ecunia) p(ublica)*. Hadrian, it can be noted, did not suffer memory sanctions.

¹⁰⁶ As Hemelrijk notes, this was a fictive, posthumous adoption (2004) 239.

Abeiana's inscription represents a possible reason why there are not more epigraphic testaments to *patronae*. As is the case with most of the *patronae*, however, it does not explicitly note the reasons for cooption. The change in medium from a dedication to a *tabula patronatus* allows more insight into how and why *patronae* may have been co-opted. In A.D. 242, an Italian *clarissima* and *sacerdos* of Venus Felix, Nummia Varia [P13], was co-opted as patron of the town of Peltuinum Vestinum in Italy and commemorated on a bronze *tabula patronatus*.¹⁰⁷ It is the only *tabula patronatus* that survives which commemorates a civic *patrona*. Nummia was from Beneventum and the daughter of M. Nummius Umbrius Primus Senecius Albinus, a consul of 206 and the *patronus* of the town of Beneventum in southern Italy, and the sister of M. Nummius Senecio Albinus, a consul of 227.¹⁰⁸ The inscription emphasizes her distinguished birth and the continuation of the patronage established by her parents (*et parentes eius semper egerunt*). However there is evidence that she was also a benefactor for the town.

The inscription notes the reasons for her cooption as on account of her goodwill (*adfectio*) and for the institution of her benevolence (*benevolentia*), but it is the only evidence of political duties as well. The *tabula patronatus* states that the town asks that "she intervene with the authority belonging to her rank (*auctoritate dignitatis suae*) and protect us and keep us (Privernum) safe." While this was perhaps a genuine sentiment of the community, it reflects the format for *tabulae patronatus* in general.¹⁰⁹ The *tabulae* were often according to

¹⁰⁷ *CIL* IX 3429=*ILS* 6110.

¹⁰⁸ M. Nummius Umbrius Primus Senecius Albinus: *PIR*² N 238; Corbier (1982) 143-4. M. Nummius Senecio Albinus: *PIR*² N 235 cf. *CIL* V 4347.

¹⁰⁹ cf. *SupIt*-9-A, 35 = *AE* 1937, 121.

a basic template established by the community, so that every time a new patron was co-opted, the name of the patron could simply be inserted. The inscription certainly infers that Nummia was selected as patron of her city for political reasons, as Hemelrijk has pointed out; but it should be reckoned that her channel of influence would be limited to informal lobbying to her brother and father.¹¹⁰ While there are numerous examples of this informal lobbying, it is questionable whether the council of Privernum really believed that they could attain political protection for the city by declaring a highly dignified but non-native *patrona*. The abilities of women to persuade their male family members is surely on a different in each case, and the fact that Nummia did not live in Privernum begs the question of how much affinity or allegiance she would have even felt for the city.

It is possible that Nummia did influence her male family members, but it is also possible that the city simply wished to display a connection to a wealthy consular family using the common epithets for *patroni* in *tabulae patronatus*.¹¹¹ At around the same time as the *tabula patronatus*, a plaque was also erected for Nummia Varia within Privernum with an inscription addressing her brother, Marcus Nummius Iustus, as patron of the city as well.

In honor of Nummia Varia, the daughter of Gaius, the plebs of Peltuinum erected this on behalf of their patron, Marcus Nummius Iustus, on account of his exceptional goodwill (*adfectio*) which he particularly exercised here. The most splendid *ordo* decreed a *bisellium* and allowed him a *cubitum*. Location ordered by decree of the decurions.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Hemelrijk (2004) 225.

¹¹¹ J. Nicols, “Tabulae Patronatus: A Study of the Agreement between Patron and Client Community” in *ANRW II*: 13 (1980) 535-61.

¹¹² *CIL IX 3436=ILS 6528: In h[onorem] / Nummiae Vari/ae C(ai) f(iliae) M(arco) Nummi/o Iusto plebs / Peltuinas patro/no ob eximiam / adfectionem / eius quam uni/ce exercuit huic / splendidissimus / ordo bisellium / decrevit [c]ubi/tumque conces/sit l(ocus) d(atus) d(ecreto) d(ecurionum)*. The right of using a bisellium at public occasions, was granted as a mark of

Camodeca notes that this is the same Nummia Varia as in the *tabula patronatus* of A.D. 242, although there is some confusion over why she is noted as the daughter of Gaius instead of Quintus.¹¹³ Together, the inscriptions reveal a history of patronage between Privernum and the Nummii. There were in fact already male Nummii patronizing Privernum, so that it seems that Nummia Varia was not especially singled out, but was rather part of a perpetual “generosity” (*adfectio*) among the Nummii toward Privernum.

The language in the dedications to Abeiena and Nummia may indicate benefactions, just as many of the North African dedications did. Elizabeth Forbis’ study of women’s virtues in Italian honorary inscriptions evaluates the inferences of honorary language, and establishes that the words *merita* and *liberalitas*, for instance, indicate civil benefaction. The justification for the dedications to both Italian and North African *patronae* exemplify this language. The dedications for Abeiena Balbina, Aurelia Crescentia, Helvidia Burrenia, Laberia Hostilia, and Oscia Modesta all mention *merita*, and the dedication to Seia Potitia mentions her *liberalitas*. A key divergence in the language of the Italian and North African *patronae* dedications is the emphasis on *patria*. The language of the existing Italian honorary inscriptions for *patronae* does not emphasize *patria* to the degree that the dedications for the North African *patronae* do. Whereas no inscription for an Italian *patrona* mentions the woman’s tie to her *patria*, the dedications for the North African civic patronesses Furcilia

honour to distinguished persons by the magistrates and people in provincial towns. See two inscriptions from Pompeii (*CIL* X 1026= *ILS* 6372; *CIL* X 1030= *ILS* 6373).

¹¹³ G. Camodeca, ‘Ascesa al senato e rapporti con i territori di origine Italia: Regio I (Campania, esclusa la zona di Capua e Caes) II (Apulia et Calabria), III (Lucania et Brutii)’ in *Tituli* 5 (1982) 144-5. There are perhaps just two different readings of the stone, Camodeca sees a ‘*Q.f.*’ while the *CIL* records ‘*C.f.*’ Since there is no record of a Gaius, it is likely to be Quintus, the father of both Nummia Varia and Marcus Nummius Iustus.

Optata, Iulia Memmia, Oscia Modesta, and Vibia Aurelia all emphasize the tie of these women to their *patria*. Many of the Italian *patronae* do not appear to have had native bond with the city they patronized.

What then is to account for the apparent shift of *patrocinium publicum* to include women in Italy and North Africa? Forbis' evaluation of the language of Italian female honorary inscriptions leads her to conclude that:

instead of the devoted wife and mother, immortalized in numerous tombstone inscriptions, the image of the wealthy and publicly generous benefactress predominates in honorary inscriptions. This public image can be explained largely in terms of the Italians' growing concern for the upkeep of their municipalities as the number of able and willing benefactors decreased beginning in the second century.¹¹⁴

I would propose that the same economic motive for co-option occurred in North Africa. Perhaps it was not so much that the North African *patronae* followed a mold cast by either Italian *patronae* or the Severan women, but rather that economic necessity caused the institution of civic patronage to be expanded to include wealthy women. While in North Africa these women were predominantly *clarissimae* native to the city in which they were declared *patronae*. In Italy there is less evidence for this trend. However, the language of benefaction is evident in the dedications for both North African and Italian *patronae*. In lieu of these language markers, the archaeological context can sometimes be relied upon to infer benefaction, as was the case with Aradia Roscia's statue near the theater of Bulla Regia.

A final inscription from the city of Tarquinia in Italy, found in the baths of Tarquinii, indicates that a third century *patrona* of the city, Domitia Melpis, may have aided in the construction of the baths.

¹¹⁴ Forbis (1990) 494.

The Senate and Tarquinian Citizens erected this for their most worthy patron Domitia Melpis, a woman of the senatorial order, wife of Quintus Petronius Melior, a consular man.¹¹⁵

A marble plaque of the same size, found beside Domitia's dedicatory plaque, indicates that her husband was also patron of the city. The inscription on Quintus Petronius' dedication states that it was erected "for the best patron, since he favored the city and repaired the baths."¹¹⁶ Whether Domitia contributed her own money to the rebuilding of the baths is not specified, but the archaeological context, Domitia's address by the city as a *patrona dignissima*, and the inscription dedicated to her husband, all infer her involvement.

¹¹⁵ *CIL* XI 3368.

¹¹⁶ *CIL* XI 3367=*ILS* 1180: *patrono op/timo, quod rem p(ublicam) fove/rit et thermas resti/tuerit*.

Chapter 10

The Epigraphic Decline of the Civic *Patrona*

The Italian civic *patronae* bear a resemblance to the *patronae* and benefactresses of North Africa in language and commemoration. Moreover, the economic conditions of Italy and North Africa at the time of the epigraphic appearance of these civic *patronae* is also similar. Forbis notes that in order to maintain and continue building structures for the city, “Italian municipals came to depend increasingly on the prosperity and largesse of a few individuals.”¹¹⁷ Just as in North Africa, the co-option of these benefactresses to the highest honorary position in the city, *patronus civitatis*, appears to be an effort to establish an economic base from which to continue urbanization. In Italy, it appears that these women could come from the decurial class, as with the co-option of Albeiena Balbina [P11], or from the equestrian order, as with Aurelia Crescentia [P14], or from the senatorial order, as Nummia Varia [P13], Domitia Melpis [P15], and Helvidia Burrenia Modesta did [P16]. The senatorial order was perhaps still favored on account of the large wealth that *clarissimae familiae* had; unlike in North Africa, however, these women do not seem to be connected by familial ties. North Africa’s group of wealthy *clarissimae* were perhaps simply more interconnected by marriage than the numerous senatorial families who still resided in Italy during the second and third century A.D.; or perhaps North Africa was dependant on a smaller group of elites than Italy for benefactions.

¹¹⁷ Forbis (1990) 506.

Italian and North African cities had counted on the *summae honorariae* derived from decurions and the benefactions of wealthy equestrians to sustain the city's vigor, and avoidance of the *summa honoraria* and the traditional civic *munera* undermined the economic base of cities.¹¹⁸ As a result, public works became *munera* rather than gifts.¹¹⁹ As Duncan-Jones has noted, the decline of civil munificence is not as evident in North Africa as it is in Italy and the Northern Provinces. He contends that this was because "the rich were in any case often willing to benefit their cities spontaneously", (i.e. without being compelled by *munera*).¹²⁰ Both Duncan-Jones and Lepelley recognize the existence of a North African ethos that may have helped the region to maintain urbanization in times of economic crisis. North African civic *patronae* reveal a shift in the institution of patronage to allow for this ethos to be maintained. The large personal wealth and close familial connections between North African elite women could have helped municipalities to establish a wider economic base that could then be perpetuated among families rather than individuals. Perhaps due in part to this African ethos and to the willingness of North African to honor elite women, fourth century North Africa continued to urbanize, even when the majority of cities within the Empire began to decline.

The evidence for civic *patronae* begins to wane at a time when civil munificence and patronage declarations throughout North Africa decrease. The surviving patronage inscriptions from the late fourth century indicate a shift from native *patroni* back to imperial

¹¹⁸ Concerning the use of the *summae honorariae* for public buildings, see Duncan-Jones (1985) 29. Also cf. *ILS* 5686 for the use of *summae honorariae* to finance the rebuilding of baths in Lanuvium.

¹¹⁹ *Dig.* 50.4.18.

¹²⁰ Duncan-Jones (1985) 32.

officials.¹²¹ The epigraphic evidence for *patroni* in North Africa suggests that civic patronage there again shifted during the fourth century in order to target imperial officials, possibly in an effort to protect cities from corruption. Warmington comments that “prosperity was damaged by the financial disorders which accompanied the civil wars...the imperial authority became less and less able to curb the extortions of its agents. To have a governor or other official as patron might now be some protection to a town.”¹²² This hypothesis may partly account for the epigraphic decline in *patronae*; these women could offer little political or military protection from municipal corruption and, as a result, may have no longer been targeted as patrons. It is also possible that these women follow a wider trend in the decline of the institution of patronage within the Empire. As Eilers has shown, there was an overall decrease in senatorial patrons of Western provinces beginning as early as the Severans, although North Africa seems to have been exceptional within the Empire for its perpetuation of the institution well into the fourth century before evidence for civic patronage there begins to decrease as well.¹²³

The economic recession and corruption that arose in the fourth and fifth centuries revealed a municipal weakness in North Africa: a widespread dependence on a small group

¹²¹ This is evident in the list of 242 North African municipal patrons compiled by Warmington “The municipal patrons of Roman North Africa”, *PBSR* 31 (1954) 40-45.

¹²² Warmington (1954) 51. For economic stagnation and corruption in North Africa in the third century, see Macmullen (1988) 28-35.

¹²³ Eilers (2002) 166: Senatorial Patrons of Western Cities: Augustus: 16, Tiberius-Nero: 19, Vespasian-Trajan: 20, Hadrian-Antoninus Pius: 29, M. Aurelius – Commodus: 25, Septimius Severus-Alexander 22.

of elites where wealth was concentrated.¹²⁴ This was not something uncommon within the Roman Empire. As Duncan-Jones has illustrated, cities in Britain, Spain, and the East were also highly dependent on small groups of wealthy benefactors.¹²⁵ The city of Bulla Regia is exemplary of this dependence. The epigraphic remains commemorating benefactors indicate that in the third and early fourth centuries, Bulla Regia was reliant upon a small and socio-economically elite group of families to help maintain the buildings of the community. While equestrians and decurions had aided significantly in the building projects undertaken at the height of North African economic prosperity, as the economy stagnated and declined, there was an increasing dependence on an elite group of wealthy North Africans.

In the case of Bulla Regia, the city's building projects began to taper in the late fourth century. However, there appear to be differences in the degree of construction or rebuilding in each town within North Africa. Prominent families in some North African cities fueled urbanism in their native city well into the fifth century. North Africa is unique in that it continued to undergo urbanization during a period when most of the cities within the Empire suffered economic hardship.¹²⁶ This is not to say that political turmoil and economic decline failed to impact North Africa. The North African *clarissimae familiae* were certainly affected by the economic stagnation during the third century, but the strong African focus on civic benefaction helped to sustain North African cities. Lepelley comments that the focus on

¹²⁴ Note Duncan-Jones' sample of African inscriptions between Trajan and Gordian III (98-244) which shows that building munificence and civic gifts hit a peak under Caracalla but then declined by almost half under Severus Alexander and then Gordian (*PBSR* (1963)172-3).

¹²⁵ Duncan-Jones (1964)199-208.

¹²⁶ Lepelley lists 332 building inscriptions in the time period between Diocletian and the Vandal invasion (1979) 112-20.

building and the financial data involved “is evidence too of a resolute determination to preserve the material fabric of the classical city, at whatever cost...”¹²⁷ This determination is exemplified by an inscription from Mascula in Numidia, erected 346/7:

In the golden times, everywhere prevailing, of our lord Valentinian and Valens, perpetual Augusti, what was derelict recovers stability, what was abandoned is renovated, beautiful new monuments replace ugly ruins. Therefore, dispelling the long-standing ill-repute of the summer baths and restoring their beauty, Publilius Ceionius Caecina Albinus, a senatorial man, of consular rank, with six fasces of the province of Numidia Constantina, has restored, completed and dedicated this building, for the glory of his homeland and of the Province.¹²⁸

Publilius Ceionius’ benefactions were certainly in line with the patronage tradition of his *gens*. In the early third century, Publilia Caecilia [P5a] and Publilia Numisiana [P5b] had been declared *patronae* along with their brother in the Numidian town of Verecundum. In North Africa’s drive to maintain the appearance of prosperity, the honorary title of *patrona* was conferred upon women of wealthy *clarissimae familiae* as a means to encourage private benefaction.

¹²⁷ Lepelley (2001) 89.

¹²⁸ AE 1911, 217=AE 1987, 1082 : *Aureis ubique temporibus dd(ominorum) nn(ostrorum) Valentiniani et Valen/tis perpetuorum (Au)gg(ustorum) statum desperata recipiunt ami/ssa renovantur ruinarum deformitatem decor novit/at is excludit iam dudum igitur thermarum aestival/ium fabulam factam depellens faciemque restituens / Publi(li)us Ceionius C(a)ecina Albinus v(ir) c(larissimus) consularis / [s(ex)ff(ascalis) p(rovinciae) N(umidia) C(onstantinae)] / ad splendorem tam patriae quam provinciae restituit / perfecit dedicavit[que?] omni nisu [cur]antib[us] / Aemilio Flaviano Fabio Praetexta[to F]lav[i]o / Innocentio Mario Secundino [3 E]xcu[s]antio / fl(ami). Lepelley (1981) 433-4. For the “optimism” of Africans at this time, see Brown (1967) 23. It is difficult to know if this Ceionius has any relation to the M. Ceionius Iulianus discussed in Bulla Regia, but this was not a common African name. Ceionius Italicus was *consularis* of Numidia between 349 and 353 and was patron of Cirta and Milev (*CIL* VIII 7012; 7013).*

During the rise of the Christian church in the late fourth and fifth centuries, patronage and the civic ethos was continued under a new, ecclesiastical guise in North Africa.¹²⁹

Women continued to aid in the urban growth and renewal of North Africa, but were not commemorated in the same manner.¹³⁰ The Church's departure from the statues and ostentatious inscriptions that civic councils previously bestowed upon patrons may be interpreted as a “decline” in patronage—but only patronage according to the early imperial definition. Arjava notes that:

In late antiquity the importance of civic benefaction is difficult to estimate. The epigraphical evidence decreases after the mid-third century but it does not necessarily follow that secular euergetism in itself decayed. What is securely attested is the rise of religious patronage in the late fourth century.¹³¹

Women gave money for monasteries, and in the same manner as Caelia Macrina, Christian women still helped to fund the alimentary schemes in Italian communities (schemes which, after being taken over by the Church in the fourth century, fed more people, but were also more expensive). Mosaics commemorate numerous female donors from this time period, and attest to the fact that the Church's building projects and extensive charity endeavors depended upon the donations of wealthy Christians to continue on.

¹²⁹ Note Figure 2, which illustrates the bishoprics of North Africa by the beginning of the fourth century.

¹³⁰ As Lepelley has indicated, all recent studies have shown the prosperity of Africa in the fourth century (2001) 87. Note Arjava (1996: 250) who comments that “in late antiquity the importance of civic benefaction is difficult to estimate. The epigraphical evidence decreases after the mid-third century but it does not necessarily follow that secular euergetism in itself decayed. What is securely attested is the rise of religious patronage in the late fourth century.”

¹³¹ Arjava (1996) 250.

Although women were set back by the Church's refusal to allow women positions of ecclesiastical leadership, patronage remained as a means of gaining influence. As Clark notes, "the Church's ever-increasing need for funds opened an avenue for women to gain importance in Christian circles despite their exclusion from positions of ecclesiastical leadership."¹³² Melania the Younger, a late fourth century Christian, exemplifies the continued wealth and importance of women. She is estimated to have earned 120,000 *solidi* per year, and, along with her husband, donated 100,000 gold coins to the building of a monastery near Tagaste, and over 200,000 more for other monasteries in North Africa.¹³³ The Church used Melania and her husband as examples of virtue when they gave up their money and estates, and entered monasteries in Jerusalem. Both were later declared saints for their patronage of the Church.

In the early fifth century, Melania the Younger and her husband fled to North Africa to escape the Visigoths invading Italy. At that time, North Africa was an area still relatively uncorrupted by barbarian invasions. The Vandals' invasion of North Africa would soon change this. The urbanization that continued in Africa during the fourth and early fifth century could not be sustained under the economic duress brought about by the Vandal invasions after A.D. 429. In 435 Numidia and Mauretania Sitifensis were allotted to the Vandals, and in 439 Gaiseric took and pillaged Carthage and the rest of the province of Africa. A treaty was later ratified in 442, establishing the Vandals in Africa Proconsularis, Byzacena, Tripolitania, and Numidia as far west as Cirta. At this time, the fifth century Carthaginian bishop, Quodvultdeus, would comment upon the state of Africa with a sad

¹³² Clark (1990) 253.

¹³³ Ger. *Vita Mel. Iun.* 22. Note Clark (1990) 262-3.

allusion to the words of Tertullian, asking “where is Africa?...where are those great and most splendid cities?”¹³⁴

¹³⁴ Quodvultdeus, *Sermo II de tempore barbarico* 5.4 (CLL 60.476-7): ‘*ubi est Africa...ubi tantae splendissimae civitates?*’

Chapter 11

Conclusions

The baths erected by Julia Memmia and perhaps Domitia Melpis, as well as the language of benefaction used to address the civic *patronae* of North Africa and Italy all indicate a significant economic function for *patronae*. Can it be true then, as Hemelrijk has argued, that these women's main duties were not benefactions or lavish generosity?¹³⁵ The *tabulae patronatus* that survive indicate multiple patrons serving simultaneously, often the male relatives of the civic *patronae*. Can these *patronae* really have been seen then as political tools? It is true that sixteen of the twenty total civic *patronae* were *clarissimae feminae*, but along with their high social position also went sizeable wealth. The civic *patronae* of North Africa and Italy exemplify the wealth of women in the second and third centuries A.D., and the bestowal of the title of *patrona civitatis* on these women reveals a broader acceptance of women in the public sphere.

The epigraphic appearance of civic *patronae* appears to have had many contributing factors. In the Severan era, the use of epigraphic commemoration appears to have increased within the Empire, this growth, coupled with the memory sanctions imposed by Septimius on many preceding emperors, may have contributed to lacunae in the epigraphic record, and the appearance that patronage increased in North Africa after Septimius Severus. The largesse of women within the empire had also increased during the first and second centuries A.D.,

¹³⁵ Hemelrijk (2004) 222.

prompting some women to be declared a “daughter of the city” or “first woman” of a city, and allowing women to become *flaminicae*, *sacerdotes*, and *patronae collegii*. Nicols’ *de facto* claim that “the temporal pattern associated with the *patronae* appears to be part of a more general willingness to provide public honors for women in the third century” is not, then, necessarily true.¹³⁶ As we have seen with the North African benefactresses and *flaminicae* in the first and second centuries, women were honored with the same statues and honorary language that they attained as civic *patronae*. Women were already economic resources in early imperial communities, whether through spontaneous giving or through the *summae honorariae* paid for priesthoods, and were commemorated by their communities in the same manner as men.

Septimius Severus’ promotion of numerous North African men into the senatorial order increased the number of North African men in the imperial bureaucracy, and encouraged this new elite class to display their *Romanitas* in their native cities. The freedom and importance of the Severan women did not provide North Africa with the model for elite women to move from the private to the public sphere. They did, however, represent the growing wealth and influence that North African women had already begun to exert. The largesse of women in North Africa helped to increase urbanization during economic prosperity, and when economic stagnation and later, recession occurred, especially wealthy women were called upon by municipalities to act as *patronae* who could provide financial resources.

¹³⁶ Nicols (1989) 118.

Appendix A : The Civic Patronae of North Africa and Italy

ID	Name	Status	Date	Origin	Clients	Co-Patron
<i>North African</i>						
[P1]	Seia Potitia	sen.	c.180	Thibaris	(A.P.) ⁷	
[P2a]	Gallonia Octavia	sen	2 nd -3 rd c.	African	(A.P.)	
	[P2b] Accia Asclepiamilla,	sen.	" "	Utica	(A.P.)	husband, daughters
	[P2c] Accia Heuresis	sen.	" "	Utica	(A.P.)	father, mother
	[P3] Aelia Celsimilla	sen.	2 nd -3 rd c.	Bulla Regia(?) ⁸ (A.P.)	Thuburbo Minus (A.P.)	
[P4]	Furcilia Optata	sen.	Early 3 rd	Bulla Regia (A.P.)	Bulla Regia (A.P.)	
[P5a]	Pubilia Caeciliania	sen.	Early 3 rd	African/Nola (Italia)	Verecundum (N.)	grandfather, brothers
	[P5b] Pubilia Numisiana	sen.	Early 3 rd	African/Nola (Italia)	Verecundum (N.)	grandfather, brothers
[P6]	Iulia Memmia	sen.	220-40	Bulla Regia (A.P.)	Bulla Regia (A.P.)	father (previously)
[P7]	Oscia Modesta	sen.	c. 240-50	Aviocala (A.P.)	Aviocala (A.P.)	husband, son
[P8]	Calpurnia Ceia Aemiliana	sen.	c. 220-50	Utica (?)	Thibica (A.P.)	
[P9]	Fabia Victoria	equ.	3 rd c.	(?)	Cirta (N.)	husband
[P10]	Aradia Roscia	sen.	3 rd -4 th	Bulla Regia (A.P.)	Bulla Regia (A.P.)	
<i>Italian</i>						
[P11]	Abeiana Balbina	dec.	180-192	Pisaurum	(Italia) (6)	husband
[P12]	Capertia Valeriana	(?)	2 nd -3 rd c.	(?)	Bellunum (Italia) (10)	
[P13]	Nummia Varia	sen.	242	Brixia (Italia) (10)	Pelutunum (Italia) (4)	
[P14]	Aurelia Crescentia	equ.	243	Trebula Muntesca (Italia)	(?)	husband
[P15]	Domitia Melpis	sen.	mid 3 rd c.	Etruria (Italia) (7)	Tarquinia (Italia) (7)	
[P16]	Helvidia Burrenia Modesta	sen.	338	Samnium (?) (Italia) (4)	Interamna (Italia) (6)	
<i>Imperial</i>						
[P17]	Vibia Aurelia Sabina	imp.	211-12	Spanish	Thibilis (N.)	
		imp.	212	Spanish	Calama (A.P.)	

⁷ A.P.=Africa Proconsularis, N=Numidia, sen. = senatorial, equ. = equestrian, dec = decurial, imp. = imperial (#) = Regio Italiae
⁸ The *Celsinii* occur most often in Bulla Regia and seem to be from that area, but there are others found in Africa Proconsularis cf. M. Corbier
 "Les familles clarissimes d'Afrique Proconsulaire", *Tituli* 5 (1982) 711. For the origin of senatorial families in North Africa, see especially
 Corbier (1982) 746-49; Numidia and Mauretania: M. Le Glay, "Senateurs de Numidie et des Mauretaniae", *Tituli* 5 (1982) 755-81.

APPENDIX A.1: Civic Patronae Inscriptions

North African Civic Patronae

[P1] Seia Potitia Consortiana

Thibaris, Africa Proconsularis (190-200)

Senatorial *patrona* from Thibaris

AE 1913,13=*IL Afr.* 511 : Seiae Potitiae / Consortianae / c(larissimae) m(emoriae) f(eminae) matri Ros/ci Potiti Memmi/ani c(larissimi) v(iri) ob insignem eius et innum(erabile)m libera/litatem qua ordi/ne(m) et patriam do/natione sua ampli/ficavit patronae di/cernente ordine r(es) p(ublica) / Thibaritanor(um) / p(ecunia) p(ublica) p(osuit)

To the memory of the senatorial woman, Seia Potitiae Consortiana, patron, mother of Roscius Potitus Memmianus, a senatorial man, on account of her distinguished and innumerable liberality through which she enhanced the municipal order and her fatherland with her donation, from the discerning municipal order, the republic of the Thibaritans placed this here with public money.

Seia's son is Roscius Potitius Memmianus (*PIR*² R 98). He is known from this inscription. Seia's husband can be inferred to have been of the Roscia *gens*. Either a member of his father's family was adopted into the Memmia *gens* or he, himself, was; connecting Seia Potitia with Iulia Memmia [P6], *patrona* of Bulla Regia, and daughter of Caius Memmius Julianus, the *patronus* of Bulla Regia.

[P2a] Gallonia Octavia

[P2b] Accia Asclepianilla Castora

[P2c] Accia Heuresis Venantia

Utica, Africa Proconsularis (2nd-3rd c.)

Senatorial *patronae*, daughters appear to be from Utica, and Gallonia is of African descent

Inscribed on a large marble tablet (H: .98m W: 2.35m) On the opposite was incised a third or fourth century inscription dedicated to the curator Silius Tertullus (*CIL* VIII 1183=*ILS* 5407 : Aedem trium camerarum vetustate collapsam / addito cultu meliori laqueariorum pecunia / propria reformavit spl(endida) col(onia) Utik(a) curante / et dedicante Silio Tertullo c(larissimo) v(iro) cur(atore) suo).

CIL VIII 1181: L(ucio) Accio Iuliano Asclepiano c(larissimo) v(iro) co(n)s(uli) cur(atori) rei p(ublicae) Utik(ae) / et Galloniae Octaviae Marcellae C(ai) f(iliae) eius et Acciae / Heuresidi Venantio(!) c(larissimae) p(uellae) et Acciae Asclepianillae / Castorae c(larissimae) p(uellae) filiabus eorum col(onia) Iul(ia) Ael(ia) Hadr(iana) Aug(usta) Utik(a) / patronis perpetuis d(ecreto) d(ecurionum) p(ecunia) p(ublica)

The colony, Julia Aelia Hadriana Augusta Utica,¹³⁷ erected this for their perpetual patrons, Lucius Accius Julianus Asclepianus, a senatorial man of consular rank, curator of the community of Utica and for Gallonia Octavia Marcella, daughter of Gaius, and to their daughters, Acciae Heuresis Venantius, a senatorial woman, and to Accia Asclepianilla Castora, a senatorial woman.

Accius Iulianus Asclepianus was a Suffect Consul at an unknown date during the third century and was also honored as patron of Utica. It is not the “Accius Julianus” that Nicols cites in Table C: 2.1 (1989: 141) as Barbieri 614. Accia Asclepianilla Castorea (*PIR*² A 29) and Accia Heuresis Venantium (*PIR*² A 30) are the children of Gallonia Octavia Marcella (*PIR*² G 52) and Accius Julianus, who seems to be the grandson of Accius Julianus (*PIR*² A 26; cf. *CIL* IX 2451) a suffect consul in the second century of African descent who is also the grandfather of the prominent Neratia gens that was highly influential in Italy in the third century. Although their grandmother is unknown, she was likely of an Italian family.

cf. *FOS* (1) p.26; Nicols (1989) 2; Hemelrijk (2004) 2,3,12.

[P3] Aelia Celsinilla

Thuburbo Minus, Africa Proconsularis Senatorial *patrona* likely from Bulla Regia

Marble Statue base excavated in Thuburbo Minus.

ILAfr. 414 = *AE* 1915, 37: Aeliae Celsinillae / consulari feminae / patronae perpetuae / matri Celsiniani con/sularis viri curatoris / sui universus ordo splen/didissimae col(oniae) VIII (Octavanorum) Thub(urbitanae)

The *universus ordo* of the most splendid colony of VIII *Octavanorum Thuburbitanae* erected this for Aelia Celsinilla, a woman from a consular family, perpetual patron, mother of Celsinianus, a man from a consular family and curator.

Aelia (*PIR*² A 290) is of the Aelia gens which was certainly of African origin, and likely concentrated in Bulla Regia. Her father was Aelius Celsus (*PIR*² A 158), a consul of the second century who was put to death between 196-7 by Septimius Severus, if the *Historia Augusta* can be believed (*HA v. Sev.* 13.2-8). She seems to have married a man named Agrius and had a son (mentioned in the inscription), (Aelius) Celsinianus. He was a suffect consul in the third century and curator of Thuburbo Minus. A third century inscription from Bulla Regia, in the temple of Apollo, recognized the benefactress of the temple, Agria Tannonia, as the daughter of Aelius Celsinianus (*CIL* VIII 25523 : *Quantam vim rei publ[icae] // Agriae Tan/noniae c(larissimae) p(uellae) / filiae Agri / Celsiniani / co(n)s(ularis) viri cu/ratoris sui*

¹³⁷ Cf. Colonia Julia Aelia Hadriana Augusta Utica: Aul. Gell. Att. 13.4; App. 8.135. for the status of Utica, Dio 49.16.

and cf. *AE* 1906,142. Both are statue bases). Thus Aelia Celsinilla is the grandmother of the benefactress, Agria Tannonia. cf. *AE* 1954 84; *RE* XII Aelius 168a; *FOS* 11.

[P4] **Furcilia Optata**

Bulla Regia, Africa Proconsularis

Senatorial *patrona* from Bulla Regia

Unpublished inscription: based upon Corbier (1990) 827, 838 and Hemelrijk (2004) no.11. Furcilia is addressed as *patrona et alumna* of the colony and hailed as *singularis in cives et patriam amor* (Hemelrijk (2004) 237, 240) and is from the Furcilia gens identified as from Bulla Regia. She apparently married P. Aradius Paternus (*RE* Suppl. XIV Aradius 54: where he is noted with his wife as being tied to Q. Aradius Rufinus Optatus Aelianus *PIR*² A 1016) and had a child, P. Aradius Paternus Aelianus (*CIL* VI 3948). Furcilia's marriage tied her into the Aradia gens and the Aelia gens, both from Bulla Regia—the *gentes* that Aradia Roscia [P10] and Aelia Celsinilla [P3] belonged to—and also associated her with Ceia Aemiliana [P8], the wife of Q. Aradius Rufinus Optatus Aelianus.

[P5a] **Publilia Caeciliana**

[P5b] **Publilia Numisiana**

Verecunda, Numidia (Early 3rd century)

Senatorial *patronae* of Italian Origin

CIL VIII 4233: Publiliis Iusto Caecilianae Numis[ianae(?)] / cc(larissimis) pp(ueris) patronis nepotibus Petroni Ius[ti]

To the Publilii, Iustus and Caeciliana and Numisiana, children of the senatorial order, patrons and grandchildren of Petronius Iustus.

The grandchildren of Petronius Iustus, the legate of Numidia (*PIR*² P 283), are here noted as *patroni*. The names of the two girls, Caecilia and Numisiana, infer that the family is of Umbrian origin (Corbier (1982) 618-19). cf. *CIL* VIII 4232

[P6] **Iulia Memmia Fidana**

Bulla Regia, Africa Proconsularis

Senatorial *patrona* from Bulla Regia

Statue base found in the vestibule of the baths at Bulla Regia.

ILAfr 454 = *AE* 1921, 45=*AE* 1973, 578 [Iul]iae Me[m]mia[e] / [---]cae Rut[ae] Aemi/[liana]e Fidia[nae] claris/[simae et nobilis]s[imae f]eminae / [C(ai) Memmi I]ul(i) Albi consularis / [viri patr]oni et alumni fil(iae) ob / [praecipu]am operis sui thermarum / [magnifi]centiam qua et patriam / [suam e]xornavit et saluti civium / [---]ico consulere / [---] dignata] est / [---] bene et eius / [---]pa]trona et [//]

To Julia Memmia Prisca Rufa Aemiliana Fidiana, a woman of a senatorial and most

sacred family, daughter of Gaius Memmius [Fidus] Julius Albinus, a man of consular rank, patron of the municipality, and native, on account of the outstanding magnificence of her work, the baths, by which she both beautified her hometown and looked after the health of the citizens [---]ico, she was worthy [---] well and her [---] to the patroness and...

Julia Memmia (*PIR*² M 487; *RE* XV Memmius 45) was the daughter of C. Memmius Iulius Albius (*PIR*² M 462), a consul and native of Bulla Regia. He had been a military tribune, decimvir, quaestor of Asia, aedile, legate of the proconsul of Africa, praetor, iuridicus of Transpadane Gaul, legate of the legion, proconsul of Baetica, prefect of Minicia, curator of the roads, governor of Noricum, suffect consul in 192, and governor of an imperial province. (*CIL* III 1528=*ILS* 9082). L. Calpurnius Fidus Aemilianus (*PIR*² C 264), either her brother or her cousin, was of African origin, quaestor of Crete and Cyrene, tribune of the plebs, and praetor (*CIL* VIII 25382, cf. Barbieri 1986). She also seems to be a relation of Calpurnia Ceia Aemiliana, through Lucius (above) and Fronto Aemilianus Calpurnius Rufilianus (cf. *CIL* VII 98).

Dating Discrepancies : Warmington (1954: 45) dates the inscription to between A.D. 180/190 while Fagan (1999: no. 187) dates the inscription securely to between A.D. 220-40, although Hemelrijk (2004: no. 14) dates the inscription to 200-10. Fagan's dating, based upon the archaeological remains and surrounding inscriptions, seems most probable. Note especially, H. Broise and Y. Thébert. *Recherches archéologiques franco-tunisiennes à Bulla Regia II. Les architectures. 1. Les thermes memmiens: étude architecturale et histoire urbaine* (1993) for support of the dating to 220/240 (107; 350) and analysis of the statues within the baths (347-54).

[P7] **Oscia Modesta Cornelia Patruina Publiana**

Avioccala, Africa Proconsularis (240-50)

Senatorial *patrona* from Avioccala

CIL VIII 23832: Osciae Modes/[tae---] / [---]iae Corne/liae [P]a[t]rui/nae Publianae / c(larissimae) f(eminiae) civi et patr(ona)e / ob insig(num) eius me/rita quibus in/lustrat origi/nis suae patriam / civitas Avioccal(enses) d(ecreto) d(ecurionum) p(ecunia) p(ublica)

The *civitas* of Avioccala erected this for Oscia Modesta Cornelia Patruina Publiana, a woman of the senatorial order, a citizen and patron, on account of her distinguished services by which she enhanced her country of origin, by decree of the decurions, from public money.

Oscia Modesta (*PIR*² O 155) was the patron of Avioccala between A.D. 240/250. Her son, C. Arrius Calpurnius Quirina Longinus (*PIR*² A 1036) was a consul (ca. 238) and the patron of Avioccala (*CIL* VIII 23831) around the same time as his mother. Her husband was the consul, Caius Arrius Calpurnius Frontinus Honoratus (*PIR*² F 220; A 1095), the patron of Antiochia Pisidia in the province of Galatia (*AE* 1914, 130). Oscia married into the prominent Arria *gens*, and is connected by marriage to the Calpurnia *gens* which Calpurnia Ceia Aemiliana [P8] also belongs to. Marcus Flavius Oscius Honoratus, her grandson, later honored her with a statue (*CIL* VI 147).

[P8] **Calpurnia Ceia Aemiliana**

Thibica, Africa Proconsularis (c. 220-50)

Senatorial *patrona* from Utica (?)

Marble statue base from the second quarter of the third century, around the reign of Severus Alexander.

AE 1995, 1653 = *AE* 2003, 1890 (A. Beschtaouch, *BCTH*, B 24 1993-1995, p.216-17).: Calpur/niae Ce/iae Aemi/lianae c(larissimae) f(eminae) / coniugi Q(uinti) Ara/di Rufini c(larissimi) v(iri) c(ivitas) T(hibicaaensis) d(ecreto) d(ecurionum) patronae

The citizenry of Thibica erected this by decree of the decurions for their patron, Calpurnia Ceia Aemiliana, a woman of the senatorial order, wife of Quintus Aradius Rufinus, a man of consular rank.

[P9] **Fabia Victoria**

Cirta, Numidia (3rd)

Equestrian *patrona* of unknown origin

CIL VIII 7043 (p 1848) = *ILAlg.* II 1.666 : Fabiae V[ic]t[or]iae / Iovinae / coniugi / L(uci) Luccei Had/riani v(iri) p(erfectissimi) rati/onalis res p(ublica) / Cirtensium / patronis

The community of Cirta erected this for their patrons, Fabia Victoria Iovina, the wife of Lucius Lucceius Hadrianus, a man of the equestrian order and *rationalis*

[P10] **Aradia Roscia**

Bulla Regia, Africa Proconsularis (3rd-4th)

Senatorial *patrona* from Bulla Regia

CIL VIII 14470 : Aradiae] Ros/[ciae ---]NE[---] / [---]E[---] / Calpurnia[e] / Purgillae / c(larissimae) p(uellae) filiae / P(ubli) Aradi Rosci / Rufini Saturn[i]/ni Tiberianici / patronae u/niversus ordo

The town council erected this for Aradia Roscia ---NE--- ---E--- Calpurnia Purgilla, a woman of the senatorial order, daughter of Publius Aradius Roscius Rufinus Saturninus Tiberianicus, patron.

*PIR*² A 1013; Barb. 1970. Father was Lucius Aradius Roscius Rufinus Saturninus Tiberianus: patron of Privernatium. cf. *CIL* VI 1578; 1695. Related to Q. Aradius Rufinus, consul suffectus, (Barb. 1017) *CIL* VIII 14688=*ILS* 3937; 10602.

Italian Civic Patronae

[P11] **Abeiena Balbina**

Pitinum Pisaurum, Italy (6) (180-192)

Decurial *patrona* from Pisaurum

Large marble statue base, in Pisaurum, (H: 1.55m, W: .48m) the city had a history of declaring municipal patrons (cf. CIL 11 6332; ILS 5711; ILS 1187 for a patron of the colony that was also a curator of the republic) The name of the emperor has been erased and reconstructed likely as the emperor Commodus due to the reference to the *ius liberorum* (Cod. Theod. 8.17.4; 15.14.9)

CIL XI 6354=*ILS* 6655 : Abeienae C(ai) f(iliae) / Balbinae / flaminicae / Pisauri et Arimini / patronae municipi(i) / Pitinatum Pisaurensium / huic anno quinquena<l=T>(itatis) / Petini Apri mariti eius / plebs urbana Pisau/remsium ob merita / eorum cui / Imp(erator) [[C(aes(ar) M(arcus) Aur(elius) Commo]]/[[[dus]] A(ntoninus Aug(ustus?))]] / ius commune libero/rum concessit / l(ocus) d(atus) d(ecreto) d(ecurionum)

The Urban Plebs of Pisaurum erected this for Abeiena Balbina, daughter of Gaius, *flaminica* of Pisaurum and Ariminum, and patron of the municipality of Pitinum Pisaurum in this the year of the quinquennial of her husband, Petinus Aper, on account of their meritorious actions, and to whom [Commodus (?)] granted the *ius commune liberorum*. The location was given by decree of the decurions

[P12] **Capertia Valeriana**

Bellunum, Italy (10) (2nd-3rd c.)

Patrona of unknown status and origin

SupIt-4B.10 = *AE* 1976, 250 : Capertiae / Maximi fil(iae) / Valeria/nae plebs urba/nae patro/nae

The Urban Plebs erected this for Capertia Valeriana, daughter of Maximus, their patron.

[P13] **Nummia Varia**

Peltuinum, Italy (4) (242)

Senatorial *patrona* likely from Brixia, Italy

CIL IX 3429=*ILS* 6110: ...Nummiam Variam Q(uinti) f(iliam) sacerdotem Veneris Felicis ea adfecti/one adque prono animo circa nos agere coepisse pro instituto / benivolentiae suae sic ut et parentes eius semper egerunt ut / merito debeat ex consensu universorum patrona praefecturae / nostrae fieri quo magis magisque hoc honore qui est apud nos potissi/mus tantae claritati eius oblato dignatione benignitatis eius glori/osi et in omnibus tuti ac defensi esse possimus q(uid) d(e) e(a) r(e) f(ieri) p(laceret) d(e) e(a) r(e) i(ta) c(ensuerunt) / placere universis conscriptis Nummiae Variae C(ai) f(iliae) sacerdoti Veneris / Felicis pro splendore

dignitatis suae patrocinium praefecturae nos/trae deferri petique ab eius claritate et eximia benignitate ut hunc / honorem sibi a nobis oblatum libenti et prono animo suscipere / et singulos universosque nos remque publicam nostram in cli/entelam domus suae recipere dignetur et in quibuscumque / ratio exegerit incedente auctoritate dignitatis suae tutos de/fensosque praestet tabulamque aeneam huius decreti n(ostri) verba conti/nentem offerri ei...

Nummia Varia, a woman of senatorial rank, priestess of Venus Felix, has started to act with such affection and goodwill towards us in accordance with her custom and benevolence, just as her parents too have always done, that she should rightfully and unanimously be made *patrona* of our *praefectura*, in the hope that by offering this honour, which is the highest in our city, to her so illustrious excellency, we may be more and more renowned by the repute of her benevolence and in all respects be safe and protected...All members of the council have decided to proffer to Nummia Varia, a woman of senatorial rank, priestess of Venus Felix, in accordance with the splendour of her high rank, the *patrocinium* of our *praefectura*, and to ask from her excellency and extraordinary benevolence, that she may except this honour which we offer to her with willing and favourable inclination and that she may deign to take us and our *res publica*, individually and universally, under the protection of her house and that, in whatever matters it may reasonably be required, she may intervene with the authority belonging to her rank and protect us and keep us safe.¹³⁸

note: Nicols (1989) dates it as “3rd c.”, whereas Harmand dates it as 4th (343).

[P14] **Aurelia Crescentia**

Trebula Mutuesca, Italy (243)

Equestrian *patrona* of unknown origin

CIL IX 4894=*ILS* 6554=*AE* 2001 908: Aureliae Cre[s]/centiae honestissim[ae] / et pudicissim(a)e femin(a)e patro(nae) / co(n)iugi Aureli Felicissimi Pro/x(imi?) e(gregi) v(iri) patroni municipii Trebulan(ae) / Mut(uescae) ob merita et be[ne]ficia saepe / [i]n se conlata statuam ponendam / [i]dem tricliniares decreve/runt / dedicata natali die XVII Kal(endas) Feb(ruarias) / Arriano et Papo co(n)s(ulibus) / l(ocus) d(atus) d(ecreto) d(ecurionum)

[The city of Trebula Mutuesca] decreed a statue set-up and dining room couches for Aurelia Crescentia, a most honest and chaste woman, patron, and wife of Aurelius Felicissimus Proximus, a distinguished man and patron of the municipality of Trebula Mutuesca, on account of her meritorious action and the frequent beneficence taken on by herself, dedicated on her birthday, the seventeenth of the kalends of February, with Arrianus and Papus consuls. The location was given by decree of the decurions.

[P15] **Domitia Melpis**

Tarquiniā, Italy (7) (mid 3rd c.)

Senatorial *patrona* from Etruria (7)

¹³⁸ trans. Hemelrijk (2004) 223.

CIL XI 3368: Domitiae Melpidi c(larissimae) f(eminae) / coniugi Q(uinti) Petroni / Melioris viri / co(n)s(ularis) / ordo et cives / Tarquiniensium / patronae dig(n)issimae

The town council and Tarquinian citizens erected this for their most worthy patron, Domitia Melpis, a senatorial woman, wife of Quintus Petronus Melior, a consular man.

[P16] **Helvidia Burrenia**

Interamna, Italy (6) (338)

Senatorial *patrona* from Samnium (? 4)

Laeucadii Mel(--) / Helvidiae Burreniae / Modestae / nepoti Helvidi Burreni Se/veri v(iri) c(larissimi) filiae Burreniae Se/verae C(ai) f(iliae) pudicitia sapientia / innocentia omnibus retro / memorabili ob meritum amo/remque eius cives Interam/nanae civitatis utriusque / sexsus(!) (a)ere conlato post / obitum huius / patronae // dedic(ata) XVIII Kal(endas) / Febr(uarias) / Urso et Polemio / co(n)ss(ulibus)

The citizens of the community of Interamna of both sexes (?) erected this from bronze for their patron, Helvidia Burrenia Modesta, of the Laeucadii Mel (--) (?), granddaughter of Helvidius Burrenius Severus, a man of the senatorial order, daughter of Burrenia Severa and Gaius, after her death, in her memorable modesty, wisdom, and innocence formerly in all things, on account of her meritorious action and love (for the community), dedicated on the eighteenth of the kalends of February, with Ursus and Polemius consuls.

Imperial Patronae

[P17] **Vibia Aurelia Sabina**

Thibilis, Numidia (211/212)

Imperial *patrona*

ILAlg. II 4661

Vibiae Au/relliae(!) di/vi M(arci) f(iliae) divi / Severi sor(ori) / Sabinae / patronae / municipii [---

[The decurions of Thibilis (?) erected this] for Vibia Aurelia Sabina, the daughter of the divine Marcus [Aurelius], sister of the divine [Septimius] Severus, and patron of the municipality.

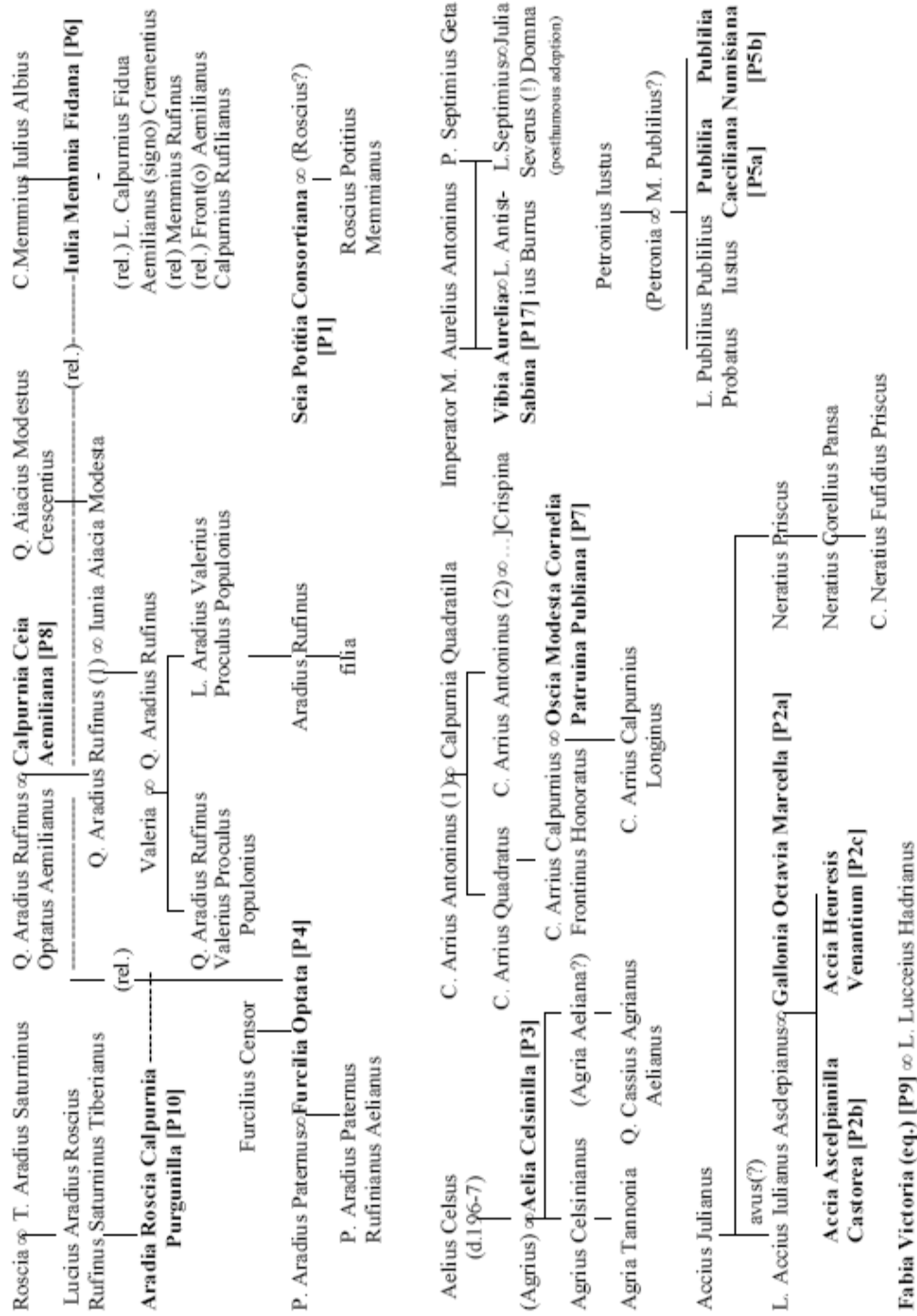
Calama, Africa Proconsularis (ca.212)

CIL VIII 5328= *ILAlg.* I 241 = *ILS* 388

Vibiae Au/relliae(!) di/vi M(arci) f(iliae) divi / Severi sor(ori) / Sabinae / patronae / municipii / decurio [---

[The decurions of Calama (?) erected this] for Vibia Aurelia Sabina, daughter of the divine Marcus [Aurelius], sister of the divine [Septimius] Severus, and patron of the municipality.

Appendix B : The Lineages of the North African Civic Patronae



rel. = familial relation, ∞ = marriage, | = progeny ---- = familial tie

Appendix C : The Families of the North African Patronage

<i>Name</i>	<i>PIR²/FOS</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Inscription¹</i>	<i>Origin</i>	<i>Offices / Accomplishments</i>
Aelia Celsinilla	A 290	2 nd -3 rd c.	ILA fr 414	Bulla Regia (?)	patrona of Thuburbo Minus
Aelius Celsus	A 158	2 nd c.		Bulla Regia	executed by Septimius Sev. 196/7
Agrina Tamnonia	A 467		CIL 8 2253	Bulla Regia	built Temple of Apollo
Agrus Celsinianus	A 464	early 3 rd c.	ILA fr 414	Bulla Regia (?)	consul suffectus, cur. Bulla Regia
Accia Asclepianilla Castorea	A 29	2 nd -3 rd c.	CIL 8 1181	Utica	patrona of Utica
Accia Heuresis Venantium	A 30	2 nd -3 rd c.	CIL 8 1181	Utica	patrona of Utica
Accus Iulianus	A 26	cos. mid 2 nd c.	CIL 9 2451	Utica (?)	consul suffectus (2 nd c.)
L. Accius Julianus Asclepianus	A 27	2 nd -3 rd c.	CIL 8 1181	Utica	patrona of Utica
Agrina Tamnonia	A 467	3 rd c.	AE 1906 142	Bulla Regia	benefactress
			CIL 8 2523		
L. Antistius Burrus	A 757	cos. 182		Numidia	consul (181) husband of Vibia
Q. Aiacius Modestus Crescentianus	A 470	cos. 228	ILS 433	African	consul (228)
Iunia Atacia Modesta	A 471	early 3 rd c.	CIL 15 8088	African	
Aradia Roscia Calpurnia Purgunilla	A 1018	3 rd -4 th c.	CIL 8 14470	Bulla Regia	patrona of Bulla Regia
Aradius Rufinus	A 1013a	c. 376	AE 1970 490	Bulla Regia	praefectus urbi
L. Aradius Roscius Rufinus Sat. Tiberianus	A 1013	3 rd c.	CIL 10 6439	Bulla Regia	patron of Privernum
L. Aradius Valerius Proculus Populonium		mid 3 rd c.		Bulla Regia	procos. Africae
(P). Aradius Paternus ²		c. 230		Bulla Regia	consul suffectus (230)
P. Aradius Paternus Rufinianus Aelianus ³		3 rd c.		Bulla Regia	
Q. Aradius Rufinus (1)	A 1016	c. 219	CIL 6 3948	Bulla Regia	sodalis Augustalis
Q. Aradius Rufinus Valerius Proculus Populon.	A 1017	c. 321	CIL 15 8088	Bulla Regia	praeses; consul suffectus
Q. Aradius Rufinus Optatus Aelianus	A 1016	c. 210	CIL 8 14688	Bulla Regia	consul (210)
T. Aradius Saturninus Tiberianus	A 1013	3 rd c.	AE 1971 470	Bulla Regia	
C. Arrius Antoninus (1)	A 1088	c. 170		Bulla Regia	consul suffectus (c. 170)
C. Arrius Antoninus (2)	A 1089	late 2 nd c.	CIL 8 7030	Cirta	
C. Arrius Calpurnius Frontinus Honoratus	F 220; A 1095		ILA fr 279	Cirta	
C. Arrius Calpurnius Longinus	A 1036	c. 238	CIL 8 23831	Cirta	patron of Aviocala
C. Arrius Quadratus	A 1107			Cirta (?)	
Fronto Aemilianus Calpurnius Rufilianus	C 310	c. 161	CIL 7 98	Utica	military legate

¹ For the patrons, their patronage inscriptions are supplied, for relatives, these are exemplary inscriptions noting their relationship and there may in fact be many more inscriptions for each pertaining to other matters.

² *RE* Suppl. XIV Aradius 54.

³ cf. Corbier (1982) 2, 713 No. 5.

Appendix D: Italian Civic Patronae and Select Relatives

Abeiena Balbina	A 29	180-192	CIL 11 6354	Pisaurum	patrona of Pitinum Pisaurum
Aurelia Crescentia	A 1648	c. 243	CIL 9 4894	Italian (?)	patrona of Trebula Mutuesca
Capertia Valeriana		2 nd -3 rd c.	AE 1976 250	Italian (?)	patrona of Bellunum
Domitia Melpis	D 184	mid 3 rd c.	CIL 11 3368	Etruria	patrona of Tarquinia
Helvidia Burenia	PLRE I 605	c. 338	CIL 11 4180	Somnium (?)	patronus of Interamna
Nummia Varia	N 240	c. 242	CIL 9 3429	Venetia	patrona of Peluinum
Petinus Aper	cf. A. 29	2 nd c.	CIL 11 6354	Pisaurum	quinquenallis, husband Abeiena
Q. Petronius Melior	P 290	cos. (c. 240)	CIL 11 3368	Etruria	patron of Tarquinia, cos. (husband of Domitia Melpis)

Appendix E: North African Benefactresses

Date	Name	Status	Structure	Location	Priesthood	Inscription	Language
1-2nd c.	Anila Domitia Gemina Natalis		Temple of Herc.	Beida, Num.	Sacerdos	CIL VIII 2295, 17736	deo suo
42/3	Coelia Victoria Potita	Senatorial	Temple of Livia	Cirta, Num.	Flaminica divae Augustae	ILAlg. II 1, 150	sua pecunia faciendum curavit
2nd c.	Proxinia Procula	Senatorial	Tribunal, Rostra	Rusicade, Numidia		CIL VIII 7986 (p 1879) = ILAlg-II 1, 36 = ILS 6862	sua pecunia
145-161	Iulia Paula Laenatiana		Temple of Minerva	Thugga, Africa Proconsularis	Flaminica Perpetua	CIL VIII 1472 = CIL VIII 26490 = ILAfr 518	sua pecunia
152-3	Calpurnia Honesta		Temple	Leptis Magna, Tripolitania		IRT 370	sua pecunia
ca. 158	Volteia Cornuficia	Senatorial	Temple of Isis and Serapis	Lambaesis, Numidia		CIL VIII 2630 = CIL VIII 18100 = SIRIS 785	
mid 2nd c.	Annia Cara		Temple (?)	Thamugadi, Numidia	Flaminica	CIL VIII 17831 = ILS 5400	
160/70	Antonia Saturnina		Vicus	Near Cirta, Numidia		CIL VIII 8280 = CIL VIII 20077 = ILS 6869 = ILAlg-II 3, 7482 = AE 2002, +1650 = AE 2003, +1894	
168-170	Iunia Saturnina	Decurial	Temple of Capitoline Jupiter, a gymnasium, feast, sculptures,	Numiulis, Africa Proconsularis	Flamen	CIL VIII 26121 = AE 1892, 145	multiplicata pecunia; Husband: 20,000 sesterces, Wife: 4,000
172-3	Nanneia Instania Fida		Two Columns	Thugga, Africa Proconsularis	Flaminica Perpetua	ILAfr 561 = AE 1914, 176	ob h[onorem] flaminicatus
Commodus	Postimia Lucilla		Temple of Minerva	Deirat, A.P.		ILAlg I 3838	
198-208	Iulia Victorina		Temple of Saturn	Mechta, A.P.		ILAfr 182	
ca. 203	Flavia Silva	Senatorial	Temple of Caelestis	Lambaesis, Numidia		AE 1957.123	

	Prisca						
204	Asicia Victoria	Senatorial	Rostra	Thugga, Africa Proconsularis	Flaminica Perpetua	CIL VIII 26593 = ILAfr 534b= AE 1907, 160 = AE 1908, 163	ex poll(ucto) HS XX(milibus) n(ummum) fieri voluit
ca. 204	" "	" "	" "	" "	" "	CIL VIII 1495 (p 938) = CIL VIII 2659	ob muni/[f]ic{i }entiam et singula/rem liberalitatem eius / in rem p(ublicam) quae ob flamonium / [V]ibiae Asicianes fil(iae) suae HS C / mil(ia) n(ummum) pollicitast ex quorum re/[d]itu ludi scaenici et sportulae
Severan	Valeria Paulina		Temple of Merkur	Gigthis, Trip.		CIL VIII 26695,6= ILTun 21, 22; ILTun 42	ob merita et munificentia m
Severan	Caecilia Maximina and Caecilia Ve[3]		Temple (?)	Cuicil, Num.		ILAlg II 3, 7648	ob merita et munificentia m
2-3rd c.	Claudia		Baths	Auzia, Maur.		CIL VIII 20757	
210	Aelia Saturnina	Senatorial	Temple of Caelestis	Auzia, Maur.		CIL VIII 9015	
211	Sidia Amara		Statue Podium	Municipium Avula, Africa Proconsularis		CIL VIII 712 = CIL VIII 12143	
211	Claudia Proculina	Senatorial	Temple of Aesclepius	Lambaesis, Numidia		CIL VIII 2585 = CIL VIII 18091 = AE 1967, 571	
211	Vera	Senatorial	Temple	Lambaesis, Numidia		CIL VIII.2583 (p 954) = ILS 3893	
211	unknown		Temple of Hygeia	Lambaesis, Numidia		CIL VIII 2588 (p 1739) = ILS 3843	
211	Firmia		Podium, Portico	Municipum Avula		CIL VIII 12143= CIL VIII. 12	

212-17	Lucia Quieta		Temple of Saturn	Lambaesis, Numidia	Sacerdos	CIL VIII 2670 (p 954, 1739) = ILS 4439 = AE 1908.260	
213-14	Gabinia Hermonia		Temple of Caesar	Thugga, Africa Proconsularis		IL Afr. 527	
217-18	Orfia Fortunata		Temple of Mercury	Mustis, Africa Proconsularis		AE 1968, 591 = IMustis 16	pro/miserat multiplicata p[ec]unia cum Orfia M(arci) f(ilia) Fortunata
241	Aurelia Germanilla		Temple of Virtus	Auzia, Maur.		CIL VIII 9026	
235	Clodia Luciosa		Temple to Bona D.	Auzia, Maur.		CIL VIII 20747	
261	Botria Fortunata		Temple of Tellus, Sportulae, Epulae	Thugga, Africa Proconsularis	Flaminica Perpetua	CIL VIII 1505 = CIL VIII 15510 = CIL VIII 26558 = IL Afr. 530 = Dougga 40	ob summam honoris flaminatus sua pecunia s[ol]o extruxit excoluit et [d]edicavit sport[ulis] d[atis] decurionibu s et e]puli[s
275/6	Nonia		Temple of Victoria	Membressa, Africa Proconsularis		CIL VIII 25836 = ILPBardo 389 = ILS 8926 = AE 1999, 1755	
286-293	Arminia Fadilla		Temple of Apollo	Calama		ILAlg I.250	150,000 sesterces and 200,000 sesterces
2nd-3rd c.	Viria Pomponilla	Decuria I	Temple of Mars	Madauros, Numidia		ILAlg I 2056 = AE 1908. 243	libens animo
2nd-3rd c.	Cominia Patercla		Epulae	Althiburus, Africa Proconsularis		CIL VIII 1827 (p 2722) = CIL VIII 16472 = ILTun 1647	ob merita posueru[nt] / ob quam dedication[e m] /
2nd-3rd c.	Terentia Bonifata; Antonia Matrona; Manilia Honoreta		Temple of Bellona?	Madauros, Numidia		ILAlg I. 2071 = AE 1919.48 = AE 1920. 41	
2nd-3rd	Armenia Auge		Gymnasium, Quadriga,	Municipium Seressitanum,		CIL VIII 937 (p	liberalitate sua HS XXV

	Bebenia Pauliana		Sportulae	Africa Proconsularis		2340) = CIL VIII 11216	mil(ia) n(ummum)
3rd.c.	Sossia	Senatorial	Temple of Saturn	Auzia, Mauretania		CIL VIII 9023	
3rd c.	Cassia Maximula		Temple of Caelestis; sportulas	Carpis, Africa Proconsularis	Flaminica divae Plotinae	CIL VIII 993	
3rd c.	Valeria Marianilla	Senatorial	building (?)	Uchi, Africa Proconsularis		CIL VIII 26273	[ob] eximiam eius li/beralitate m
3rd c.	unknown	Senatorial	Temple	Thabora, Africa Proconsularis		IL Afr. 221	patriae karissimae sua pecuni
3rd c.	Clodia Macrina	Senatorial		Murzuc, Africa Proconsularis		CIL VIII 12058	...promiserat Clodia Macri/nac(larissima) f(emina) neptis eius super HS VI mil(ia) et / CCCC n(ummum) e[ius sum]mae honorariae / adiectis am[plius li]beralitate sua / HS V mil(ia) et sesc[entis n(ummum)] ex HS X[II] / mil(ibus) n(ummum) a solo [er]exit...
3rd-4th c.	Honorata		Temple	Sigus, Numidia		CIL VIII 19121 = ILS 4479 = ILAlg-II 2, 6486 = AE 1888, 140	pollicitus erat fac/turum se ex (denariis) DL ampli/ficata liberalitate / ex (denariis) mille cum base
unknown	unknown		Temple (?)	Caesarea, Mauretania	Flaminica	CIL VIII 21067	
unknown	Bonifatia		Temple	Thibursicum Bure, Africa Proconsularis		CIL VIII 1463 (p 938, 1473) = ILTun 1332	20,000 sesterces; ex testamento
unknown	Aufidia Quartilla		Temple and Portico	Thuburbo Maius, Africa Proconsularis		AE 1917/18. 22=IL Afr 242 = ILPBardo	

						338	
unknown	Flavia Euphrosyne		Temple of Aesclepius	Maxula, Africa Proconsularis		ILTun 868 = AE 1937. 72 = AE 1937. 73	
unknown	Ulpia Ingenua	Equestrian	Temple of Minerva	Lambaesis, Numidia		CIL VIII 2647	
unknown	Maria Lucina	Senatorial	building (?), epulae, sportulae	Mustis, Africa Proconsularis	Flaminica	CIL VIII 1578	ob honor(em) eiusd(em) / [--- promississent adiectis ex li]beralitate sua amplius HS X[--- n(ummum) --- fecerunt --- ob dedicatione m sp]ortulis decurionibus et epulis civibus datis
unknown	Lartidia		Temple (?) to Jupiter	Segermes, Africa Proconsularis		ILTun 261 = AE 1935, 35	



Fig.1. Roman North Africa

Source: J. B. Rives, *Religion and Authority in Roman Carthage from Augustus to Constantine* (Oxford, 1995) xvi: Map 3.

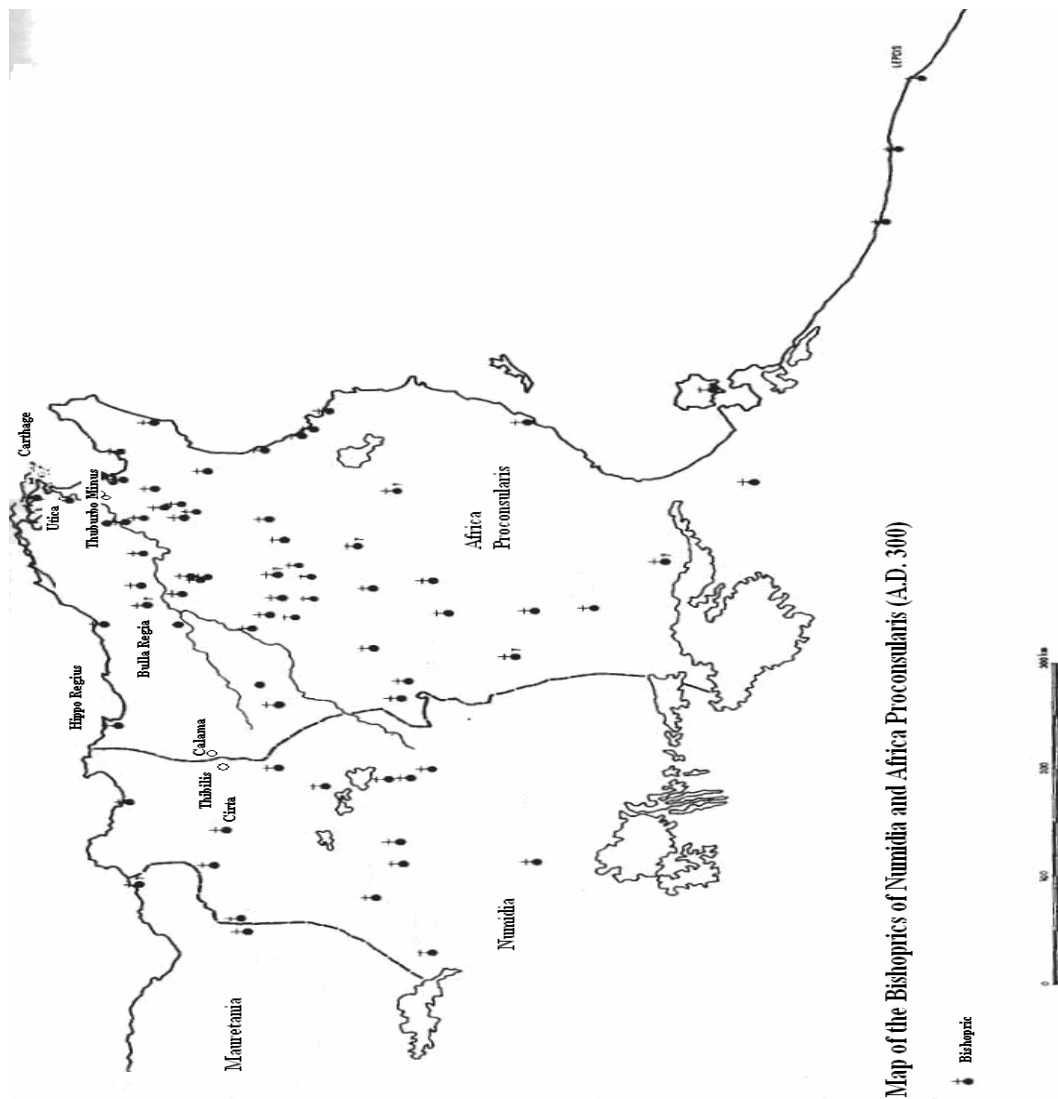


Fig. 2. Map of the Bishopricks of Africa Proconsularis and Numidia by A.D. 300

Source: P.-A. Février, *Approches du Maghreb romain: pouvoirs, différences et conflits* (Edisud, 1989) 180. [The labels have been modified from the original French]

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