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## Chapter 5      *The Nomen Antoninorum* Theme

### 5.1      Introduction: Imperial Names

Imperial names belong to the author's favourite themes.<sup>363</sup> The first preface in the *HA*, that of *Ael.*, contains a programmatic digression in which the author announces his intention to describe rulers who came close to attaining the principate, but never held this position. Some of these are indicated as *Caesares*, the first of whom was Hadrian's intended successor Aelius. *Quorum praecipue de Aelio Vero dicendum est, qui primus tantum nomen Caesaris accepit* (*Ael.* 1.2, see § 3.2) is the statement of the author. Meanwhile, he distorts the names given to these rulers, since Aelius (who was named Caesar as an heir, and whose juvenile name was Lucius Ceionius Commodus) never bore the name of Verus, though in the biography the name is attributed to him (see quotation above).<sup>364</sup> The actual beginning of the biography runs thus (*Ael.* 2.1): *Ceionius Commodus (...) nihil habet in sua vita memorabile nisi quod primus tantum Caesar est appellatus*. The *nomen Caesaris* theme is presented as the main reason for a biography about Aelius in the series. In *Ael.* 2.3, the author further builds up his program by adding some thoughts about the name of Caesar: *Et quoniam de Caesarum nomine in huius praecipue vita est aliquid disputandum, qui hoc solum nomen indeptus est...*, after which a digression follows on the etymology of the name of Caesar.<sup>365</sup>

The author's treatment of the *nomen Caesareum* may be considered a preliminary to the theme of the *nomen Antoninorum*. He may even have derived the idea of continuing the *nomen Antoninorum* as a theme from his disquisitions on the *nomen Caesaris*, for which he took the information from other sources. A development in the author's considerations about the *nomen Caesareum* (or *Caesareanum nomen*, as *CIA* 13.4 and 9 have it) can be observed in the earlier lives, though no research has been done on the subject so far. To give just two examples: in *Ael.* 2.5 the name of Caesar is extolled: *certe quaecumque illa, felix necessitas fuit, unde tam clarum et duraturum cum aeternitate mundi nomen effloruit*, which is important, as the theme will be replaced by another one, that of the *nomen Antoninorum*, in the course of the earlier and the intermediary lives, to which far more space will be devoted than to the present theme. The theme is continued until the vita of Clodius Albinus, who not only refuses the *nomen Caesareum* (*CIA* 13.3-10) conferred upon him by the emperor Commodus, but also

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<sup>363</sup> The recurrence of the theme among different *scriptores* was one of Dessau's arguments (1889, 384) that the *HA* had not been written by the authors named in the manuscripts, nor in the alleged era. Hohl 1950 made an important contribution in a fine piece of philological erudition, by showing that not all the imperial names should be attributed to the same source or stage of composition: for example, the jokes on the names of Lucanicus and Germanicus are from an earlier date or source than those about Sarmaticus, Parthicus, Gothicus, etc., whom the author of *HA* invented.

<sup>364</sup> Chastagnol 1994, 62 for the explanation of the distortion; Kienast 1996, 131 for factual information.

<sup>365</sup> The *nomen Caesaris* theme was popular also in other works in late antiquity, like Servius, Festus and Nonius, see A. Alföldy *BHAC 1966-1967*, 9-18. No explanation by Suetonius of the precise use of the name of Caesar is left; possibly, the lost opening chapters of his *Div. Iul.* provided several later authors with the information – though this is only a matter of conjecture.

wishes that nobody should ever accept the name from that emperor (13. 9: *Di faxint, ut ne alii quidem velint*). His argument is that the senate rules the empire, and he emphasises that the *nomen Caesareum* (which originated with the senator who later became a dictator, *ClA* 13.7) was granted him by Commodus, not the senate.

The name of Caesar, emphatically introduced in *Ael.*, seems to have fallen from grace in the author's narration about Clodius Albinus. Caesar's name makes way for another, purportedly more important name: that of Antoninus, a prestigious name since the days of the wise and beloved Antoninus Pius. This is not the right place to discuss all the appearances of the former theme, that of Caesar's name, but one more quotation may reveal what the author based his ideas on. Here is what Aurelius Victor's *Breviarium* (13.12) says concerning Trajan's adoption of Hadrian: *Abhinc divisa nomina Caesarum atque Augusti, inductumque in rem publicam, uti duo seu plures, summae potentiae dissimiles, cognomento ac potestate dispari sunt*. The author may have borrowed the theme and adapted it for his own purposes (surprisingly, with a better historical account as the outcome)<sup>366</sup> as he does with other quotations from either Aurelius Victor or Eutropius on the subject of imperial names.

Originally Caesar was a personal name that became a *cognomen* of the *gens Iulia* when Octavianus Augustus adorned his adoptive sons Caius and Lucius with it, later to become a title when Claudius and Nero were called thus. With Galba, who granted his adoptive son Piso the name of Caesar, the name was first used to designate the successor to the throne<sup>367</sup> - a usage which was adopted by Hadrian when he nominated Aelius as his intended successor. The origin of the name of Caesar should be distinguished from that of Augustus, which always was a title granted by the senate to a new emperor,<sup>368</sup> a procedure which was in principle continued into the second century AD. By that time, the Antonine name had come to play an important part. Originally a personal name, it came to bear all the hallmarks of an imperial title on March 7th 161, when it was transferred to Marcus Aurelius on the occasion of his accession to the throne. In the author's conception, Antoninus was to be the most important imperial name and imperial title in the course of the second century and the first quarter of the third.

Aelius' successor as Hadrian's heir was Antoninus Pius, or rather T. Aurelius Fulvus Boionius Arrius Antoninus, who became T. Aelius Caesar Antoninus on the day of his adoption on 25th February 138 AD and was invested with the names of Augustus and Pius on the 10th of July, the day of his accession to the throne.<sup>369</sup> After he had become emperor a new pair of imperial names gained authority, the personal name *Antoninus* and the cognomen *Pius* as a title<sup>370</sup>: *post hunc (sc. Aelium) denique Hadrianus*

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<sup>366</sup> Dufraigne 106n27 remarks that *HA* is more accurate in pinpointing the moment of this measure, namely at the time of Hadrian's adoption of Aelius, *Ael.* 1.1-2.

<sup>367</sup> Kienast 1996, 24.

<sup>368</sup> Kienast 1996, 25.

<sup>369</sup> For convenience sake, I will refer to the emperors by their traditional names, unless their other names are required for the argument. Thus, Marcus Aurelius instead of M. Annius Verus or Aurelius Antoninus and Lucius Verus instead of L. Aelius Aurelius Commodus, etc.. For name changes in different stages of the rulers' lives, Kienast 1996 is essential reading.

<sup>370</sup> For a digression on this name, see *AP* 2.3-7 (*Pius cognominatus est a senatu, vel quod... {vel quod repeated 5 times}*), by which the author's interest in imperial titles is attested another time. Cf. also the digressions on the *Caesareum nomen* in *Ael.* 2.3, though here the etymology of the name is subject of the narration.

*diu anceps quid faceret, Antoninum adoptavit Pium cognomine appellatum* (*Ael.* 6.9)<sup>371</sup>. Stress is laid on the *cognomen* by the participle construction *Pium cognomine appellatum*. In *H* 24.1 a similar formula *qui postea Pius appellatus est*, is found, after which in *H* 24.3-5 a digression on the name of Pius emphasises the importance of the theme, to be repeated in *AP* 2.3-7. Though no new dynasty had been initiated, Pius' other name of Antoninus became almost a title, in particular when the founder of the next dynasty, the emperor Septimius Severus, in 196 chose to adopt Marcus Aurelius Antoninus as his father (and, incidentally, Commodus as his brother)<sup>372</sup> and granted the Antonine name to his son Bassianus.<sup>373</sup> This fact appealed to the author, since he took it as a theme for contemplations on the continuity of the Roman emperorship. Apart from this, he used the theme to build up his own series, thereby exaggerating the importance of the Antonine name in the imperial succession by making it weigh as heavily as those of Caesar and Augustus, or even heavier.

The attention that the author paid to the name of Antoninus has resulted in one of the most elaborate themes in the *HA*. Aspects of the theme of the *nomen Antoninorum* have been treated by several scholars,<sup>374</sup> beginning with Tropea (1899), whose chief contribution was the collection of individual passages. Syme (1971, 78-88) paved the way with an inventory of relevant passages with an analysis of the peculiarities of each of them. The main concern in this chapter will be the way in which the *NA* theme is integrated in the structure of the *HA*. Related questions, such as the sources, models and origin of the theme, and the internal developments in the use of the theme, will be treated subsequently. Finally, some conclusions about the genesis of the books in which the theme occurs will be drawn. The *NA* theme is prepared for in the biography where the name of Antoninus begins to play a role: the secondary *vita* of *Ael.*, which uses the name even before the noble Antoninus Pius had gained the throne. The theme is continued in the primary *vitae* of *AP*, *MA*, *S* and *Cc*. It reaches a peak, at least in volume, in the biographies of *G*, *OM* and *Dd*. The books *Hel.* and *AS*, about the second era of the Severan dynasty, continue the theme, until it comes to an end in *Gd*. The importance of the *NA* theme can hardly be underestimated, as it covers nineteen out of thirty books.

## 5.2 The *NA* Theme in the Earlier Lives

### 5.2.1 The *NA* Theme in *Ael.*, *AP*, *MA* and *V*

The author's preoccupation with the name of Antoninus is first attested in a remarkable passage in *Ael.* 5.12-3: *Eius est filius Antoninus Verus, qui adoptatus est a Marco, - vel certe cum Marco – et cum eodem aequale gessit imperium. Nam ipsi sunt qui primi duo Augusti appellati sunt, et quorum fastis consularibus sic nomina praescribuntur, ut dicantur non duo Antonini, sed duo Augusti*. It appears that he takes for granted that both

<sup>371</sup> Antoninus only received the name of Pius when he became emperor in AD 138 (Kienast 1996, 134), see *AP* 5.2: *Pii appellationem recepit (sc. a senatu)*.

<sup>372</sup> Cassius Dio 76.7.4; Herodian only makes general mention of the family ties (3.10.5).

<sup>373</sup> Kienast 1996, 162: in the year 195 or 196, Septimius conferred the name of Caesar on his son M. Aurelius Antoninus. Birley (1988, 117) seems to opt for the earlier date.

<sup>374</sup> Reusch 1931, 53; Barnes 1978, 48; Den Hengst 1981, 28-35; Scholtemeijer 1976 and 1981.

adoptive sons of the first Antoninus, viz. Antoninus Pius, were named Antoninus.<sup>375</sup> In that case, the author suggests, it would have been logical if the *fasti consulares* had simply called them the sons of Antoninus, Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, but the novelty of joint emperorship caused them both to be named *Augustus*.<sup>376</sup> A typical aspect of the author's style is his extension of this remark, namely that some *fasti consulares* start with the two *Augusti* (*tantumque huius rei et novitas et dignitas valuit, ut fasti consulares nonnulli ab his sumerent ordinem consulum, Ael.5.14*).

The remark is an elaboration and partial imitation of *MA* 7.6: *Atque ex eo pariter coeperunt rem publicam regere. Tuncque primum Romanum imperium duos Augustos habere coepit, cum imperium sibi relictum cum alio participasset*, which in its turn is derived from Eutropius 8.9.2<sup>377</sup> in an amplified form. The most innovative element in this last quote is the addition *non duo Antonini*, as there were no two Antonini: Lucius Verus was never officially called by that name, though it is so mentioned in *AP* 4.5.<sup>378</sup> In the author's view, the remark in both *MA* 7.5 and *Ael.* 5.12-3 is historically important because of *huius rei et novitas et dignitas* (*Ael.5.14*), but in the case of *Ael.* of particular interest for the construction of the *HA*, as the author intended to describe *eos, qui principum locum in hac statione, quam temperas (sc. Diocletian), retentarunt* (*Ael.1.1*). That the Secondary Lives were all composed after the compilation of the Primary Lives, has been hypothesized before (Syme 1971, 54-75), and that the author used information from the Primary Lives for the composition of the Secondary, may be deduced from a host of examples.<sup>379</sup>

With the echo from *MA* in *Ael.*, a typical trait of the Secondary Lives as opposed to the Primary Lives becomes clear: a certain theme, that of the first *duo Augusti*, recurs in a slightly changed and often amplified form. When we investigate the changes in greater detail, it becomes clear that the author uses several methods to reformulate his messages. He uses techniques like *antithesis* (*cum alio* in *MA* 7.6 becomes *cum eodem* in *Ael.* 5.12-3), *variatio* (a change of casus: *duos Augustos* becomes *duo Augusti* (twice), *synonymia*

<sup>375</sup> Just like Eutropius (8.10.1), Orosius associates the name Antoninus with Verus (7.15.2-3). Note that Eutropius' contemporary Festus also has in 14.4: *sed post sub Antoninis duobus, Marco et Vero, ... quater amissa, quater recepta Mesopotamia est* and 21.1: *Antonini duo, Marcus et Verus, hoc est socer et gener, pariter Augusti, imperium orbis aequata primum potestate tenuerunt*. This indicates a common source for Eutropius, *HA*, Festus and Orosius (probably the *KG*), though the question why Aurelius Victor disregarded the name is difficult to answer. Neither Eadie (1967, 140, for Festus) nor Arnaud-Lindet (1991, 47 and 138 for Orosius; 1994, 46 for Festus) comments on Verus' Antonine name; they probably accept the designation *Antonini* as 'members of the Antonine dynasty'. Similarly, Callu (1992, 139n9) in his commentary on *Ael.* and Hellegouarc'h (1999, 213) on Eutropius, are silent on this matter. Walentowski 1998, 177 *ad AP* 4.5 'Der Irrtum der *HA* mag darauf zurückzuführen sein, das Marc Aurel seit 161 den Namen Antoninus führte' does not provide a solution to the problem. Callu (1992, 144n41) does observe that *Ael.* 5.12-3 is the first manifestation of the *nomen Antoninorum* theme.

<sup>376</sup> After the death of Antoninus Pius, his two adoptive sons Marcus and Lucius became consuls, Kienast 1996, 139 and 144.

<sup>377</sup> Eutropius 8.9.2, see below.

<sup>378</sup> Kienast 1996, 143; Callu 1991, 100 *sqq.* On *AP* 4: Pflaum 1966, 144 ('mauvaise source', 'également erroné') and Syme 1971, 40 ('erroneous') and 87 ('patent additions') – though in this latter case it is not explained what exactly an 'addition' is, or what it is based on.

<sup>379</sup> For example, see Mommsen (1890, 246-9) about the relation of *MA* – *AC* and *S* – *PN* (cf. Lécivain 1904, 245-63 for all the secondary lives and Klebs 1888, 321 *sqq.* for *AC*). See for the discussion about the relation between primary and secondary lives § 2.2.1 of this study; and § 5.4.1 (below) for the verbal parallels in *Cc.* – *G*.

(*rem publicam* becomes *imperium*, while *pariter coeperunt rem publicam regere* becomes *aequale gessit imperium*), *repetitio* (the word *primi* ('as the first') is an echo of *primum* ('for the first time'). The inventory is important. It helps us to understand how the author proceeded when rewriting texts, either working within the series of the *HA* or drawing from a source outside the work. These techniques may be normal practice for any historiographer following or seeking to condense a source (studies on this aspect do, to my knowledge, not exist), but in case of a cumulation of correspondences and lexical similarities the particular use or distortion of a source can still be demonstrated, while the author's particular working procedure may be distilled through an analysis of his method of rewriting texts. In the case quoted above, the author rewrites a text from *MA* (or its source). To give another instance of the same procedure, compare Eutropius 8.9.2 as a postulated source<sup>380</sup> with the remaking in *MA* 7.6, which proves the direct borrowing from Eutropius:

Eutropius 8.9.2

*Tuncque primum Romana res publica duobus aequo iure imperium administrantibus paruit, cum usque ad eum singulos semper habuisset Augustos.*

*MA* 7.6

*Atque ex eo pariter coeperunt rem publicam regere. Tuncque primum Romanum imperium duos Augustos habere coepit, cum imperium sibi relictum cum alio participasset.*

The author reveals his source implicitly by the repetition of *tuncque primum* (*tuncque primum Romana res publica duobus ... administrantibus paruit* becomes *tuncque primum Romanum imperium duos Augustos habere coepit*). Note how he changes the original thought of Eutropius to something more to his own liking:

|                                    |   |                               |                                      |
|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <i>Romana res publica</i>          | → | <i>rem publicam</i>           | change of casus                      |
| <i>imperium</i>                    | → | <i>Romanum imperium</i>       | shift of adjective, <i>repetitio</i> |
| <i>aequo iure</i>                  | → | <i>pariter</i> <sup>381</sup> | <i>synonymia</i>                     |
| <i>usque ad eum</i>                | → | <i>ex eo</i>                  | temporal inversion                   |
| <i>duobus... administrantibus;</i> |   |                               |                                      |
| <i>singulos... Augustos</i>        | → | <i>duos Augustos</i>          | <i>variatio</i> , shift of adjective |
| <i>semper habuisset</i>            | → | <i>habere coepit</i>          | temporal inversion                   |

<sup>380</sup> The question whether Eutropius (who published his *Breviarium* in 369-70) could have served as a source of *HA* has been discussed ever since Dessau (1889, 161 *sqq.*) used it as an argument to date *HA* (basing himself especially on a comparison of *MA* 16.3-18.1 and Eutropius 8.9-14). The evidence brought forward by Hasebroek (1916, 73) was not accepted by Hohl (1950, 17). For a discussion see Fündling 2006, 136-7 (Eutropius) and Chastagnol 1994, LXVIII and 141n7. Schmid 1964, 124-5 and Chastagnol 1967, 85-97 affirmed the direct use of Eutropius by the author of *HA*, which is now widely accepted (Ratti 1996, 26-7).

<sup>381</sup> Some caution is required here, because *pariter* 'at the same time, together' is not necessarily the same as *aequo iure* 'with equal authority', see Fündling 2006, 1018 (K 501) and Hartke 1951, 157-8. Perhaps Schwendemann, meant the same with 'unkorrekte Ausdrucksweise' (1923, 29). Festus (21.1: Eadie 1967, 63 and Arnaud-Lindet 1991, 29) distinguishes the two clearly: *Marcus et Verus, (...) pariter Augusti, imperium orbis aequata primum potestate tenuerunt*. It should however be questioned whether the author of *HA* is very mindful of the distinctive terms, as in *S* 20.1 he writes *duos Antoninos pari imperio* and *OM* 10.4: *... quem plerique pari fuisse cum patris imperio tradiderunt*, which cases come close to *aequo iure*: is it subversive to suppose that it is rather a question of style than exact terminology for our author (thus:

These changes are typical aspects of the author's style: with the use of repetition, synonymia (*res publica, imperium*), antitheses (*usque ad eum, ex eo*) and combinations (*Romanus* shifts from *res publica* to *imperium*; *duobus administrantibus* and *singulos Augustos* becomes *duos Augustos*) something new is created. Note also the shift of perspective from past to future (*usque ad eum singulos semper habuisset Augustos* becomes *ex eo pariter coeperunt rem publicam regere* and *duos Augustos habere coepit*).

The mistaken attribution of the name of Antoninus to Lucius Verus is repeated in the life of Marcus Aurelius (MA 7.7): *Et quasi pater Lucii Commodi esset, et Verum eum appellavit addito Antonini nomine filiamque suam Lucillam fratri despondit*. This passage shows the disparity in *auctoritas* of the two new Augusti, though they were both appointed emperor: Marcus grants his name Verus to his colleague, whose name was at that moment Lucius Aelius Aurelius Commodus, and tightens the imperial bond by giving his daughter in marriage.<sup>382</sup> The historical error resides in the *addito Antonini nomine*. Exactly the same can be stated for a similar passage dealing with the adoption by Antoninus Pius, in AP 4.5: *...ita sibi ille adoptaret M. Antoninum, fratris uxoris suae filium, et L. Verum, Aelii Veri, qui ab Hadriano adoptatus fuerat, filium, qui postea Verus Antoninus est dictus*. The structure of the sentence itself betrays that the relative clause *qui...dictus* is a loose addendum to the nucleus: subj. (*ille*) – verb (*adoptaret*) – obj. (*M. Antoninum* + apposition, *L. Verum* + apposition), after which historically incorrect information about Verus' names is given (which may have been meant to clear up the complicated situation resulting from such adoptions). The same thing happens in AP 6.10:<sup>383</sup> *Annium Verum, qui postea dictus est Antoninus, ante tempus quaestorem designavit* (sc. Antoninus Pius). The insistence that he shows in giving Lucius the name of Antoninus is suspect and has, according to Syme, all the characteristics of a piece of interpolated historical invention.<sup>384</sup>

Sometimes, the author is over-zealous in explaining which person or family is meant, as in MA 5.5: in *Tunc primum pro Annio Aurelius coepit vocari, quod in Aureliam* (sc. *familiam*), *hoc est Antonini, adoptionis iure transisset*. For the rest, he just adds the Antonine name to his subject: AP 10.3 (*Verum Antoninum post quaesturam consullem fecit*) and in Verus' own life (V 1.3): *Igitur Lucius Ceionius Aelius Commodus Verus Antoninus, qui ex Hadriani voluntate Aelius appellatus est, ex Antonini coniunctione Verus et Antoninus, neque inter bonos neque inter malos principes ponitur*, as well as in the designation in the Secondary Life of Ael. (2.9): *Et de huius* (sc. *Lucii Veri*) *quidem familia plenius in vita Lucii Aurelii Ceionii Commodi Veri Antonini (...) disseremus*. In

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*pariter = aequo iure and pari imperio and aequale imperium*)? The terms are rather commonplace in the sources: Aurelius Victor called the emperors Hadrian and Aelius *potestate dispari*, in which *dispar* means 'of unequal authority', the opposite of *aequata potestate or pari imperio*.

<sup>382</sup> See Schulze 1907, 77, Birley 1966, 153-4 and Fündling 2008, 73-4 and for an explanation of the relations between the two Augusti. Although the emperors reigned with equal rights, Marcus was the sole 'Antoninus'.

<sup>383</sup> On the historical names of Verus in connection with AP 4 and 6.10 see Pflaum (1966, 144sq.), who shows that the names attributed by the author to Marcus Aurelius are also inaccurate. For further discussion and different forms of Verus' names: Callu 1991, 101-22.

<sup>384</sup> 'The first four of these are patent additions', as Syme (1971, 87) perceived in the case of AP 4.5, 6.10, 10.3 and MA 7.7 (see above).

these passages the names are, in agreement with the way the Secondary Lives are composed, derived from the Primary Lives of *AP* and *V*.

It becomes increasingly clear that the author has a predilection for the name of Antoninus, which he stresses both when an emperor really bears that name, such as Caracalla, and when he wishes an emperor to be called thus, as in Verus' case. The question to be answered is why the author, deliberately or not, neglects historical fact and what he seeks to achieve in this way. The author of the *HA* copies faulty names from Eutropius, whether or not in the knowledge that his source was wrong.<sup>385</sup> Whereas his use of Eutropius is contested for the section of Primary and Secondary Lives (Chastagnol shows no signs of hesitation, while Fündling is very cautious),<sup>386</sup> the parallels between *MA* 7.6 and Eutropius 8.9.2 do show a direct use of Eutropius. The author of the *HA* supplements his basic source with historical information from Eutropius, including the latter's faulty epithets. This procedure explains how Verus acquired the name of Antoninus: this is an error for which Eutropius served as authority. That Orosius has the same error has been explained as an indication that a common source underlies the *HA*, Eutropius and Orosius, which must have been the *KG*. With regard to the present point, the dependence of the *HA* on Eutropius sheds a different light on the question – Orosius may also have derived his information and formulation from Eutropius: 7.15.2: *hi primi rempublicam aequo iure tutati sunt*. Presumably, the remark about the *duo Augusti* found its way to *HA* by way of direct use and imitation of Eutropius. The echoes are to be found in *Ael.* 5.12-3 (see above), and also in *H* 24.2: *Hi sunt qui postea duo pariter Augusti primi rem publicam gubernaverunt*. It has been suggested that this passage is an echo of Festus<sup>387</sup>, though no persuasive parallels can be shown apart from his use of the same well-known theme. It should rather be supposed that this remark, too, was borrowed from Eutropius, to occur again in *Ael.* 2.1 and *MA* 7.6. The intrusive character of the passages is also clear from the next sentence, *H* 24.3-5, as witness formulas like *et... quidem*<sup>388</sup> and *idcirco... quod*.<sup>389</sup> The expansive character of the *NA* theme was made possible by a constant addition of imperial names, first Caesar, then Pius, and the first appearances of the *nomen Antoninorum*.

## 5.2.2 The *NA* Theme in *S*

The emperor to close the series of adopted dynasts was Marcus' natural born son Commodus, who inherited the Antonine name. The author does not pay much attention to his name Antoninus, though one passage, *C* 8.1 is devoted to the titles granted to him, in which the names Pius, Felix, Britannicus and Romanus Hercules are mentioned. His

<sup>385</sup> We have to differentiate between the procedure in the earlier lives on the one hand, and intermediary and later lives on the other. As shown by Schmid (1964, 123-33) on the name of Lollianus (9.9.1 – *HA Tr.*5) and Regilianus (*HA Tr.* 10) and Damsholt (1964, 138-50) for *Sarmatosirin* (*H* 5.4). In *MB* 15.4-5 and 16.7 and *Max.* 33.3 Herodian and Dexippus are criticised for assigning the name of Maximus to Puppianus, in *Gd.* 2.1 there is similar censure when only two Gordiani are mentioned instead of three. The errors are ascribed to the *inperitia* of the authors.

<sup>386</sup> Chastagnol 1968, 59-60, repeated in 1994, LXVIII.

<sup>387</sup> Baldwin 1978, 208: 'twice closely followed in *HA*' (namely in *H* 24.2 and *MA* 7.6).

<sup>388</sup> Fündling 2006, K 502. Wölfflin (1891, 513 f.) saw *H* 24.3-5 as an 'Interpolation des Lesers' of *AP* 2.

<sup>389</sup> Den Hengst 2008, 172 on the subject of *idcirco*: 'Ich habe den Eindruck, dass es sich hier um Zusätze handelt (...), womit der Redaktor die wenig aufregenden Hauptviten gleichsam aufpoliert'.

successors Pertinax and Didius Iulianus were no Antonini. The next dynasty, that of the Severi, showed a keen interest in the Antonine name. Septimius Severus, assumed the titles of *Divi Marci Pii filius* and *Divi Commodi frater*.<sup>390</sup> Septimius reserved the name Antoninus for his son Bassianus Caracalla - the relevant texts in *HA* will be treated below. The first appearance of the *NA* theme is in *S* 10.3-5, which passage is quoted here in its context, *S* 10.3-7, as the accompanying text reveals aspects of the author's procedure. The passages dealing with the Antonine name are underlined: (3) *Et cum iret contra Albinum, in itinere apud Viminacium filium suum maiorem Bassianum adposito Aurelii Antonini nomine Caesarem appellavit, ut fratrem suum Getam ab spe imperii, quam ille conceperat, summovertet.* (4) *Et nomen quidem Antonini idcirco filio adposuit, quod somniaverat Antoninum sibi successurum.* (5) *Unde Getam etiam quidam Antoninum putant dictum, ut et ipse succederet in imperio.* (6) *Aliqui putant idcirco illum Antoninum appellatum, quod Severus ipse in Marci familiam transire voluerit.* (7) *Et primo quidem ab Albinianis Severi duces victi sunt.*

This passage is confusing, as two Getae and two Antonini are treated simultaneously. In *S* 10.3, Severus deprives his brother (*fratrem suum*) Geta of the prospect of a co-emperorship, while in *S* 10.5 Severus's son Geta is called Antoninus with the promise that he will succeed his father as an emperor. The earlier Geta may have hoped to share the emperorship with his brother, as mentioned before in *S* 8.10: *occurrit ei et statim Geta frater suus, quem provinciam sibi creditam regere praecepit aliud sperantem.*<sup>391</sup> Secondly, the place where Caracalla was appointed Caesar in either 195 or 196,<sup>392</sup> is interesting, as Viminacium is in the province of Lower Moesia, the province where Severus' brother Geta had been appointed governor. Possibly, the province entrusted to him (*sibi creditam*) refers to that same province,<sup>393</sup> which may have been the reason for Septimius Severus to grant his elder son the title of Caesar and the name of Antoninus in that very province, in order to deprive his brother Geta of his hopes for the emperorship.<sup>394</sup>

Then, the name of Antoninus. As *adposito Aurelii Antonini nomine*<sup>395</sup> is historically correct (just as the time of the granting of the name may be right),<sup>396</sup> the author apparently based his information on a reliable source. Still, the speculation about the dream that led

<sup>390</sup> In the spring of the year 195 AD (Kienast 1996, 156). See Arrigoni Bertini (1980, 189 and note 10) for the dynastic aspects of the assumption of the name of Antoninus, also by Severus' successors (1980, 189-93).

<sup>391</sup> If the two texts, *S* 8.10 and *S* 10.3 are related, Birley's supposition (1988, 109) that *aliud sperantem*, 'a cryptic statement', refers to Geta's hopes for a field command might be wrong, as he clearly hoped for a share in the reign. The Geta mentioned here is Severus' brother, as Birley's translation (1976, 210) confirms: 'This was in order to destroy the hopes which Severus' brother Geta had conceived of gaining the imperial position.' Whittaker in his Loeb edition of Herodian, interpretes the texts *S* 8.10 and 10.3-4 correctly when he states that P. Septimius Geta, Severus's brother, hoped for a share of power (1969, 197n4 and 328n2).

<sup>392</sup> Kienast 1990, 162.

<sup>393</sup> Chastagnol 1994, 320n3; *pace* Birley 1988, 109. Soon afterwards he was appointed governor of Dacia.

<sup>394</sup> The passage is superficially reminiscent of *H* 24.6-7, where Catilius Severus, who prepared himself for the emperorship, was deprived of his prospects by Hadrian's adoption of Antonius Pius.

<sup>395</sup> *Adposito* being a variation on *MA* 7.7 *addito Antonini nomine*.

<sup>396</sup> Kienast 1996, 162 and Whittaker 1969, 328n2. Cf. Cassius Dio 76.7.4 *μάλιστα δ' ἡμᾶς ἐξέπληξεν ὅτι τοῦ τε Μάρκου υἱὸν καὶ τοῦ Κομμόδου ἀδελφὸν ἑαυτὸν ἔλεγε, ...* Septimius had adopted the titles of *Divi Marci Pii filius* and *Divi Commodi frater* (Kienast 1996, 156).

Severus to his decision certainly belongs to the more fanciful parts of Severus' *vita*, but does not break up the narrative flow.<sup>397</sup> The next section, however, is particularly confusing. First of all, without any preparation, Severus' son Geta son is introduced and is granted the Antonine name, which is historically incorrect. This makes the next remark, that other sources are of a different opinion, difficult to follow. Why not *eos Antoninos appellatos*, instead of the singular form? *Illum* must refer to Caracalla, and might have been *eum* if the remark about Geta had not been added. We will return to this issue when we come to *G*.

The next mention of the name of Antoninus for Geta is in *S* 16.3-4: *Ob quae etiam filium eius Bassianum Antoninum, qui Caesar appellatus iam fuerat, annum XIII. agentem participem imperii dixerunt milites. Getam quoque, minorem filium, Caesarem dixerunt, eundem Antoninum, ut plerique in litteras tradunt, appellantes.* The scene takes place on 28 January 198 and is historically correct,<sup>398</sup> save, again, for its final line. A false message is added to the nucleus of the sentence with a participle construction *appellantes* with *eundem* as an object. *Harum appellationum causa*, the first words of the following text, refers to the appointments of Caracalla as *Augustus* and Geta as *Caesar*. The interpolation contains elements of fiction. Note the essential difference with the preceding passage in 10.5: whereas the earlier passage reads *quidam Antoninum putant dictum*, here *plerique* are mentioned as a source, which makes matters even more deceptive.

In *S* 19.2, the fiction of the Antonine name is continued with a new passage imitating Eutropius (8.19.2).<sup>399</sup>

Eutropius 8.19.2

*Decessit Eboraci admodum senex. (...) Nam filios duos successores reliquit, Bassianum et Getam, sed Bassiano Antonini nomen a senatu voluit imponi.*

*S* 19.2

*Perit Eboraci... iam senex. Reliquit duos filios, Antoninum Bassianum et Getam, cui et ipsi in honorem Marci Antonini nomen inposuit.*

When comparing the two texts, one sees that the name of Antoninus is added to that of Bassianus, which exposes the fraud: *sed Bassiano* is replaced by *cui et ipsi*, referring to *Getam*. Then, *a senatu voluit imponi* is changed into *inposuit*, while *in honorem Marci* is added (as a distortion of *aliqui putant idcirco illum Antoninum appellatum, quod Severus ipse in Marci familiam transire voluerit*, *S* 10.6-7, here referring to Caracalla).

In *S* 10.6 it was stated that some reported (*aliqui putant...*) that Septimius wished to be part of Marcus' family. This, of course, is true – bearing in mind the titles of *Divi Marci Pii filius* and *Divi Commodi frater* – but the present statement is closer to the report given by Herodian (3.10.5-6): τὸν δὲ πρεσβύτερον (...) Σεβήρος Ἀντωνῖνον ὠνόμασε, Μάρκου θελήσας αὐτὸν προσηγορίαν φέρειν...<sup>400</sup> It was Marcus Aurelius who

<sup>397</sup> According to Den Hengst (1981, 29), as based on a report from Marius Maximus 'who paid much attention to Severus' measures concerning his succession (*CIA* 3.4-5; 9.2)'.  
<sup>398</sup> Chastagnol 1994, 400 and Kienast 1996, 162 and 166.

<sup>399</sup> Dessau 1889, 371n1: *iam senex* ≈ *admodum senex* indicates insertion from Eutropius; Chastagnol 1968, 58.

<sup>400</sup> Cassius Dio does not explicitly mention the bestowal of the name of Antoninus to Caracalla; he pays even less attention to this than Herodianus (leaving aside for the moment that the author of the *HA* also

inspired Septimius to call his son Antoninus, according to Herodian. Apart from the fact that the author of the *HA* calls both of Septimius' sons Antoninus, this report corresponds with contemporary historiographical sources.

However, our author comes up with a new idea in *S* 19.3, occurring in a passage that Dessau indicated as a close imitation of Aurelius Victor.<sup>401</sup> The consequences of granting the Antonine name to Caracalla, in itself historically correct, are much overrated. In the figure below, on the left the model, on the right its counterpart in the *HA*:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>Aur. Vict. 20.30<br/> <i>Illatumque Marci sepulcro,<br/>         quem adeo percoluerat,<br/>         ut eius gratia Commodum inter<br/>         divos referre iusserit,<br/>         fratrem appellans,<br/>         Bassianoque Antonini vocabulum<br/>         addiderit...</i></p> | <p><i>HA S</i> 19.3<br/> <i>Inlatus sepulchro Marci Antonini,<br/>         quem ex omnibus imperatoribus tantum coluit,<br/>         ut et Commodum in divos referret</i><br/>         ∅<br/> <i>et Antonini nomen omnibus deinceps quasi<br/>         Augusti adscribendum putaret</i></p> |
|--|---|

Note how the author reformulates the words of his source:

|                                  |   |  |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| <i>Illatum... Marci sepulcro</i> | → | <i>Inlatus sepulchro Marci Antonini</i>  |
| <i>quem ... percoluerat</i>      | → | <i>quem... coluit</i>                    |
| <i>adeo</i>                      | → | <i>(ex omnibus imperatoribus) tantum</i> |
| <i>ut...referre iusserit</i>     | → | <i>ut ...referret</i>                    |
| <i>Commodum inter divos</i>      | → | <i>Commodum in divos</i>                 |
| <i>Antonini vocabulum</i>        | → | <i>Antonini nomen</i>                    |
| <i>Bassiano</i>                  | → | <i>omnibus deinceps</i>                  |
| <i>addiderit</i>                 | → | <i>adscribendum putaret</i>              |

Whereas in Victor's *Bassianoque Antonini vocabulum addiderit* only Caracalla is called Antoninus, the author of the *HA* suggests that Severus wished all future emperors to bear this name. With *Antonini nomen...quasi Augusti* the author tries to elevate the name of Antoninus to an equal status with Augustus, an attempt that already showed up in rudimentary form in *Ael.* 5.13. Meanwhile, the responsibility for the attempt is ascribed

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granted the name of Antoninus to Geta). The name first appears in 77.1.2: ...οί γάμοι τοῦ τε Ἀντωνίνου τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ Σεουήρου καὶ τῆς Πλαυτίλλης τῆς τοῦ Πλαυτιανοῦ θυγατρὸς. The wedding took place in 202 (Kienast 1996, 162), few years after the bestowal of the name of Antoninus (though Herodian places the wedding immediately after the report about the name of Antoninus).

<sup>401</sup> Dessau (1889, 363) turned matters upside down: before, the parallels between *HA* and Eutropius and Victor were discussed when *HA* was still considered a possible source for the other two (Peter 1884, 173). The *KG*, too, could have served as a common source (see § 2.4.2). A vexed question that occupied scholars during the decades after Dessau was whether *S* 17.5-19.4 might be a direct imitation of Aurelius Victor's *Caesares* 20.1 and 10-30 or whether the texts are based on the same source, notably the *KG*. Nowadays, there is consensus on the direct use of Eutropius and Victor by the author of *HA*; see Brandt (1996, K 57-60) and Chausson 1997. Lippold (1991, K118n126) and Walentowski (1998, 45-6: 'der entgültige Beweis ist jedoch bis heute nicht gelungen') are unnecessarily sceptical. There can be little doubt that the author of *HA* directly followed Aurelius Victor, as can be seen in the examples given in this chapter.

to Septimius, who is said to have been the one to turn Antoninus into an imperial title, on a par with Augustus or Caesar.

The next moment when an old argument about the *nomen* recurs is *S* 20.1, which is the beginning of a passage that has been recognised by Syme as fraudulent, an interpolated passage in a relatively reliable context:<sup>402</sup> *Legisse me apud Aelium Maurum Phlegontis Hadriani libertum memini Septimum Severum inmoderatissime, cum moreretur, laetatum, quod duos Antoninos pari imperio rei publicae relinqueret exemplo Pii, qui Verum et Marcum Antoninos per adoptionem filios rei publicae reliquit, ...* The author's authority for the authenticity of Geta's name of Antoninus is shifted to the fictitious Aelius Maurus, who is supposed to have produced ghost-written books under Hadrian's name.<sup>403</sup> The responsibility for the Antonine name for Geta is ascribed to Septimius, who is thought to have followed the example of Antoninus Pius by leaving two Antonines to rule the empire.<sup>404</sup> This is the first time the author states that Antoninus Pius inspired Septimius to call both of his sons Antoninus: *exemplo Pii*. The formula *duos Antoninos pari imperio* reminds us of Eutropius 8.9.2 again (*nam filios duos successores reliquit*), presumably repeated from *S* 19.2, while *pari imperio* is a variation on *Ael.* 5.12-3: *cum eodem aequale ... imperium* combined with *pariter ... rem publicam regere* in *MA* 7.6, both referring to Marcus and Verus. In all these cases, Eutropius (8.9.2) was the source of inspiration, as shown above. Indeed, the name of Antoninus was also mistakenly added to Verus, Marcus brother, and now to Geta, Caracalla's brother: the second wrong attribution of the name of Antoninus.

The Phlegon account continues with a passage that combines the *NA* theme with another theme dear to the *HA* author: the adoptive emperorship and the *fili imperatoris*. In several places he shows his conviction that real sons are worse successors to the throne than adopted sons (for example: Marcus' son Commodus was the worst ruler of his time).<sup>405</sup> Septimius Severus, however, was of a different opinion, *S* 20: *hoc melius quod ille filios per adoptionem, hic per se genitos rectores Romanae rei p. daret: Antoninum scilicet Bassianum quidem ex priore matrimonio susceperat et Getam de Iulia genuerat. sed illum multum spes fefellit. nam unum parricidium, alterum sui mores rei p. inviderunt, sanctumque illud nomen in nullo diutine mansit.* In the words *ille filios per adoptionem* ↔ *hic per se genitos rectores* the contrast between real sons and adoptive successors is expressed – the theme occurs for the first time in *Ael.* 1.1 and 2.2 (see § 3.2). Then, a surprising move is made: Caracalla and Geta did not have the same mother.<sup>406</sup> The author needs this element in his story to elaborate a tale of jealousy in the biography of *G*, to which we shall return when dealing with that passage (*G* 1.5). Note

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<sup>402</sup> Syme (1971, 61 and 82) calls it a notoriously bad passage; Hasebroek (1921, 147), more credulously, treats the similarities with messages in *Cc.*.

<sup>403</sup> *H* 16.1 and Fündling 2006, K 345.

<sup>404</sup> Septimius, however, did better because he left two Antonines of his own flesh, while Pius was dependent on adoption (*S* 20.2) – this statement forms the beginning of elaborate considerations about the benefits of adoptive vs hereditary emperorship.

<sup>405</sup> Theme of real sons: § 3.9.1.4.

<sup>406</sup> A 'notoriously bad passage' (Syme 1971, 61). In *S* 20.2 Julia is mentioned as Geta's mother. The historical error (Julia Domna was mother of both sons: Kienast 1996, 162, 166-7) is due to Aurelius Victor 21.3, according to Chastagnol 1994, 334n1. Also wrongly mentioned in *Cc.* 10.1 and *G* 7.3, but not in *S* 3.9. The report in *Cc.* 10.3 is suspect: although Julia is called Caracalla's stepmother, in 10.4 the author states *matrem enim – non alio dicenda erat nomine – duxit uxorem et ad parricidium iunxit incestum*, suggesting that Julia was actually Caracalla's real mother.

that the name of Antoninus is called *sanctum* here. The passage continues with a dedication to Diocletian and a consideration about real sons of great men, which extends as far as 21.12.

At the end of the much debated passage 20.1-21.12 a further small passage occurs which is removable – the line of thought gains nothing through its addition, as is clear when the interjection is left out: *S* 21.11 *vixit denique in odio populi diu Antoninus, nomenque illud venerabile diu minus amatum est, quamvis et vestimenta populo dederit, unde Caracallus est dictus, et thermas magnificentissimas fecerit*. It could even be said that the sentence is better off without the parenthesis. The theme of Antoninus as a beloved name, as expressed in this interpolation, will be further elaborated in *OM* 3.9. The qualification of the name as *venerabile* is reminiscent of *sanctum illud nomen* in *S* 20.3.

At the end of *S*, the author has amply prepared the reader for the *NA* theme. While in the first lives (*Ael.*, *AP*, *MA* and *V*) the *nomen Antoninorum* was erroneously conferred on Verus, in *S* the name was unhistorically attributed to Geta. The reasons given for Caracalla's historical name of Antoninus was Septimius' dream that he would be succeeded by an Antoninus (possibly based on an account by Marius Maximus) and his wish to pose as a relative of his famous and venerable predecessor Marcus<sup>407</sup> (which is well attested in several sources). Fiction comes in with Geta's *nomen Antoninorum*: first, some (*quidam*) say that he was given the name too in order to ensure his succession to the throne, which is later confirmed by many sources (*plerique*). A simple testimony from Aurelius Victor about Caracalla's name is amplified in *S* 19.3 to apply to a whole dynasty, or even eternity. Suddenly, the reason for the bestowal of the *nomen Antoninorum* is changed: in *S* 20.1, Septimius appears to imitate Antoninus Pius in naming both his sons *Antoninus*. His admiration of Marcus is not mentioned any longer. Amplifications, distortions and contradictions begin to appear in the slowly increasing theme of the *nomen Antoninorum*.

### 5.2.3 The *NA* Theme in *Cc*.

At the very beginning of Caracalla's biography there is a remark on the *Nomen Antoninorum*, the basis for which was laid in the preceding books, *Cc*. 1.1: *Ex duobus liberis, quos Septimius Severus reliquit [Getam et Bassianum]<sup>408</sup>, quorum unum Antoninum exercitus, alterum pater dixit, Geta hostis est iudicatus, Bassianum notum optinuisse imperium*. On the basis of our earlier conclusions, it can be assumed that the text in bold is an addition to the source followed by the author. Meanwhile, a new element has entered the theme: while Caracalla was hailed as an Antoninus by the army, Geta was called Antoninus by his father. Eutropius is almost certainly the source, as is indicated by the following texts:

<sup>407</sup> Which is normal in dynastic thought: Constantine claimed descent from Claudius Gothicus and Theodosius from Trajan.

<sup>408</sup> The Teubner edition by Hohl, based on the *Palatinus* 899 manuscript, has [*Getam et Bassianum*], which had been omitted by Jordan in his 1864 edition (Berlin). On logical grounds, *Bassianum et Getam* was to be expected (cf. *unum...alterum*), and compare Eutropius 8.19.2: *nam filios duos successores reliquit, Bassianum et Getam, ...*, which is the probable source of this passage.

(Cc 1.1)

*Ex duobus liberis, quos Septimius Severus reliquit [Getam et Bassianum],*

Ø

Ø

*quorum unum <Antoninum>*<sup>409</sup>

*exercitus*,<sup>410</sup>

*alterum pater dixit*,

*Geta hostis est iudicatus,*

*Bassianum autem <notum> optinuisse imperium.*

Eutr. 8.19.2

*Nam filios duos successores reliquit, Bassianum et Getam,*

*sed Bassiano Antonini nomen a senatu voluit imponi.*

*Itaque dictus est M. Aurelius Antoninus Bassianus patrique successit.*

Ø

*Nam Geta hostis publicus iudicatus confestim periit.*

Nothing in Eutropius goes to show that Severus called his second son Antoninus – the text even seems to exclude Geta from the title (*sed Bassiano...*). Furthermore, if the relative clause *quorum...dixit* is left out of *HA*'s text, the reasoning is unimpaired: there are two sons, the second of whom is declared a public enemy, and the first acquires the throne. The text, then, agrees with Eutropius' version, who dwells longer on Caracalla's appointment as emperor. Again, the *NA* theme exhibits signs of a textual interpolation.

The same holds good for *Cc* 8.10, the second passage on the *nomen Antoninorum* in *Cc.*: *Qui (sc. Macrinus) cum filio factus in castris imperator filium suum, qui Diadumenus vocabatur, Antoninum vocavit, idcirco quod a praetorianis multum Antoninus desideratus est.* Chastagnol supposes that *Cc.* 8.10 is an interpolation of a later date, while Reusch shows that the entire passage ending with the remark at hand (*Cc.* 8-10) is an intrusion.<sup>411</sup> The *NA* passages all seem to indicate a break in the narration: the remarks on the *nomen Antoninorum* often have hardly any bearing on its context. In the present case there is only the mention of Macrinus, to which an afterthought is added, ending in a contemplation on the name of Antoninus for Macrinus's son Diadumenian. This addition is attached to the previous sentence by the relative *Qui* (cf. *Cc.* 1.1 *quorum* or *AP* 4.5 or 6.10, where the theme is similarly added in the form of a relative clause, a technique very suggestive of interpolation). The theme develops: the sixth Antoninus enters the stage, namely Macrinus' son Diadumenian. This time the name does not serve to honour a predecessor, but is bestowed at the request of the pretorians. Septimius Severus called his son Geta Antoninus on his own initiative (*S* 10.4, 19.2, *Cc.* 1.1), while Geta in *S* 16.4 was hailed Antoninus by the soldiers. In the present passage the soldiers themselves urge the new emperor Macrinus to call his son Antoninus. The source is Aurelius Victor, as we shall find in *OM* 3.9.

<sup>409</sup> The addition <Antoninum> is by Petschenig.

<sup>410</sup> Note that Eutropius (8.19.2) states that Septimius wanted to refer the bestowal of the appellation of Antoninus to the senate: *sed Bassiano Antonini nomen a senatu voluit imponi*. Cf. *S* 19.3, where it is implied that the responsibility for the appellation was not the senate's.

<sup>411</sup> Chastagnol (1993, L): 'Nul doute que ce passage ait été inséré dans la biographie postérieurement à la rédaction de la Vie de Macrin.' When exactly the redaction took place, will be discussed later. Reusch 1931, 54; cf. Syme 1971, 86 ('patently an addition').

In *Cc.* 9.2 the eighth and last Antoninus crops up: *Filium reliquit qui postea et ipse Marcus Antoninus Heliogabalus dictus est; ita enim nomen Antoninorum inoleverat, ut velli ex animis hominum non posset, quod omnium pectora velut Augusti nomen obsederat.* It is striking that, after *S* 20.1-2, this passage is encountered once again in the *filius imperatoris* theme: it is introduced in the following context: *filium reliquit, qui postea et ipse Marcus Antoninus Heliogabalus dictus est (...). Fuit male moratus et patre duro crudelior,* after which the narration continues with Caracalla's *mores*. The *NA* theme *vires acquirit eundo*: not only do the descriptions of its popularity become more substantial but the message increases in strength, and exaggeration is applied on a large scale. Whereas in *Cc.* 8.10 the soldiers were the ones who yearned for the *nomen Antoninorum*, here the name *velli ex animis hominum non posset*: it is in the heart of all the inhabitants of the Roman world.<sup>412</sup> That the emperor bearing the name is one of the most debased rulers ever is no obstacle to the popularity of his name. The notion introduced in *S* 19.3 (or in a rudimentary form in *Ael.* 5.13) that all the emperors should be called Antoninus finds its fullest expression here. Note that *qui postea et ipse Marcus Antoninus Heliogabalus dictus est* is an echo of two earlier *NA* passages, namely *AP* 4.5: *qui postea Verus Antoninus est dictus* and *AP* 6.10: *qui postea dictus est Antoninus.*

The *vita Caracalli* begins with a repetition of previously introduced elements, repeated from passages added to *S*. Later, two further Antonini are announced, namely Diadumenian and Elagabalus, and the motivation for this is ever more elaborate. For Caracalla's own title as Antoninus, no reasons are given – these were already added in the Severus *vita*. The passages mentioned in *Ael.*, *AP*, *MA*, *V*, *S* and *Cc.* are only the beginning of a much larger design.

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<sup>412</sup> Reusch 1931, 55 ad *Cc.*9.2: 'Der Bemerkung über die Beliebtheit der Antoninusname ist wertlos. Hier lässt der Fälscher wieder seine Auffassung durchblicken, dass der Antoninusname die Herrschaft bedinge.'

| <i>Passage</i>  | <i>Nomen Antoninorum</i>  | <i>Source mentioned or postulated</i>  | <i>Motivation</i>   |
|---|---|--|---|
| <i>Ael.</i> 2.9; 5.12-3;<br><i>MA</i> 7.7; <i>AP</i> 4.5;<br>6.10; 10.3; <i>V</i> 1.3 | Mistakenly attributed to Verus                                      | ∅                                      | ∅   |
| <i>S</i> 10.3   | attributed to Caracalla   | ∅                                      | ∅   |
| <i>S</i> 10.4   |   | ∅ (Marius Maximus?)                    | <i>quod somniaverat Antoninum sibi successurum.</i>                       |
| <i>S</i> 10.6   |   | <i>aliqui</i> (Cassius Dio?)           | <i>quod Severus ipse in Marci familiam transire voluerit.</i>             |
| <i>S</i> 10.4   |   | <i>Quidam</i>                          | <i>ut et ipse succederet in imperio.</i>                                  |
| <i>S</i> 16.4   | erroneously attributed to Geta                                      | <i>Plerique</i>                        | ∅   |
| <i>S</i> 19.2   |   | ∅                                      | <i>in honorem Marci</i>   |
| <i>S</i> 19.3   | attributed to Caracalla   | Aurelius Victor                        | <i>Antonini nomen omnibus deinceps quasi Augusti adscribendum putaret</i> |
| <i>S</i> 20.1-2   | Erroneously attributed to Caracalla and Geta (and Marcus and Verus) | <i>Aelius Maurus</i> (Aurelius Victor) | <i>exemplo Pii</i>  |
| <i>S</i> 21.11  | attributed to Caracalla   |  | <i>nomenque illud venerabile diu minus amatum est</i>                     |
| <i>Cc.</i> 1.1  | attributed to Caracalla and erroneously to Geta                     | Eutropius<br>∅                         | ∅   |
| <i>Cc.</i> 8.10   | attributed to Diadumenian   | ∅                                      | <i>idcirco quod a praetorianis multum Antoninus desideratus est</i>       |
| <i>Cc.</i> 9.2  | attributed to Elagabalus  | ∅                                      | <i>quod omnium pectora velut Augusti nomen obsederat.</i>                 |

Figure 5.1: Survey of the passages with the NA theme in *Ael.*, *MA*, *AP*, *V*, *S* and *Cc.*

## 5.2.4 The NA Theme in G

The introduction to the Secondary Life of *G* is reminiscent of the preface to *Ael.* and similarly includes a remark on the *nomen Antoninorum*. The author defends his decision to write the life of Geta thus, *G* 1.1-2: *Scio, Constantine Auguste, et multos et clementiam tuam quaestionem movere posse, cur etiam Geta Antoninus a me tradatur (...). Neque enim multa in eius vita dici possunt, qui prius rebus humanis exemptus est, quam cum fratre teneret imperium.* He does not answer the question, but the answer is already known from such passages as *Ael.* 7.5: *quia mihi propositum fuit omnes, qui (...) vel Caesares vel Augusti vel principes appellati sunt, ... vel imperatorum filii aut parentes Caesarum nomine consecrati sunt, singulis libris exponere (...).* In the middle of this statement he adds a remark on the structure of the text as a whole: *De cuius priusquam vel vita vel nece dicam, disseram, cur et ipsi Antonino a Severo patre sit nomen adpositum.*<sup>413</sup> He makes explicit that, before treating the life and death of Geta, he will discuss something else: why Geta is also called Antoninus.<sup>414</sup> Again, this is a sentence added in the form of a relative clause with *cuius* (see my remarks on *AP* 4.5, 6.10, *Cc.* 1.1 and 8.10). The theme looks like an extraneous element of the *vita* or, more simply, an interpolation.

The content of the *vita Getae* is described by the author in the second half of *G* 1.1 (*cuius...adpositum*, henceforth: *G* 1.1') in a passage of *divisio: de cuius priusquam vel vita vel nece dicam, disseram, cur et ipsi Antonino a Severo patre sit nomen adpositum*. He appears to stick to his plan, when the overall structure of *G* is considered: 1. preface (1.1-2), 2. *nomen Antoninorum* (c. 1.3-3), 3. *vita* (c. 4-5), 4. *nex* (6-7).<sup>415</sup> The division, made by the author himself, is a successful attempt to structure three major themes in the biography: *vita*, *nex* and *nomina*. Still, there are some conspicuous breaks in the narrative flow that do not follow from what the author says on the subject, for the passages about the *nomen Antoninorum* are interwoven in several places with the first part of the *vita*.

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| 1.1-2   | dedication and introduction (paratext) |
| 1.3-2.5 | <i>nomen Antoninorum</i>               |
| 2.6-9   | horoscope                              |
| 3.1-9   | birth and omnia                        |
| 4.1-5.8 | character and youth                    |
| 6.1-8   | Bassianus' cruelty after Geta's death  |
| 7.1-6   | Geta's funeral and Bassianus' attitude |

There are four *nomen* passages concerning Geta: 1.1', 1.3-7, 2.2-5, 3.5-9, 5.3. A considerable part of NS is devoted to the *nomen* theme. Apparently, ignorance of relevant

<sup>413</sup> For the figure of *divisio* with *priusquam* see Den Hengst (1981, 35), who indicates Suet. *Div. Iul.* 44.4 as the model (repeated in *AS* 29.1, *Gd.* 3.1, *MB* 4.5) and my remarks in § 3.1.

<sup>414</sup> Cf. *S* 19.2 ... *Getam, cui et ipsi in honorem Marci Antonini nomen inposuit*; the formula also occurs in *Cc.* 9.2: *qui postea et ipse Marcus Antoninus Heliogabalus dictus est* with regard to Elagabal.

<sup>415</sup> Casaubonus' division in chapters led Chastagnol (1994, 427) to the following description: 1: the name of Antoninus; 2: the names of Geta and his deification; 3: birth and *omina*, 4: character and youth, 5: Geta Caesar, 6: *damnatio memoriae*, 7: burial and Caracalla's attitude. However accurate these descriptions of the contents at the hand of his division in chapters may be, the structure of the books is better determined without any special consideration of Casaubon's division in chapters.

facts about Geta, due to a scarcity of sources, caused the author to write a short life and to try to expand it by drawing on his imagination.<sup>416</sup>

This is not all that there is to say about the structure and contents of this peculiar life. The first appearance of the NA theme after the announcement in G 1.1 is in G 1.3, in which the dream in S 10.4 is referred to: *Septimius Severus quodam tempore cum consulisset ac petisset, ut sibi indicaretur, quo esset successore moriturus, in somnis vidit Antoninum sibi successurum. Quare statim ad milites processit et Bassianum, filium maiorem natu, Marcum Aurelium Antoninum appellavit.* The account is an elaboration of S 10.4 (*quod somniaverat Antoninum sibi successurum*), which message is a product of the author's own invention.<sup>417</sup> The two passages deserve to be studied more closely, as there are many verbal and thematic parallels:

S 10.3-6

*et cum iret contra Albinum, in itinere apud Viminacium filium suum maiorem Bassianum adposito Aurelii Antonini nomine\* Caesarem appellavit.*(1) *ut fratrem suum Getam ab spe imperii, quam ille conceperat, summo veret. et nomen quidem Antonini idcirco filio adposuit, (2) quod somniaverat Antoninum sibi successurum. (3) unde Getam etiam quidam Antoninum putant dictum, (4) *ut et ipse succederet in imperio. aliqui putant idcirco illum Antoninum appellatum, quod Severus ipse in Marci familiam transire voluerit.**

G 1.3-5

*Septimius Severus quodam tempore cum consulisset ac petisset, ut sibi indicaretur, quo esset successore moriturus, in somnis vidit Antoninum sibi successurum. (3) quare statim ad milites processit et Bassianum, filium maiorem natu, Marcum Aurelium Antoninum\* appellavit. (1) quod cum fecisset (2) *ex paterna cogitatione vel, ut quidam dicunt, a Iulia uxore commonitus, quae gnara erat somni*<sup>418</sup> *quod minori filio hoc facto ipse interclusisset aditum imperandi, etiam Getam, minorem filium, Antoninum vocari iussit. (4)**

The underlined passages are the parallels between S 10.3-6 and G 1.3-5.<sup>419</sup> The following picture appears: (1) *filium suum maiorem (Bassianum adposito Aurelii Antonini nomine) Caesarem appellavit* becomes *Bassianum, filium maiorem natu, Marcum Aurelium (Antoninum) appellavit* with the notion that in the first case the words in brackets are an addition to the followed source, while in the second case the name is no extra addition, as it is part of the NA theme. Next, (2) *et nomen quidem Antonini idcirco filio adposuit, quod...* becomes *quod cum fecisset*; and (3) *quod somniaverat Antoninum sibi successurum* becomes (3) *in somnis vidit Antoninum sibi successurum*, while (4) *unde Getam etiam quidam Antoninum putant dictum* becomes *etiam Getam, minorem filium, Antoninum vocari iussit*.

Now, a most surprising rewritten passage appears: the reason for Geta's title of Antoninus in S 10.5 is *ut et ipse succederet in imperio*, while in G 1.5 the motivation is *a Iulia uxore commonitus*, with a reference to the passage in S 20.1. It is suggested that, by giving the name of Antoninus to Caracalla, Septimius (*hoc facto*) wanted to keep his

<sup>416</sup> Chastagnol 1993, 426.

<sup>417</sup> According to Syme 1983, 88.

<sup>418</sup> Cf. for the formula *quae gnara erat somni...*: G 2.6: *Severus, gnarus geniturae illius*.

<sup>419</sup> See also Hasebroek (1916, 74) for a comparison between the two passages.

younger son (*minori filio*) away from the throne. This surprising message must have been caused by a misunderstanding of the earlier passage in *S* 10.3 *fratrem suum Getam ab spe imperii, quam ille conceperat, summooveret*, where the author of the *HA* must have understood *fratrem eius* (viz. Caracalla's brother) instead of *fratrem suum* (viz. Septimius' brother), an error caused by the fact that both Septimius' brother and Caracalla's brother are called Geta.

The author continues his narration with *Itaque semper ab eo in epistulis familiaribus dictus est, cum si forte abesset, scriberet: 'salutate Antoninos filios et successores meos'. Sed nihil valuit patris cautio, nam ei solus ille successit, qui primus Antoninus nomen accepit. Et haec de Antonini nomine*. The deception persists and even gains strength: the popularity of the *NA* is illustrated by a new literary device, the letter: the reader is confronted with a letter from the emperor to his two *Antonini* (the *duo Antonini* motif, as we have seen, originates from *MA* 7.6, inspired by Eutropius 8.9.2).<sup>420</sup> This technique, the recurrence of a single theme in several literary guises, will be further explored in *Dd*. The author suggests that Septimius emulates Antoninus Pius in his letter, as the latter did not leave sons of his own as successors to the throne, but adopted ones: in *S* 20.1, in the Phlegon account, it is stated that *Septimium Severum inmoderatissime, cum moreretur, laetatum, quod duos Antoninos pari imperio rei p. relinqueret exemplo Pii, qui Verum et Marcum Antoninos per adoptionem filios rei p. reliquit, hoc melius quod ille filios per adoptionem, hic per se genitos rectores Romanae rei p. daret.*, while the present letter has *Antoninos filios et successores meos*. Ultimately, the theme derived from Eutropius 8.9.2 occurs here in the shape of the theme of the adopted sons combined with the *NA* theme.

Considering that *G* 1.5-7 is an addition to a basic source, it can be concluded that *G* 2.1 *Geta autem dictus est ... rettulit* is, narratively, linked to *G* 1.4, in which Caracalla's title is explained – *autem* marking the continuation. In *G* 2.2 fiction rears its head again: *Fuit autem Antoninus Geta etiam ob hoc ita dictus, quod in animo habuit Severus, ut omnes deinceps principes quemadmodum Augusti, ita etiam Antonini dicerentur, idque amore Marci, quem patrem suum semper dicebat et cuius philosophiam litterarumque institutionem semper imitatus est. Dicunt aliqui non in Marci honorem tantum Antonini nomini delatum, cum id Marcus adoptivum habuerit, sed in eius, qui Pius cognominatus est, Hadriani scilicet successoris, et quidem ob hoc quod Severum ille ad fisci advocacionem delegerat ex formularia forensi, cum ad tantos processus ei patuisset dati ab Antonino primi gradus vel honoris auspiciam, simul quod nemo ei videretur felicius imperator ad commodandum nomen eo principe, cuius proprium nomen iam per quattuor principes cucurrisset*. The motifs within the *NA* theme begin to pile up: in *G* 2.2, *Antoninus* is stressed as an imperial name on a par with *Augustus*, which first happened in *S* 19.3 (*et Antonini nomen omnibus deinceps quasi Augusti adscribendum putaret*). The motif of love for Marcus, which first occurred in *S* 10.6, is repeated (with the use of *amplificatio*). In *G* 1.3, the adoption is repeated, and the second reason for the Antonine name is also mentioned (repeated from *S* 20.1: *exemplo Pii*), but a novel argument is added: Septimius Severus owed his position as a *advocatus fisci* to Antoninus Pius.<sup>421</sup> The

<sup>420</sup> In *S* 23.3 the two sons are also called *Antonini*, in the plural, and the designation also appears in a citation: *senex ac pedibus aeger firmum imperium Antoninis meis relinquens...* says the dying Severus in his *ultima verba* in a variation on Sallustius (21.10, see Chastagnol 1994, 338n3).

<sup>421</sup> The *advocatus fisci* was instituted by Hadrian (*H* 20.6). Chastagnol (1994, 432n1) calls the report about Septimius' investiture of this function 'bien peu crédible'. For the institution of the *advocatus fisci*, see

source for this dubious report may be either Aurelius Victor (20.30-1: ...*quod ex illo, post multos dubiosque eventus, auspicia honorum cepisset patrocinio fisci*) or Eutropius (*hic (i.e. Septimius Severus) primum fisci advocatus, mox militaris tribunus, per multa deinde et varia officia atque honores usque ad administrationem totius rei publicae venit*), although Aurelius Victor provides the closest resemblance to the passage in *G*, as he explicitly states that the *advocatio fisci* had been acquired thanks to Antoninus Pius.<sup>422</sup> Finally, in *G* 2.5, a further motif makes its appearance: the number of *Antonini*, with an honourable mention of the first emperor bearing this name. The four emperors referred to are Antoninus Pius and his two sons Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, and Commodus.

With *de hoc eodem* in *G* 2.6 the author picks up his narrative about Geta, which had been left behind in *G* 2.1, interrupted as it was by speculations about the name of Antoninus, which are partly based on Aurelius Victor. Without the addition, the passage on Marius Maximus (*G* 2.1) precedes the stories about the horoscope. It might be supposed that the more fanciful stories about horoscopes and *omina* are derived from this author,<sup>423</sup> which corroborates the suspicion that *G* 2.6 is the natural sequel to *G* 2.1.

The fourth and final *nomen* passage in in *G* 5.3: *Post Parthicum bellum pater cum ingenti gloria floreret, Bassiano participi imperii appellato Geta quoque Caesaris et Antonini, ut quidam dicunt, nomen accepit*. The quote is strongly reminiscent of *S* 16.3-4 (... *Getam quoque, minorem filium, Caesarem dixerunt, eundem Antoninum, ut plerique in litteras tradunt, appellantes*). In the *G*-passage, *plerique* is substituted by *quidam*, like in *S* 10.4. The passage is totally out of place in a description of the character, habits and physical appearance of the young Geta, so that it can safely be assumed that the text is an addition to the primary source. Still, a problem occurs in the assessment of this detachable passage: in itself, the account *post Parthicum bellum pater cum ingenti gloria floreret, Bassiano participi imperii appellato Geta quoque Caesaris (...)* *nomen accepit* is historically true, while the addition, marked by the coordinator *et*, contains the fictional elements: *et Antonini, ut quidam dicunt*. Exactly the same thing occurs in the model, in *S* 16.3-4: (... *Getam quoque, minorem filium, Caesarem dixerunt...* is historically true, while *eundem Antoninum, ut plerique in litteras tradunt, appellantes* is a fictitious element. Ch.1.3-7, which was identified as an *NA* passage, also exhibits this dichotomy: *G* 1.3-4 treats the part probably based on Marius Maximus (reporting the dream in which Antoninus is named as his successor), *G* 1.5-7 contains the fictional account about Geta. We have to deal with additions to the name of Antoninus on two levels: historically accurate information taken from the primary source, supplemented by fictional elements

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Brunt 1966, esp. 84 ('The duty of *advocatus fisci* was to represent the claims of the 'fiscus' in judicial proceedings') and 85n62 (about the *HA*). Barnes (1967b, 91-2) proves that reports of Septimius' tenure of the post of *advocatus fisci* are suspect in both Eutropius (8.12.2) and Aurelius Victor (20.30), as they are always combined with false details. See also Hartke (1951, 159-60) for the same conclusion.

<sup>422</sup> Syme (1971, 81) notes that Victor's unusual expression '*auspicia honorum*' is changed into '*honoris auspicium*' in the *HA*, which suggests a direct derivation.

<sup>423</sup> Witness the attestations collected by Birley 1997. It is important to note that among the *omina* one is a variation on the dream that an Antonine would succeed Septimius: ...*audissetque ille (i.e. quidam Antoninus, plebeius homo) ab aruspice post Severum Antoninum imperaturum...*, the same prediction which had been given to Septimius in a dream (*G* 1.3: *in somnis vidit Antoninum sibi successurum* and *S* 10.4: *quod somniaverat Antoninum sibi successurum*). This shows that Severus' dream does not belong to the invented parts of the *NA* theme, but that Marius Maximus was the source.

of the author's own making. The passages involving the author's inventions we define as the *NA* theme. We will return to this topic in § 5.6.1.

After this passage, the author does not interfere any more in the primary text with remarks concerning the *nomen Antoninorum*. In the chapter about *omina*, there are two interesting events reported about the prediction that an Antonine was destined to succeed Septimius Severus: a plebeian called Antoninus killed a lamb (*G* 3.5) and a *popa* called Antoninus killing a sacrificial victim (*G* 3.7-8). In these passages, as well as later on, Geta is referred to by his own name of Geta, while Caracalla is called Bassianus or Antoninus, as may be seen in the lines: *Mirum sane omnibus videbatur, quod mortem Getae totiens etiam ipse fleret, quotiens nominis eius mentio fieret, quotiens imago videretur aut statua. Varietas autem tanta fuit Antonini Bassiani, immo tanta sitis caedis, ut modo fautores Getae, modo inimicos occideret, quos fors obtulisset. Quo facto magis Geta desiderabatur*. This is striking: it looks as if the author totally forgot about the name for the younger of the two brothers, while the first two chapters are almost entirely devoted to Geta's name of Antoninus. Furthermore, to call Caracalla simply by the name of Antoninus, here, in the *omina* passages and elsewhere,<sup>424</sup> is confusing in a biography that purports to be primarily devoted to Geta. This observation can only lead to the conclusion that the source used for the chapters 3-7 (save the addition in *G* 5.3) did not treat Geta as an Antoninus. The opening chapter shows indeed that the name of Antoninus is only a supplementary theme to the *vita* and *nex Getae*, not the essential reason of the composition of a separate book. We shall return to this subject in § 5.4.

When we dissect the three parts according to the *divisio* given by the author in *G* 1.1' (*nomen* on one hand, and *vita* and *nex* on the other), this results in the following picture: of the 1231 words in *G* as many as 213 words in five passages are concerned with the *NA* theme, which is 17 per cent of its total text. When the two parts of *G*, the *NA* theme and *vita* plus *nex*, are studied separately, we can state that only in the *NA* passages in the first two chapters, Geta is designated as Antoninus, and that in the following chapters in every single case when Antoninus is referred to, Caracalla is meant. The only instance outside the *NA* passages when Geta is called Antoninus, is at the very beginning of *G*, in 1.1: *cur etiam Geta Antoninus a me tradatur...* It is not hazardous to suppose that the author simply added the name of Antoninus to his subject, a practice that he drops after the first two chapters. These findings show that in the primary text, Geta was no Antoninus. The author must have derived Geta's name of Antoninus either from another source or invented it himself, but the theme that he created around it is certainly one of his own making.

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<sup>424</sup> E.g. *G* 5.6 (*Sereni Sammonici libros familiarissimos habuit, quos ille ad Antoninum scripsisset*) and *G* 7.4 (*fuit praeterea eius inmanitatis Antoninus...*).

## 5.3 The NA Theme in the Intermediary Lives I

### 5.3.1 The NA Theme in *OM*

That *OM* with its elaborate preface, its use of a Greek source (Herodian) and high degree of literary invention marks a break in the construction of the *HA* has been explained in § 2.2. The section of *EL* has ended and a new beginning is made. On the other hand, the author stays with the structure as laid out in the Primary and Secondary Lives. Just as Caracalla Augustus had his brother Geta as co-ruler, Macrinus had his son as his companion in government, which results in a similar structure. Both the biographies of Geta and Diadumenian are ‘satellites’ to the ‘planets’ of Caracalla’s and Macrinus’ biographies, and the factual information in both is based on the biographies which they complement.

After the transition from preface to narration, the name of Antoninus is mentioned in *OM* 2.1: *...seque nunc Severum nunc Antoninum, cum in odio esset omnium et hominum et militum, nuncupavit...* These words occur in a summary<sup>425</sup> of the *vita* listing its many elements (name, origin, career, character and usurpation) – again, a perfect opportunity for the author to add some remarks about his imperial names. The former title, *Severus*, must be seen as Macrinus’ attempt to link his own family to that of Septimius Severus, while the other seeks to link him to the dynasty of Antoninus Pius.<sup>426</sup> Macrinus’ name of Antoninus is not historical, and not even paralleled in the *HA*. The clause *cum...militum*, however, is in line with some earlier remarks, namely the popularity of the name of Antoninus among soldiers (*milites*, *S* 16.4, *Cc.* 1.1, 8.10, *G* 1.3 concerning Caracalla) and the people (*homines*, *Cc.* 9.2 concerning Elagabal). The name was granted to Macrinus’ son Diadumenian, not to Macrinus himself.

Then, in *OM* 2.5, a new motif is introduced: *Et mirum omnibus fortasse videatur*<sup>427</sup>, *cur Diadumenus filius Macrini Antoninus voluerit nuncupari, cum ille auctor necis Antoninianae fuisse dicatur*. Macrinus is accused of having been Caracalla’s murderer, yet calls his son Antoninus. There are some serious problems about the long digression on the name of Antoninus that follows immediately (*OM* 3.1-7) after the question posed in the passage just cited. It says that during the reign of Antoninus Pius a *vates Caelestis* near Carthage had uttered the name of Antoninus eight times.<sup>428</sup> At first, this was understood to mean the number of years of ‘the reign of Antoninus Pius’, but

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<sup>425</sup> We are talking here about a summary not only in the sense of ‘table of contents’, as assessed in the passage below, but also in the narratological sense defined by Genette (1980, 95-9) as a vast domain of TS in a limited narrative space.

<sup>426</sup> Turcan (1993, 119) for the historical background and references to literature.

<sup>427</sup> Cf. *G* 2.6: *mirum mihi videtur, ... Geta noster divus futurus...*

<sup>428</sup> Barnes (1970b, 96-101) convincingly shows that the oracle, that is mentioned nowhere outside the *HA*, is a product of the author’s fantasy, for which no source can be indicated, apart from a passage in *P* 4.2: *dein pro consule Africae factus est. in quo proconsulatu multas seditions perpessus dicitur vaticinationibus <eum reddentibus> certum, quae de templo Caelestis emergunt*. The goddess also occurs in *T* 29.1 in the context of the appellation of the African usurper Celsus: *Celsum imperatorem appellaverunt peplo deae Caelestis ornatum*.

after his eighth year (AD 146), a new explanation had to be found.<sup>429</sup> The number was now (*vel tunc vel postea*) taken, to apply to the emperors called *Antoninus*.<sup>430</sup> This tallies with the number of Antonines mentioned in the preceding books, *OM* 3.3-4: *denique adnumeratis omnibus, qui Antonini appellati sunt, is Antoninorum numerus invenitur. enimvero Pius primus, Marcus secundus, Verus tertius, Commodus quartus, quintus Caracallus, sextus Geta, septimus Diadumenus, octavus Heliogabalus Antonini fuere*. As was argued earlier, Verus and Geta are mistakenly called Antoninus (see above, § 5.2.4), after the fashion of some fourth century authors (Eutropius, Festus).<sup>431</sup> The oracle in *OM* 3 is probably the author's invention,<sup>432</sup> but the fact that Verus and Geta are labelled as Antonines strongly suggest a 4th century origin of the fiction.

A related theme is introduced next: it is not only the emperors up to Elagabalus (Heliogabalus) who get to be called Antoninus, but also their successors, the Gordiani, be it that they were allegedly either called *Antonii* or only bore *Antoninus* as a *praenomen* instead of *nomen proprium*. Just as in other cases, when coming up with a name like Regilianus or Lollianus (see note in § 5.2.1), the author makes light of the historiographical tradition, in which names are sometimes transmitted in different forms. The author plays his *praenomen* card and extends the theme of the name of Antoninus even beyond the reign of the *ultimus Antoninorum* Elagabalus, be it by denying that the Gordiani ever belonged to the Antonini: *nec inter Antoninos referendi sunt duo Gordiani*. Nor is the past safe from the author's expansive inventions: in a typical move, he incorporates in retrospect all of the emperors who succeeded Antoninus Pius by claiming that Severus, Pertinax, Didius Iulianus and Macrinus similarly called themselves Antoninus, like the Gordiani, as a *praenomen*.<sup>433</sup> Source: *plurimi* ('many authors').<sup>434</sup> By

<sup>429</sup> The oracle is thus interpreted in the same way as the passage in *PN* 8.5, as referring to the number of years of the reign: *item cum quaereretur, quamdiu imperaturus esset* (sc. Severus), *respondisse Graece dicitur: 'bis denis Italum conscendit navibus aequor: / si tamen una ratis transiliet pelagus.'* *ex quo intellectum Severum viginti annos expleturum*. For models of this oracle in *PN*, see Den Hengst 1981, 52; 1991, 165; 2002b, 86.

<sup>430</sup> A textual parallel with *Cc.* 6.3 could provide the model for numbering the emperors as eight: Caracalla selects some people to be executed in the gymnasium of Alexandria, after the example of Ptolemy Euergetes, who reigned till his death in 116 BC: *exemplo Ptolemaei Euergetis qui octavus hoc nomine appellatus est*. The detail in the rather complex periphrasis *qui...est* that Ptolemy was the eighth ruler of that name may be significant. The Romans were not acquainted with the system of numbering their own rulers, unlike later European practice. In classical times, this principle was only known from other cultures, such as Egypt, and the author may have had in mind this interesting idea when counting the Antonines.

<sup>431</sup> Syme 1971, 80 and 89, and above § 5.2.1.

<sup>432</sup> Den Hengst (1981, 42) supposes that the story of the oracle is based on Marius Maximus (see for a refutation of this viewpoint § 5.6.4). Barnes (1970b, 99) supposes the oracle is the author's invention, partly based on a report in *P* 4.2 and possibly combined with historical facts. Syme (1971, 82-3) does not comment on the origin, but only refers to the passage in *P* 4.2.

<sup>433</sup> One of the topics in the discussion about the passage is the interpretation of *inde est quod*. Pasoli (1968, 33) suggested that the oracle led the emperors to call themselves Antoninus (provided that we take the Gordiani passage as a parenthesis), a conclusion shared by Den Hengst (1981, 33). This explanation is unsatisfactory. Following the author's line of thought, our conjecture must be that the emperors knew about the oracle or thought that they understood it, whereas only after eight Antonini had reigned, the meaning became clear: *denique adnumeratis omnibus qui Antonini appellati sunt, is Antoninorum numerus invenitur*. This can only have happened after Heliogabalus reign. Before that, nobody could have known for sure what the oracle meant, except for the notion: *constitit apud credentes vel tunc vel postea per vatem aliud designatum*. Therefore, the formula *inde est quod* refers to *quia praenomen tantum Antoninorum habuerunt* (this also goes for three former emperors Pertinax, Iulianus and Macrinus, the last of whom calls himself

way of an escape route, the author lets Antoninus as a *praenomen* serve as an epithet for the emperors not called Antoninus, thus extending the theme to all the successors of Antoninus Pius, even beyond the *ultimus Antoninorum* Elagabalus. In doing so, he seems to explode his carefully constructed Antonine system at the end of the day, but the author calls himself to order, *OM 3.7: sed ab ipsis Antoninis qui veri successores Antonini fuerunt, hoc nomen magis quam proprium retentum est.*<sup>435</sup> Here the name has even become more important than the emperors' (*veri successores*) own names, which they often discarded at the time of their adoption or accession to the throne.

The story of the oracle must be accepted as the first of three answers to *OM 2.5 Et mirum omnibus fortasse videatur, cur Diadumenus filius Macrini Antoninus voluerit nuncupari, cum ille auctor necis Antoninianae fuisse dicatur*, because *haec alii*, the formula with which the passage is rounded off corresponds with the following clause *sed alii idcirco Antoninum Diadumenum a Macrino patre appellatum ...*, which suggests that the first answer to the question has been given. A more accurate answer to the question in *OM 2.5* follows in two versions, marked by *sed alii... alii vero*. In chapter 6 of this study the structure of the presentation is analysed. For the present, texts and sources should suffice. First, we encounter a speculation about Macrinus' murder of Caracalla, corresponding with *Cc. 8.10:*<sup>436</sup> *Sed alii idcirco Antoninum Diadumenum a Macrino patre appellatum ferunt, ut suspicio a Macrino interfecti Antonini militibus tolleretur*. Macrinus' direct responsibility for the murder of Caracalla is mentioned neither by Aurelius Victor nor by Eutropius, the *Epitome de Caesaribus*, or Festus. It is Herodian 4.13 and Cassius Dio 79.5 who write about Macrinus's involvement in the plot. It was stated several times in *Cc. 6.6: insidiis a Macrino praef. praet. positis, qui post eum invasit imperium*, 6.9: *nam Macrinus Antoninum occidit, ut supra exposuimus* and *Cc. 11.5 a Macrino, qui eum occiderat, ... inter deos relatus est*. Herodian pays very little attention to Diadumenian (only in 5.4.12, when he and his father die), and has no knowledge of Diadumenian's title of Augustus. Cassius Dio states (79.19.2) that Macrinus calls his son Antoninus to please the soldiers' love of his predecessor. But there is no suggestion anywhere of the reason which the author of the *HA* gives for the appellation, namely to avert suspicion that Macrinus was responsible for Caracalla's

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Antoninus according to *OM 2.1*, apparently using it not as *nomen* but as *praenomen*), as the same is stated in *Dd. 6.3: unde etiam quidam et Severum et Pertinacem et Iulianum Antoninorum praenomina honorandos putant*, a parallel quoted by Hartke (1951, 124). Of course, Pasoli's interpretation is prompted by the introduction *et mirum... dicatur* in *OM 2.5*, which leads one to think that the emperors called themselves Antoninus because of the oracle (cf. Lécivain 1904, 183). When the passage is interpreted from that starting point, Pasoli's interpretation is a good option, but it is more likely that *OM 2.5* is meant as a preparatory step to *OM 3.8-9*, as may be deduced from the clause *cum... dicatur*. The entire passage *OM 3.1-7*, as rounded off by *haec alii*, looks as if it was meant as a parenthesis. Klebs (1892, 34) mentions three instances of *inde (est) quod* ('die bei Cicero beliebte Wendung', 'verbreitete Schulphrase') in *PN 9.2*, *OM 3.6* and *Pr. 1.2* and remarks that the clause also occurs several times in the *Panegyrici*.

<sup>434</sup> I follow the conjecture put forward by Jordan that we should read *ut plurimi ferunt* instead of *et plurimi fuerunt*, because the latter option does not really make sense if only three emperors (who are not likely to be referred to as *plurimi*) are mentioned. Both *et* and *fuerunt* are errors by anticipation. Mind the parallel *Dd. 6.3: unde etiam quidam putant*.

<sup>435</sup> The term *proprium nomen* is already mentioned in *G 2.3*, which is also the first occurrence of the 'number of Antonines' theme: *simul quod nemo ei videretur felicior imperator ad commodandum nomen eo principe, cuius proprium nomen iam per quattuor principes cucurrisset*.

<sup>436</sup> *Qui cum filio factus in castris imperator filium suum, qui Diadumenus vocabatur, Antoninum vocavit, idcirco quod a praetorianis multum Antoninus desideratus est*.

death. This seems to be an element of the author's own making, despite his feeble and unreliable attempt at pretending to several sources at his disposal: *alii*.

The source of the author's other reason for the *nomen Antoninorum* is better attested. It resides, as several scholars find,<sup>437</sup> in a remark by Aurelius Victor (*Caesares* 22.1-2):

Aurelius Victor (*Caesares* 22.1-2)  
*Quibus eo quod ingens amissi principis desiderium erat, adolescentem Antoninum vocavere....*

*HA OM* 3.9  
*alii vero tantum desiderium nominis huius fuisse dicunt, ut, nisi populus et milites Antonini nomen audirent, imperatorium non putarent.*

Thus, *ingens... desiderium* is regarded to have served as a model for *tantum desiderium*, while, unexpectedly, *amissi principis* was changed into *nominis huius*. The author interprets the longing for the deceased and beloved emperor as a general yearning for his name. This idea falls in with Severus' alleged wish to call all the emperors to succeed him by the name of Antoninus (*S* 19.3), which is also a distortion of Aurelius Victor. Here the author of the *HA* tries once again to enhance the name's authority. The motif of the soldiers' desire for the name was earlier formulated in *Cc.* 8.10: *qui (i.e. Macrinus) cum filio factus in castris imperator filium suum, qui Diadumenus vocabatur, Antoninum vocavit, idcirco quod a praetorianis multum Antoninus desideratus est.* We may safely assume that the afterthought introduced by *idcirco quod* is an insertion (see note ad § 5.2.1) dating from the time when the author laid his hands on Aurelius Victor.

As we have seen, Aurelius Victor was used in the insertion in *S* 19-21. In the case of *OM*, it is very difficult to determine whether these passages can also be characterised as an insertion, as *OM* consists of a patchwork of texts (see chapter 6).<sup>438</sup> The *NA* theme is present everywhere in the *vita*, though in varying degrees. *OM* 4, which is mainly a single senator's speech, does not include any *NA* elements. *OM* 5 opens on the commencement of Macrinus' rule and the designation of Diadumenian as his co-ruler,<sup>439</sup> which makes the chapters 3-5 a flashback, as the narrative point of departure is the moment when Macrinus seized power in *OM* 2.1. A small *NA* addition to the historical narrative is made in *OM* 5.1: *Statim denique arripuit imperium filio Diadumeno in participatum adscito, quem continuo, ut diximus, Antoninum appellari a militibus iussit.* The formula is strongly linked to the report in *Cc.* 8.10 quoted above, to which *ut diximus* refers.<sup>440</sup> In *OM* 5.7, a silly joke with regard to Macrinus' and Diadumenian's imperial names is

<sup>437</sup> Reusch 1931, 45-5; Syme 1971, 85-6; Dufraigne 1975, 135; Béranger 1976, 41; Barnes 1978, 55; Den Hengst 1981, 30; Chastagnol 1994, CLVIII. Barnes (1972, 65) holds a different opinion when supposing that Marius Maximus served as a source, as the *ingens desiderium* (a 'natural expression') was a historical fact (Dio 79.32.2).

<sup>438</sup> Mommsen 1890, 251: 'hybriden Charakter'.

<sup>439</sup> *OM* 5.1: *Statim denique arripuit imperium filio Diadumeno in participatum adscito, quem continuo, ut diximus, Antoninum appellari a militibus iussit.* In reality, Macrinus was hailed as emperor in April 217, Diadumenus as *Caesar* and *Antoninus* in May 217 and *Augustus* in May 218, see Kienast 1996, 170-1.

<sup>440</sup> It is interesting to note that the words just before the passage in *Cc.* 8.10 are *nam Macrinus Antoninum occidit, ut supra exposuimus*, referring to *Cc.* 6.6 *insidiis a Macrino praef. praet. positus, qui post eum invasit imperium, interemptus est.* The formula *invasit imperium* resembles *imperium arripuit*, as attested in *OM* 2.1 and the present passage, 5.1. See also *OM* 5.4 *imperium, quod raptum ierat.* All these related passages bear the fingerprint of the same author or source.

mentioned.<sup>441</sup> In Macrinus' letter to the senate after having been hailed as emperor by the troops, one passage is devoted to Diadumenian's name of Antoninus, beginning with *item infra* (OM 6.6, see ch.6).<sup>442</sup> The following phrase starts with *Antonino autem divinos honores et miles decrevit* – which is about another Antonine, namely Caracalla. The fragmentary character of the letter does not really repair the break in the narrative continuity that is caused by the remarks about Diadumenianus' name of Antoninus.

A telling passage in which various motifs are taken up appears in OM 7.5-8, the second in length (106 words) after OM 2.5-3.9 (227 words): first, a repetition of the motif in OM 3.8: *Filium sane suum, (...), ut suspicionem occisi a se Antonini removeret, Antoninum vocavit, Diadumenum antea dictum*. Note the variation on *ut suspicio a Macrino interfecti Antonini militibus tolleretur* and the reversal of the usual *qui postea...dictus est*, which is here *antea dictum*. For the first time since Cc 9.2, Elagabalus' Antonine name is brought up, OM 7.6: *Quod quidem nomen etiam Varius Heliogabalus, qui se Bassiani filium diceret, homo sordidissimus et ex meretrice conceptus, idem postea nomen accepit*, but now in a pejorative sense. It is suggested that the name of Antoninus has suffered a gradual degeneration, which is supported by reference to a poem, in which seven out of eight canonical *Antonini* are mentioned (in bold; only Geta is missing): *Denique versus extant cuiusdam poetae, quibus ostenditur Antonini nomen coepisse a Pio et paulatim per Antoninos usque ad sordes ultimas pervenisse, si quidem solus Marcus nomen illud sanctum vitae genere auxisse videatur, Verus autem degenerasse, Commodus vero etiam polluisse sacrati nominis reverentiam. Iam quid de Caracallo Antonino, quidve de hoc<sup>443</sup> potest dici? Postremo etiam quid de Heliogabalo, qui Antoninorum ultimus in summa inpuritate vixisse memoratur?* The motif of degeneration is underlined by the formula *usque ad sordes ultimas pervenisse*, as well as the two contrasting verbs *auxisse* and *degenerasse*, and finally *polluisse*. The motif as such is based on a poem, which is mentioned but not cited. Still, the thought that Elagabalus as the *Antoninorum ultimus* polluted the name badly is attested in a distichon by Ausonius (*Caesares* 97-8): *Tunc etiam Augustae sedis penetralia foedas/ Antoninorum nomina falsa gerens*.<sup>444</sup> Parallels between the passage in OM and Ausonius' fragment have caused much scholarly debate,<sup>445</sup> which centers on the question to what extent Marius Maximus may have served as a source and model for the HA. Ausonius' *Caesares* are thought to be inspired by Marius Maximus, who is supposed to have written the lives from Trajan to Elagabalus.<sup>446</sup> If with the *versus cuiusdam poetae* Ausonius' *Caesares* are

<sup>441</sup> OM 5.7: *Infulsit praeterea in nomen Severi, cum illius nulla cognatione tangeretur. unde iocus extitit: 'sic Macrinus est Severus, quo modo Diadumenus Antoninus.'*

<sup>442</sup> OM 6.6: *'Diadumenum filium meum vobis notum et imperio miles donavit et nomine, Antoninum videlicet appellans, ut cohonestetur prius nomine, sic etiam regni honore. quod vos, p. c., bono faustoque omine adprobetis petimus, ne vobis desit Antoninorum nomen, quod maxime diligitis.'*

<sup>443</sup> Hoc refers to Diadumenus, the subject of the present narration.

<sup>444</sup> The last two verses of the quatrain are lost.

<sup>445</sup> For the discussion, see especially Green 1981, 234 and 1999, 576-8. Barns (1967, 70) came up with the parallel. See further Syme 1968, 57; Chastagnol 1994, LIV. Schwartz (1972, 268-70) treats the similarities in detail; Den Hengst (1992, 165) provides for corroborating evidence by the parallel T 31 ~ Aus. *Caes.* 2 (*memor historiae*).

<sup>446</sup> Opinions about the use of Marius Maximus as a basic source differ, but the extent of his program, up to Elagabalus, is widely accepted (though contested by Paschoud 1998).

meant, the paraphrase is inaccurate.<sup>447</sup> This is a topic that will be further explored below, in *OM* 11.6 and *Dd.* 2.3. For the present, another observation should be made: the *nomen Antoninorum* turns out to be *sanctum* and has *sacrati nominis reverentiam* (which was mentioned before in *S* 20.3 *sanctum illud nomen*, cf. *nomenque illud venerabile* in *S* 21.11), at which time only the hearts of men were overwhelmed by the authority of the name. It looks as if a new climax is coming up.

A new development occurs in the part that follows Herodian very closely.<sup>448</sup> The author must have been pleased to have Herodian at his disposal, because the fragment provides practically the only genuine information in the entire biography. The passage is revealing about the author's literary techniques. It shows how he juggles his sources in order to strengthen the unity of his work – if we interpret it with some good will. In a passage that follows an excerpt from Herodian very closely the *nomen Antoninorum* theme is interwoven in the text:

Herod. 5.3.1

ἐχρῆν δὲ ἄρα Μακρῖνον ἐνιαυτοῦ  
μόνου τῆ βασιλείᾳ ἐντροφήσαντα  
ἄμα τῷ βίῳ καὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν  
καταλῦσαι, μικρὰν καὶ εὐτελεῖ  
πρόφασιν τοῖς στρατιώταις ἐς ἃ  
ἐβούλοντο τῆς τύχης παρασχούσης.  
Μαῖσα ἦν τις ὄνομα, τὸ γένος  
Φοίνισσα, ἀπὸ Ἐμέσου καλουμένης  
οὕτω πόλεως ἐν Φοινίκῃ:

*OM.* 8.4-9.1

*Inde cum se Antiocham recepisset ac  
luxuriae operam daret, iustam causam  
interficiendi sui praebebat exercitui (ac  
Bassiani, ut putabatur, filium sequendi,  
id est Heliogabalum Bassianum Varium,  
qui postea est et Bassianus et Antoninus  
appellatus). Fuit aliqua mulier Maesa  
sive Varia ex Emisena urbe...*

The parallels between the text of *OM* and its source are clear: first, *luxuriae operam daret* is based on ἐντροφήσαντα, second, *iustam causam interficiendi sui praebebat exercitui* derives from πρόφασιν τοῖς στρατιώταις ἐς ἃ ἐβούλοντο τῆς τύχης παρασχούσης and third *Fuit aliqua mulier Maesa sive Varia ex Emisena urbe* is based on Μαῖσα ἦν τις ὄνομα, τὸ γένος Φοίνισσα, ἀπὸ Ἐμέσου καλουμένης οὕτω πόλεως ἐν Φοινίκῃ. The passage in *OM*: *ac Bassiani ... Antoninus est appellatus*, quoted between brackets above, is not paralleled by the source of its context: the *NA* theme functions here as a repetitive element to embellish the historical narration.

<sup>447</sup> Inaccurate, because only the poem on Elagabalus comes up with the name of Antoninus, though it is the author's habit to exaggerate such things. A second incongruence is that the author names Verus, to whom Ausonius did not devote a poem.

<sup>448</sup> As observed by Mommsen *Hermes* 25, 27n2; Klebs *RhM* 45, 458; Lécrivain 1904, 187; Hönn 1911, 11; Kolb 1972, 135; Barnes 1967, 70 and 1978, 56; Turcan 1993, 133n50.

A similar instance occurs in the immediate sequel:

Herod. 5.3.3

ἦσαν δὲ αὐτῇ θυγατέρες δύο·  
Σοαιμὶς μὲν ἢ πρεσβυτέρα  
ἐκαλεῖτο, ἢ δὲ ἕτερα Μαμαία.  
παῖδες δὲ ἦσαν τῇ μὲν πρεσβυτέρα  
Βασιανὸς ὄνομα, τῇ δὲ νεωτέρα  
Αλεξιανός. (...) ἰέρωντο δὲ αὐτοὶ  
θεῶ ἡλίω· τοῦτον γὰρ οἱ ἐπιχώριοι  
σέβουσι, τῇ Φοινίκων φωνῇ  
Ἐλαιαγάβαλον καλοῦντες.

OM 9.2

*Huic erant duae filiae, Symiamira et  
Mammaea, quarum maiori filius erat  
Heliogabalus (et Bassiani et Antonini  
nomen accepit). Nam Heliogabalum  
Foenices vocant solem.*

Here, *huic erant duae filiae* is based on ἦσαν δὲ αὐτῇ θυγατέρες δύο, *Symiamira et Mammaea* on Σοαιμὶς μὲν ἢ πρεσβυτέρα ἐκαλεῖτο, ἢ δὲ ἕτερα Μαμαία, and *quarum maiori filius erat Heliogabalus* on παῖδες δὲ ἦσαν τῇ μὲν πρεσβυτέρα Βασιανὸς ὄνομα..., Finally *nam Heliogabalum Foenices vocant solem* is based on τῇ Φοινίκων φωνῇ Ἐλαιαγάβαλον καλοῦντες. The only element in the passage that is not derived from Herodian is the formula *et Bassiani et Antonini nomen accepit*, which resembles the added formula quoted above, in OM 8.4: *...id est Heliogabalum Bassianum Varium, qui postea est et Bassianus et Antoninus appellatus*. The element *et Bassiani et Antonini* is an echo from *et Bassianus et Antoninus*, while *nomen accepit* is no more than a variation on *est appellatus*.

The examples are instructive with regard to the author's procedure: from the comparison between Herodian and the HA it appears that the author freely added his favourite theme to an existing text (in a paraphrased or abbreviated form). In much the same way, it can be imagined that the longest passage on the *nomen Antoninorum*, OM 3.1-9, was added to a source about Macrinus in order to expand the scarce information about this 'lesser-known' ruler. Indeed, once OM 2.5 – 3.9 is removed, the structure of the text seems to be unaffected and more even, OM 1.3-4.1: *Quamvis senatus eum imperatorem odio Antonini Bassiani libenter acceperit, cum in senatu omnibus una vox esset: 'Quemvis magis quam parricidam, quemvis magis quam incestum, quemvis magis quam impurum, quemvis magis quam interfectorem et senatus et populi.'* (OM 2.5-3.9: *Nom. Ant.*) *Et de Macrino quidem in senatu multis, (...) ea dicta sunt, ut appareat ignobilem, sordidum, spurcum fuisse*. Once the *nomen Antoninorum* passage (indicated between brackets) is deleted, the text produces a much smoother account than the final version of HA. The same applies to OM 7.5-7: *Denique statim Macrino et proconsulare imperium et potestatem tribuniciam detulerunt*. (OM 7.5-7: *Nom. Ant.*). *Appellatus igitur imperator suscepto bello contra Parthos profectus est magno apparatu...* Within this same passage, some remarks are reminiscent of the added passages in OM 3.8, 8.4 and 9.2: *Varius Heliogabalus, qui se Bassiani filium diceret... idem postea nomen accepit*.

Compare *OM* 7.5 to 3.8:

7.5: *Filium sane suum, ..., ut suspicionem occisi a se Antonini removeret, Antoninum vocavit, Diadumenum antea dictum.*

3.8: *Sed alii idcirco Antoninum Diadumenum a Macrino patre appellatum ferunt, ut suspicio a Macrino interfecti Antonini militibus tolleretur.*

and *OM* 7.6 to 8.4 and 9.2:

7.6 : *Quod quidem nomen etiam Varius Heliogabalus, qui se Bassiani filium diceret, ..., idem postea nomen accepit.*

8.4: - ...*Bassiani (...) filium...*  
- *id est Heliogabalum Bassianum Varium*  
- ...*qui postea est et Bassianus et Antoninus appellatus*  
9.2 : ... *et Bassiani et Antonini nomen accepit*

*OM* 7.5 is very similar to *OM* 3.8: *filium sane suum Antoninum vocavit, Diadumenum antea dictum* is a variation (caused by a change of perspective from *Macrinus* to *alii*) on *Antoninum Diadumenum a Macrino patre appellatum ferunt*, while *ut suspicionem (occisi a se Antonini) removeret* is based on *ut suspicio (a Macrino interfecti Antonini) ...tolleretur*. Much the same can be said about the formula *Diadumenum antea dictum* that recurs in the next sentence - though in a different context - as *idem postea nomen accepit*, and in 8.4 as *qui postea est... appellatus*. The discussed paragraphs in *OM*, 2.5-3.9 and 7.5-8 clearly correspond with one another and seem to interrupt a historical narration. They also have verbal connections with other, more briefly related formulas (8.4 and 9.2). One more remark should be made at this point. We concluded that the clause in bold is an addition: ...*iustam causam interficiendi sui praebeuit exercitui ac Bassiani, ut putabatur, filium sequendi, id est Heliogabalum Bassianum Varium, qui postea est et Bassianus et Antoninus appellatus*. That being so, the remarks about the love for Antoninus in *OM* 10.2<sup>449</sup> may well be loose additions of the *NA* theme, thematically connected with the passage in *OM* 3.9 and *Cc.* 9.1, in which it is reported how much the name of Antoninus was loved.

After *OM* 10.4, the author takes leave of Herodian for new considerations about imperial names (*sciendum praeterea...* is typical of the author's idiom, see ad § 3.2) and the joint rulership of Macrinus and Diadumenian (*OM* 10.5: ...*quem plerique pari fuisse cum patris imperio*), a theme that is known from *MA* 7.6 (see § 5.2.1). In *OM* 10.6 again, a brief remark on Diadumenian's name of Antoninus is made (a variation and exaggeration of *G* 1.1 and *Ael.* 1.2)<sup>450</sup>: *non enim aliquid dignum in eius vita erit, quod dicatur, praeter hoc quod Antoninorum nomini est velut nothus adpositus*. This has every

<sup>449</sup> *OM* 10.2: *quibus cum Antoninus ostenderetur, miro amore in eum omnibus inclinatis occiso Iuliano praefecto ad eum omnes transierunt* and *OM* 10.3: *commissoque proelio Macrinus est victus proditione militum eius et amore Antonini*.

<sup>450</sup> *G* 1.1: *neque enim multa in eius vita dici possunt, qui prius rebus humanis exemptus est quam cum fratre teneret imperium* and *Ael.* 2.1: *Ceionius Commodus, ... nihil habet in sua vita memorabile, nisi quod primus tantum Caesar est appellatus*, see § 5.3.2.

appearance of the author continuing with his usual themes after Herodian had run out as a source.

The next part concerns Macrinus' character, which the author inserts as a supplement to the historical narrative in order to produce a biography in the Suetonian tradition. The narration becomes increasingly fluent, in that interruptions in the text, as we have come across above, seem to diminish, apart from considerations on the imperial names of Severus, Pertinax, Pius and Felix in *OM* 11. An elegiac epigram mocking the assumption of the names of Severus, Pertinax and Felix and the refusal of the name of Pius by Macrinus follows, after which the description of Macrinus' behaviour is continued. In *OM* 14.2 Diadumenian is graced with some other verses, in hexameters this time, in which the *NA* theme occurs again: *Vidimus in somnis, cives, nisi fallor, et istud: / Antoninorum nomen puer ille gerebat, / qui patre venali genitus sed matre pudica, / centum nam moechos passa est centumque rogavit. / ipse etiam calvus moechus fuit, inde maritus: / en Pius, en Marcus, Verus nam non fuit ille.* Several echoes from classical authors are to be found in the poem.<sup>451</sup> Some further observations should be made about the remarkable beginning (apparently *medias in res*, to judge by the words *et istud*) about the first person point of view determined by *vidimus*, and the apostrophe *cives*. The form *vidimus* is used in the way that T.E. Page has described as 'graphic *vidimus*', as pointing 'to something actually visible to the Romans in Rome...', i.e. the flooding of the Tiber.<sup>452</sup> This same use of *vidimus* is often used for the introduction of funny street scenes in satire, especially Juvenal, normally in depreciatory sense.<sup>453</sup> In this sense, *vidimus* fits the author's intention perfectly, though he gives the word an original twist: it is placed in the perspective of a dream, *in somnis*. Note that in v.2 the *Antoninorum nomen* is mentioned for the first time in exactly such a fashion, possibly derived from Ausonius' *Caesares* 98 on Elagabalus: *Antoninorum nomina falsa gerens*. A triplet of Antonines is summed up in the last verse *en Pius, en Marcus, Verus nam non fuit ille*, Antoninus Pius and his two adoptive sons Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, the latter of whom provides the pun: Diadumenian was never to be a *verus Antoninus*. As Diadumenian is presented as a bastard son of an adulterous slave (*patre venali, calvus moechus*), the name *Antoninus* is *velut nothus adpositus*, as was stated in *OM* 10.6.

Also important is the way in which the epigram is introduced and fitted into the context, *OM* 14.1: *...inita factione illum occiderunt cum puero filio Diadumeno, scilicet Antonino cognomine, de quo dictum est, quod in somnis Antoninus fuisset. unde etiam versus extant huiusmodi:...* Note how the poetical fragment follows a careless *scilicet Antonino cognomine*, after which the introduction to the verses follows. Later, the

<sup>451</sup> Den Hengst (1995b, 143) sees an allusion to Catullus 11.17-8 in the fourth verse: *cum suis vivat valeatque moechis / quos simul complexa tenet trecentos*. In the fifth verse, *calvus moechus* has been seen as an echo from Suetonius' distichon in *Div.Iul.* 51: Salmassius 1620 *ad loc*, Cameron 1964; Baldwin 1978, 53; Den Hengst 1995, 143. Cazzaniga (1972, 140) emphasises the use of *calvus* as a characteristic of *liberti*, which Macrinus, according to the author (*OM* 4. 3) would have been. *Patre venali* in v.3 refers to the same connotation.

<sup>452</sup> T.E. Page *ad Hor. Od.* 1.2.13, London 1964, 138.

<sup>453</sup> For example Iuv. *Sat.* 3.6: *nam quid tam miserum, tam solum vidimus...*; cf. Hor. *Serm.* 2.8.90 and Lucilius *Sat.* v.1324. Also in the late fourth-century the *Carmen contra paganos* v.103-4 the form is used in a satirical sense: *vidimus argento facto iuga ferre leones, / lignea cum traherent iuncti stridentia plaustra,...* The singular *vidi* is used by Tibullus in his elegies to provide some examples from own observation, c.1.2.89, 1.4.33. Cf. also *PN* 6.8: *Hunc...videmus sacra Isidis ferentem* for a variation on 'graphic *vidimus*' in the present tense.

narrative is resumed in *OM* 14.1 with *Genus mortis, ut diximus, tale fuit: ...* In the introduction to the connecting verses, the author, as usual, takes some elements from the cited document<sup>454</sup> (...*quod in somnis Antoninus fuisset*). The epilogue is traditional: *et isti versus ex Graeco translati sunt in Latinum, nam Graece sunt disertissimi, videntur autem mihi ab aliquo poeta vulgari translati esse*. This is certainly untrue, as a play on words with *verus Antoninus* could never have been made in Greek, as Den Hengst 1995, 143-4 has pointed out, while Cazzaniga's attempt (1972, 142n12: 'restituito *per iocum*') to reconstruct the original is as ingenious as it is useless. All the elements have come up before: the Greek original (*PN* 12.5: *extat etiam epigramma Graecum, quod Latine hanc habet sententiam*), the superiority of the Greek version (*OM* 7.3: *unde in eum epigramma non infacetum Graeci cuiusdam poetae videtur extare, quod Latine hac sententia continetur:...*), the bad translator (*OM* 7.7: *sed non minus risui est habitus quam poeta ille, qui de Graeco Latine coactus est scribere*). The alleged answer by the emperor is a traditional one also (*PN* 12.7-8; *OM* 11.5: *Quibus acceptis Macrinus his versibus respondisse fertur: ... OM* 11.7: *his versibus Macrinus ... respondisse se credit...*). Macrinus' lost answer is referred to thus: *Quod cum Macrinus audisset, fecit iambos, qui non extant; iucundissimi autem fuisse dicuntur*. The word *iucundus*, like *lepidus*, often denotes lighter, epigrammatic verse in Catullus' times, and later for Martial and his colleagues (see § 7.4 and 7.8). Then, a funny explanation is given for the loss: *Qui quidem perierunt in eo tumultu, in quo ipse occisus est, quando et omnia eius a militibus pervastata sunt*. There are two constant elements in the author's disclaimers: the version that he quotes is always inferior to the other (Greek or Latin)<sup>455</sup> original, and the unquoted verses that he only refers to, are *non infacetum* or *iucundissimi*. So it happens that Macrinus in *OM* 14.7 is able to compose *iucundissimi* verses (*qui non extant*), while in *OM* 11.7 *versibus...longe peioribus* are quoted.<sup>456</sup> Needless to say, the author excuses himself for his own bad products but they serve a purpose: he tries to ridicule the traditional formulas of modesty by writing really bad poetry and immediately apologizing for it.

With this, we have finally come to the end of the analysis of the *NA* theme in a biography that shows multiple variations on the same theme: the *nomen Antoninorum* numbered in an oracle and the occurrences as *nomen* and *cognomen* (*OM* 3.1-7), as an excuse for Caracalla's murder (2.8), as a variation on Aurelius Victor (2.9), as a joke on names (3.7), in a letter to the senate (6.6-7), in a description of a poem (7.5-8), as intrusions in an historiographical account taken from Herodian (8.4, 9.2 etc.), in a programmatic statement (10.6) and finally in an epigram (14.2). All of these passages suggest that they were added to an already existent text. In that sense, they function as 'Lückenbüsser', padding, as has been observed before by several scholars.<sup>457</sup> In the course of this, we have examined how and where exactly the additions were made.

<sup>454</sup> Conform the author's habit: Den Hengst 1987.

<sup>455</sup> A Latin poem is compared to another Latin poem in *OM* 11.3-7: *longe peioribus, quam illi Latini sunt*.

<sup>456</sup> Other verses in *AS* 38.3-6; *Gd.* 20.5; *T* 1.2; *Aur.* 6.5, 7.2, all quoted by Baldwin (1978, 50-8); the verses in *Dd.* 7.3 are treated below.

<sup>457</sup> For example, Den Hengst 1981, 38, though he adds the thought that the *NA* passages are Lückenbüsser 'on a par with e.g. the divagations about *omina*'. As my analysis makes clear, I believe that 'on a par' must be modified in that the *NA* theme is the author's fabrication based on two passages in Eutropius (see paragraph on *Ael.-V*) and Aurelius Victor (see on *S, Cc.* and *OM* 3.9), whereas the *omina* are based on a different source, possibly Marius Maximus.

Statistically, in accordance with the analysis above, the 2495 words of *OM* contain twelve fragments totalling 584 words, which were added to the earlier text, amounting to 23.4 per cent (cf. 17.3 per cent of *G*). The fragments differ in length from 225 words (*OM* 2.5-3.9), 115 words (14.1-5), 106 words (7.5-8), 41 words (5.7), to some smaller interpolations of twenty words or less in *OM* 2.1; 5.1 and 7; 8.4; 9.2; 10.2, 3 and 6. The author took his information about Macrinus' life from Eutropius and Aurelius Victor, the source of *Cc.*, at least some passages from Herodian and a poem by Ausonius.<sup>458</sup> To these disparate sources, the author added long passages about the *NA* theme, which is not paralleled by any other source, from either the third or fourth century AD.

### 5.3.2 The *NA* Theme in *Dd.*

The inclusion of a separate biography on Macrinus' teenage son Diadumenian has a twofold justification: *Antonini Diadumeni pueri (...) nihil habet vita memorabile*, (1) *nisi quod Antoninus est dictus et* (2) *quod ei stupenda omina sunt facta imperii non diutini...* (*Dd.* 1.1, the first two words of the biography mark the main theme). The formula contains verbal repetitions, though with slight variations, of the remark about Aelius quoted before (*Ael.* 2.1: *Ceionius Commodus (...) nihil habet in sua vita memorabile nisi quod primus tantum Caesar est appellatus.*). A similar remark was made in *OM* 10.6: *non enim aliquid dignum in eius vita erit, quod dicatur, praeter hoc quod Antoninorum nomini est velus nothus adpositus*. Another variation is found in *Dd.* 6.1: *cuius vitam iunxissem patris gestis, nisi Antoninorum me ad edendam puerili specialem expositionem vitae coegisset*. The *nomen Antoninorum* is used in *Dd.* in the same way as the *nomen Caesaris* in *Ael.*, to justify the writing of a separate biography.

Many elements in the introductory remark are echoes from earlier passages in *HA*: the *digna memoratu*-theme from the preface to *OM* (*nihil habet vita memorabile*), the theme of the short-lived emperor from the same preface (*imperii non diutini*), occurring for the first time in *PN* 1, and naturally the *NA* theme. Indeed, the theme is omnipresent in the biography, and is also essential to the passages devoted to the *omina imperii*, the second justification of the biography.<sup>459</sup> Evidently, the main concern of the author in this biography is to integrate the *NA* theme in a number of narrative forms: historical narration, speeches, acclamations, letters and verses. Here is a survey of the theme and its appearances; the passages from which the theme is absent are underlined:

<sup>458</sup> Barnes (1978, 55-6) identifies the various sources; see also chapter 6 in this study.

<sup>459</sup> Apart from other things, the *omina stupenda*, described in *Dd.* 4 and 5, provide an explanation of the name Diadumenus or Diadematus, which may be inspired by the explanation of the *nomen Caesaris* in *Ael.*

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <i>Dd.</i> 1-2 | NA (introduction, historical narration, speeches) |
| 3.1-3          | <u>physical appearance</u> (3.1-3)                |
| 3.4-5.6        | <u>omina imperii</u> , NA theme 5.4-5             |
| 6.1            | NA (programmatic remark)                          |
| 6.2-10         | NA ( <i>nomen / cognomen</i> ) <sup>460</sup>     |
| 6.1, 6.5-8.1   | NA ( <i>epistula</i> )                            |
| 6.2-4          | NA ( <i>versus</i> )                              |
| 8.2-9.3        | <u>epistulae</u>                                  |
| 9.4-6          | NA (conclusion)                                   |

*Dd.* is the most conspicuous example of the figure of *amplificatio* in the *HA*. On three occasions, the author reminds the reader of the origin of the remark (see *Cc.* 9.2 and *OM* 3.9), for example in *Dd.* 1.5: *intellego praeterea desiderium ingens Antoniniani nominis apud vos manere*, are Macrinus's words in his speech to the soldiers. Then, in 6.10, there is a surprising shift: the original intention of Aurelius Victor's passage (22.1-2) is followed, in which the author suddenly shows his hand: *Post hoc ipse Diadumenus ut commendaretur exercitui senatui populoque Romano, cum esset ingens desiderium Bassiani Caracalli, Antoninum appellatum satis constat*. At the end of the biography, in *Dd.* 9.4, a variation on the theme is made when the soldiers are inclined to favour Elagabalus: *...in Marcum Aurelium Antoninum caritate nominis inclinavit exercitus. Is filius Bassiani Caracalli ferebatur*, cf. the small additions in *OM* 10.2 *miro amore in eum omnibus inclinatis* and 10.3 *et amore Antonini*.

The passages dealing with the NA theme will be treated in the order in which they appear in *Dd.* The first section, 1.1-2, is a fine example of a single historical fact combined with a lot of authorial invention. In fact, these paragraphs are a form of amplification of the announcement in *OM* 5.1: *Statim denique arripuit imperium filio Diadumeno in participatum adscito, quem continuo, ut diximus, Antoninum appellari a militibus iussit*. The second half of the phrase, beginning with *quem continuo...* is an attempt by the author to make historical fact serve his purposes. The author keeps on making variations within the NA theme. Note for example the variation on *OM* 3.8, where, as we have seen, the Antonine name was granted to Diadumenian in order to suppress suspicion that Macrinus was involved in Caracalla's murder plot. Now the author states, *Dd.* 1.2: *...veritus, ne in aliquem Antoninorum, qui multi ex affinibus Antonini Pii erant inter duces, exercitus inclinaret, statim contionem parari iussit filiumque suum tunc puerum Antoninum appellavit*. It is suggested that Macrinus feared that the soldiers would side with some of his officers, who were related to Antoninus Pius. Meanwhile, the author gives us to understand that many leaders were prepared to use the name of Antoninus in order to seize power.<sup>461</sup> The explanation of the name of Antoninus in *OM* 3.8 (the name was given in order to avoid suspicion about involvement in Caracalla's murder plot) has been abandoned. The *contio* that follows again picks up

<sup>460</sup> Chapter 6 is closely connected to *OM* 3 and 7.5-8, in which the emperors bearing the Antonine name are treated and preparation is made for the emperors yet to come, Heliogabalus in particular.

<sup>461</sup> Macrinus' fear is a recurring theme, which was also mentioned in *OM* 2.1 *iudicandi de se militibus...potestatem demit*, 5.4 *adcedebat etiam illud, quod militarem motum timebat, ne eo interveniente suum impediretur imperium*, 5.5 *timuit etiam collegam, ne et ipse imperare cuperet*; 5.7 *statim ad delendum militum motum stipendium ....dedit*.

the motif of the popularity of the name of Antoninus, now in direct speech: *intellego praeterea desiderium ingens Antoniniani nominis apud vos manere*, which is in accordance with *OM* 3.9 (the popularity of the name among soldiers, earlier mentioned in *Cc.* 8.10). The soldiers respond with acclamations (1.6-8).<sup>462</sup> The most innovative part in the *NA* theme is provided by the end of the acclamations: *Antoninum habemus, omnia habemus. Antoninum nobis di dederunt*.<sup>463</sup> The gods themselves have given us an Antoninus.

Macrinus' answer is an elaboration of *OM* 5.7 (*statim tamen ad delendum militum motum stipendium et legionariis et praetorianis dedit solito uberius*), in *Dd.* 2.1: *habete igitur, commilitones, pro imperio aureos ternos, pro Antonini nomine aureos quinos et solitas promotiones sed geminatas*. The clause *solito uberius*<sup>464</sup> is specified and echoed and amplified in *solitas promotiones sed geminatas*. There is also an echo from Macrinus' letter to the senate in *OM* 6.6 (*et imperio miles donavit et nomine*), the double mention of *pro imperio* and *pro Antonini nomine*. The phrase is an example of how the author combines several texts, preferably with use of *amplificatio* and *hyperbole*. This latter figure is fully explored in *di facient, ut haec saepius fiant. dabimus autem per cuncta quinquennia hoc, quod hodie putavimus*. The gods will see to it that the gift is repeated every five years. Then the floor is given to Diadumenian with his maiden *contio* to the troops: *gratias vobis ... quod me et imperio donastis et nomine*, which, just a few words later, he repeats in *causa imperii, causa nominis*. The enumeration of emperors, familiar from *OM* 3.4, 7.5-7 and especially 14.2 (v.6) passes review again: *scio enim me Pii, me Marci, me Veri suscepisse nomen*. Finally, the last words by Macrinus are exaggerated again, *Dd.* 2.4: *interim tamen ... id omne quod pater et tantundem promitto honoribus, ut et venerandus Macrinus pater praesens promisit, duplicatis*.

The total dependence of *Dd.* on *OM* becomes even clearer when the author explicitly mentions Herodian as his main source for that book, for its factual information in *Dd.* 2.5 *Herodianus Graecus scriptor haec praeteriens Diadumenum tantum Caesarem dixit puerum a militibus nuncupatum et cum patre occisum*. Indeed, in his history (5.4.12), Herodian mentions the two facts in one breath, Diadumenian's promotion to Caesar<sup>465</sup>: τέλει μὲν δὴ τοιούτῳ Μακρίνος ἐχρήσατο, συναναίρεθέντος αὐτῷ καὶ τοῦ παιδός, ὃν ἦν ποιήσας Καίσαρα, Διαδουμηνιανὸν καλούμενον. With *haec praeteriens* the roguish scholar acts out his own fantasies and fools around with source criticism.

<sup>462</sup> The first occurrence of the formula *di te servant* is *AP* 3.1 ... *inter alias acclamations dictum est: Auguste, di te servant*. Also, in these acclamations the new emperor is wished long life. For this theme, see Burian 1980 and Baldwin 1981 for acclamations in general. The theme of the *senex imperator*, who cannot reign for long, recurs in *Tac.* 5.

<sup>463</sup> The term *omnia* refers to 'un amour intense' or 'une dévotion religieuse au prince', according to Turcan (1981, 143), with reference to Versnel (1990, 214): persons on whom one sets all one's hopes or towards whom one directs all one's affection are (*unus*) *omnia*, e.g. *Lucan.* 3.108: *omnia Caesar erat*; *Auson. Grat. Act.* 3.13: *unus mihi omnia Gratianus*; cf. *Cod. Th. Gesta Senatus* 5 p.2 line 43, p.3 line 1 and Instinsky 1942b, 350n1.

<sup>464</sup> See for this expression Suetonius *Galba* 16.2 and Gascou 1984, 752.

<sup>465</sup> Herodianus does not seem to know about Diadumenianus' late installation as Augustus by the soldiers, as coins appear to witness; cf. Kienast 1996, 171 and Whittaker 1970, 37n2. The author of *HA* contradicts himself when *OM* 10.5 is taken into account: *sciendum praeterea, quod Caesar fuisse dicitur, non Augustus Diadumenus puer, quem plerique pari fuisse cum patris imperio tradiderunt*.

Then the focus shifts to the senate in Rome. The letter (*oratio*) that had been cited in *OM* 6 is mentioned (*missae ... ad senatum litterae*) and therefore no document in direct speech is inserted. One particular passage is mentioned (*quibus nomen Antonini indicatum est*), which is a reference to that particular *NA*-passage *OM* 6.6-7 in the letter. The reaction of the senators corresponds with *OM* 7.1 (*et mortem Antonini senatus gratanter accepit*), *Dd.* 2.7: *senatus imperium id libenter dicitur recepisse*: the words are similar, though not the object (*mortem Antonini* → *imperium id*). The same formula, however, had been used with the expected object: *OM* 2.3 *quamvis senatus eum imperatorem odio Antonini Bassiani libenter accepit*. The element missing in the other two phrases, *odio Antonini Bassiani*, crops up in the present passage as an afterthought ... *quamvis alii Antonini Caracalli odio id factum putent*. Note the inversion *odio Antonini Bassiani* → *Antonini Caracalli odio*, see above sub *Dd.* 1.5. The constant rearrangement of these elements may be shown schematically as follows:

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <p><i>OM</i> 2.3<br/> <i>quamvis <u>senatus</u> eum<br/> imperatorum <u>odio Antonini<br/> Bassiani libenter accepit</u></i></p> | <p><i>OM</i> 7.1<br/> <i>et mortem Antonini<br/> <u>senatus gratanter<br/> accepit</u></i></p> | <p><i>Dd.</i> 2.7:<br/> <i>quare etiam <u>senatus</u> imperium id<br/> <u>libenter dicitur recepisse</u>,<br/> <i>quamvis alii <u>Antonini Caracalli<br/> odio id factum putent</u></i>.</i></p> |
|--|--|--|

The formula of *libenter accep(er)it* may well come from *Cc.* 2.11: *quod quidem nec senatus libenter accepit*, referring to the excuse by Caracalla (!) for the murder of Geta.

Our analysis of the *NA* passages shows that its contents are reshaped through the medium of a preface, historical narration, *contiones*, *acclamationes* and *senatus consulta*, but there are also a few novel elements. One of these is the protection of Antoninus by the gods, which is a further step in the amplification of the *NA* theme. But there is a further fabrication. In *Dd.* 2.6 coins are minted, the first issue of these bearing the name of Antoninus Diadumenianus, the second, after approval by the senate, that of Macrinus. In other instances, the ideas are derived from other biographies: in *Dd.* 2.8 dark-red *paenulae* (cloaks)<sup>466</sup> are distributed named *Antoninianae* in honour of the emperor's son. Their distribution and naming after the giver is an imitation of Caracalla's offer of *Caracallae* to the people (*Cc.* 9.8).<sup>467</sup> As Caracalla himself is named after such a cloak, the author adds the joke that Macrinus proposed the name *Paenuleus* or *Paenularius* for his son.

In *Dd.* 2.9, the author cites the text of an edict (with an adequate introduction) in which Macrinus expresses the wish to come to Rome in order to give a *congiarium* (distribution of largess) to the people in honour of Diadumenian (*vellem... iam praesentes essemus*).<sup>468</sup> The text of the edict also includes the promise that *pueri Antoniniani* and

<sup>466</sup> *Paenulae* were normally worn by *tribuni plebis*, see *H* 3.5 and Kolb 1972, 95-100.

<sup>467</sup> *Cc.* 9.7-8: *Ipse Caracalli nomen accepit a vestimento, quod populo dederat, demisso usque ad talos. Quod ante non fuerat. Unde hodieque Antoniniana dicuntur caracallae huiusmodi, in usu maxime Romanae plebis frequentatae*. This passage may be an addition from a different source, as it occurs as an explanation of Caracalla's name in a passage about the emperor's building activities (*Cc.* 9.4-6: *opera Romae reliquit...* and 9.9-10: *Idem viam novam munivit...*). The use of the word *ipse* in 9.7 may be read as betraying the author's interpolation.

<sup>468</sup> The literary fabrications do not mean that no *congiarium* took place at all, see for example Whittaker 1970, 37n2, who provides a brief historical reconstruction of such an event in Antioch.

*puellae Antoninianae* will be registered, in order to propagate the glory of this much beloved name (...*qui tam grati nominis gloriam propagarent*). This promise is reminiscent of Antoninus Pius' distribution of food for girls (*Faustiniana*, after his wife's name, *AP* 8.1: *congiarium populo dedit... Puellas alimentarias in honorem Faustinae Faustinianas constituit*) and Marcus Aurelius' comparable largess after the marriage of his daughter Lucilla and his brother Verus (*MA* 7.8: *ob hanc coniunctionem pueros et puellas novorum nominum frumentariae perceptioni adscribi praeceperunt*). The origin of the idea of food distribution to minors is already present in the first biography of the *HA*, that of *H* (7.8) which even refers to Trajan's act.<sup>469</sup> In *AP* 8.1 and *MA* 7.8 distribution is linked to names of girls and boys, which results in again a new manifestation of the *NA* theme in *Dd*.2.8. The largess for the children is meant to glorify the favourite name (see *Cc*. 9.2 and *OM* 3.9 and above). The *NA* theme ends with the placing of *signa* and *vexilla* in the military camps devoted to the Antonine name, and the memory of Bassianus is honoured with gold and silver statues. On top of this a thanksgiving of seven days is granted (...*atque dies septem supplicatio pro Antonini nomine celebrata est*) - an extraordinary event in every respect, as this was normally restricted to great victories.<sup>470</sup>

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<sup>469</sup> See for these *alimentariae* *H* 7.8: *pueris ac puellis, quibus etiam Traianus alimenta detulerat, incrementum liberalitatis adiecit*. For an explanation of Trajan's measures, see Chastagnol 1994, 28n1. Garnsey (1988, 251-68) on food supply in the later empire, and especially Virlouvet (1995, 230-1) for *alimenta* and *frumentationes*. Pliny praises Trajan in his *Panegyricus* for his food distributions (*Pan.* 51.5); on Pertinax' food distribution (*P* 9.3) and references to general articles: Birley 1978, 87-90.

<sup>470</sup> Halkin (1953, 126) treats the *supplicatio* in case, the duration of which he characterises as 'exceptionnel à l'époque impériale'. See further Freyburger 1978 about *supplicationes* in general.

| Passage                  | Contents   | Parallels (sources)   |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| praefatio 1.1            | Justification of <i>Dd.</i> : <i>NA</i> and <i>omina</i>   | <i>Ael.</i> ( <i>nomen Caesaris</i> ), <i>G</i>   |
| narration 1.2            | <i>ingens desiderium</i><br>exaggeration: ... <i>quod cum eo Romanum esset imperium periturum</i>  | <i>OM</i> 3.9 (← <i>AV</i> 20.1-2), <i>Cc.</i> 9.2 (← <i>Eutr.</i> )                            |
| narration 1.3            | instalment of Diadumenian<br><i>veritus ne...inclinaret</i>  | <i>OM</i> 2.5, 5.1, 6.6, 8.10<br>↔ <i>Cc</i> 8.10; <i>OM</i> 3.8                                |
| contio 1.4-5             | <i>desiderium ingens Antonini nomine</i><br><i>pro imperio ...</i> , <i>pro Antonini nomine ... et solitas promotiones sed geminatas</i> | <i>OM</i> 3.9 (← <i>AV</i> 20.1-2), <i>Cc.</i> 9.2, <i>Dd.</i> 1.2<br><br><i>OM</i> 5.7, 6.6    |
| acclamationes 1.6-8      | <i>Antoninum nobis di dederunt</i>   |   |
| contio 2.2-4             | <i>et imperio donastis et nomine / causa imperii, causa nominis Pii... Marci ... Veri ... nomen honoribus duplicatis</i>                 | <i>OM</i> 6.6, <i>Dd.</i> 1.5<br><br><i>OM</i> 3, 7.5-7<br><i>OM</i> 5.7, 6.6, <i>Dd.</i> 1.5   |
| Source-criticism         | <i>Herodianus ...Diadumenum tantum Caesarem dixit...</i>   | <i>OM</i> 10.4  |
| narration (senate) 2.6-7 | <i>missae ...ad senatum litterae quibus...indicatum est senatus...libenter dicitur recepisse ... Antonini Caracalli odio...</i>          | <i>OM</i> 6<br><i>OM</i> 6.6<br><i>OM</i> 7.1, 2.3<br><i>OM</i> 2.3                             |
| narration (puns) 2.8     | <i>paenulas populo coloris russei... quae vocarentur Antoninianae</i>  | <i>H</i> 3.5, <i>Cc.</i> 9.7-8  |
| edictum 2.9-10           | <i>congiarium sui nominis ...et pueros Antoninianos et puellas Antoninianas tam grati nominis</i>  | <i>H</i> 7.8, <i>AP</i> 8.1, <i>MA</i> 7.8<br><br><i>Cc.</i> 9.2, <i>OM</i> 3.9, <i>Dd.</i> 1.5 |
| narration 3.1            | <i>Et vexilla fieri Antoniniana iussit...</i><br><i>...atque diem septem supplicatio pro Antonini nomine celebrata est.</i>              |   |

Figure 5.2: presence of the *NA* theme in *Dd.* 1.1-3.1 and its parallels

The next occurrence of the *NA* theme in *Dd.* is in the section on the *omina*, chapter 4. The theme of *omina imperii* is a well-known element in the lives before *OM* (Cf. the already cited passage in *AP* 3.1).<sup>471</sup> After mentioning the day of Diadumenian's

<sup>471</sup> *AP* 3.1: *huic... imperii omen est factum. nam cum tribunal ascendisset, inter alias acclamations dictum est: Auguste, di te servant. Omina* can be mainly subdivided in *omina imperii* and *omina mortis*, the former fewer than the latter. *Omina imperii*: Straub 1963, 125-82; De Kisch 1973, 190; *omina mortis*: Mouchova 1970, 111-49; Paschoud 1996, 314-5.

birth three times (*Dd.* 4.1: *die qua natus est...* , 4.6 *eadem die qua natus est...* and 5.1 *his diebus quibus ille natus est...* ), the author states that Diadumenian was born on Antoninus Pius' birthday, *Dd.*5.4: *natus est praeterea natali Antonini et ea hora et signis prope concinentibus, quibus et Antoninus Pius; quare dixerunt mathematici et imperatoris illum filium futurum et imperatorem, sed non diu.* And again, *Dd.*5.5: *die qua natus est, quod Antonini esset natalis, mulier quaedam propinqua dicitur exclamasse: Antoninus vocetur.* Macrinus, however, is said to have refused the name (*abstinuisse nomine imperatorio*), because nobody in his family bore it, and the horoscope seemed to be ominous enough already.<sup>472</sup> Two more observations may be made here: it is in this place that the theme of an imperial father and son (in brief form: *et imperatoris illum filium futurum et imperatorem*<sup>473</sup> crops up, as well as that of the length of a reign (*sed non diu*, cf. *OM* 1.1). The section on *omina* seems to come to an end with *Haec atque alia omina fuisse multi in litteras rettulerunt...*, but one more *omen* follows. The *omina* are reminiscent of the procedure in *OM* 6, where the division of the text into fragments introduced by *et infra* and *item infra* easily allow the addition of extra passages. This is also seen in *Dd.* 4.1-5.5, where in 4.1 *die qua natus est...*, 4.6 *eadem die qua hic natus est...*, and 5.1 *his diebus, quibus ille natus est...* are expanded by 5.4 *natus est praeterea...* and 5.5 *die qua natus est...*. These last two formulas appear to function as the basis to which more passages were added.

In *Dd.*6.1 the next *NA* passage occurs, this time as a programmatic statement that repeats some elements from the preface: *Haec sunt quae digna memoratu in Antonino Diadumeno esse videantur. cuius vitam iunxissem patris gestis, nisi Antoninorum nomen me ad edendam pueruli specialem expositionem vitae coegisset.* The theme of *digna memoratu* is repeated from the preface to *OM* 1.1 (*et ea quidem quae memoratu digna erunt*). *Vitam* denotes Diadumenian's life in biographic form, *patris gestis* is the narration about Macrinus' life. The author stresses again the importance of the *nomen Antoninorum*, also (and for the first time) for the construction of his book, which takes the form of a *specialis expositio*. *OM* 10.6 closely conforms to this statement, though no comment is made there on the construction of the books.<sup>474</sup> *Dd.* 6.1 is a key-text for the understanding of the construction of *OM* and *Dd.* (see § 5.4).

The author takes up the issue of the love of the name of Antoninus again in *Dd.*7.2: *et fuit quidem tam amabile illis temporibus nomen Antoninorum, ut qui eo nomine non niteretur, mereri non videretur imperium.* This, of course, is a variation on *OM* 3.9 again, with its emphasis on the popularity of the name. (*Alii vero tantum desiderium nominis huius fuisse dicunt, ut, nisi populus et milites Antonini nomen audirent, imperatorium non putarent*). The first occurrence of the theme was in *Cc.* 8.10. The question is whether *imperatorium* here refers to *Antonini nomen* or to an elliptic *eum*. Considering the passage *Dd.*5.5, just a few lines before the present passage, the first option is preferable: *sed Macrinus (dicitur) timuisse, quod nullus ex eius genere hoc nomine censeretur, et abstinuisse nomine imperatorio.* In *Dd.*7.2, however, the man who

<sup>472</sup> The phrase *simul quod iam rumor de vi geniturae illius emanasset* is reminiscent of *G* 2.6: *De hoc eodem, gnarus geniturae illius, ...*. A further similarity between the two *omen* passages is *clarum autem eventus ostendit* in *Dd.* 5.3, which corresponds with *ut postea satis claruit* and *ut postea ingens exitus docuit* in *G* 3.6-7, formulas that are to be expected in *omina* passages.

<sup>473</sup> cf. *S* 20.1-2, *G* 1.6-7 and § 5.2.2/4.

<sup>474</sup> *OM* 10.6: *non enim aliquid dignum in eius vita erit, quod dicatur, praeter hoc quod Antoninorum nomini est velus nothus adpositus.*

bears the name is called *imperatorius* in a periphrastical way (*qui eo nomine non niteretur, mereri non videretur imperium*).<sup>475</sup>

In *Dd.* 6.1 the matter of names is brought up again. The author has in mind his formulas as expressed in *OM* 3.5 and deliberately alters his utterances:

*OM* 3.6

3.6'': *inde est quod se et Severus Antoninus<sup>476</sup> vocavit ut plurimi ferunt<sup>477</sup>, et Pertinax et Iulianus et idem Macrinus.*

*Dd.*6.3

*unde etiam quidam et Severum et Pertinacem et Iulianum Antoninorum praenominibus honorandos putant,*

3.5': *Nec inter Antoninos referendi sunt duo Gordiani, aut quia praenomen tantum Antoninorum habuerunt aut etiam Antonii dicti sunt, non Antonini.*

*unde postea duos Gordianos, patrem et filium, Antoninos cognominatos putant.*

First, it should be remarked that the sequence of thought is altered in a chiasmic fashion: the second part of the passage 3.5 is echoed first, and after that the first part. Next, in the model of 3.5 the series *Pertinax et Iulianus et idem Macrinus* is listed,<sup>478</sup> while in the echo Severus joins the first two and Macrinus is left out: *Severum et Pertinacem et Iulianum*. Finally, sources are mentioned, though they remain entirely unspecified: *plurimi ferunt* in the model and *quidam putant* in the echo. In the second part of the echo, another opinion, voiced by *quidam*, is mentioned, namely that the two Gordiani can be called Antonini by way of *cognomen*, an option apparently not explored in the earlier list of Antonini, but by closer inspection the use of *cognomen* appears to be similar to that of *praenomen*.<sup>479</sup> On the other hand, Pius and Marcus possessed it as *verum nomen* (cf. the

<sup>475</sup> *OM* 3.9: Birley 1976, 270: 'they would not regard a man as imperial'; Chastagnol (1994, 453) and Turcan (1991, 23) also favour the second option (*eum*). *Dd.* 7.2: Birley 1976, 286: '...that those who did not have the support of that name, seemed not to have deserved imperial power.' In classical times, *imperatorius* is normally combined with non-animate entities (cf. *ThLL* 7.1, 560.64-561.37), in Cic. *Phil.* 14.12 with *nomen*. Cf. Tac. *Ann.* 1.3: *Tiberium Neronem et Claudium Drusum imperatoris nominibus auxit* (sc. *Augustus*). In *HA*: AC 1.4: *oderat tacitum principatum nec ferre poterat imperatorium nomen dicebatque nil esse gravius nomine imperii, quod non posset e re p. tolli nisi per alterum imperatorem* and 3.3: *omnes, qui imperatorium nomen sive iusta causa sive iniusta habuerunt; Pr.*12.8: *decerno igitur, p. c., votis omnium concinentibus nomen imperatorium, nomen Caesareanum, nomen Augustum....*

<sup>476</sup> Note the erroneous nominative *Antoninus*, instead of *Antoninum*.

<sup>477</sup> I follow Jordan's conjecture *ut plurimi ferunt, et...* (Pasoli 1968, 41), which is corroborated by the parallel with *Dd.* 6.3, see § 5.3.1 ad *OM* 3.6.

<sup>478</sup> Macrinus called himself Antoninus according to *OM* 2.1: *seque nunc Severum nunc Antoninum ... nuncupavit*, see § 5.3.1.

<sup>479</sup> Chastagnol (1994, 482) warns that in this passage *praenomen* is *nomen gentile* and *nomen* stands for *cognomen*, but it is rather the other way round. Chastagnol's interpretation would mean that Marcus (in *OM* 6.5), whose *cognomen* was *Verissimus*, adopted the name of Antoninus not as *nomen gentile*, but as *cognomen*. Yet the *verum nomen* also must be the *nomen gentile*, as the example of Antoninus Pius makes clear: *Nam Pius verum nomen Antonini habuit, cognomen Pii...*. Béranger (1976, 39) pointedly remarks that the *nomen Antoninorum* is used in several forms ('nom commun, nom propre, prénom, surnom, second surnom, titre') and also refers to *Pr.*4.3-4 (39n113), in which the *nomen Probus* could also have been the *cognomen*. The fact that the terms of *cognomen* and *praenomen* are interchangeable also corroborates our

*veri successores Antonini* in *OM* 3.6, who fostered the name more than their own name, *proprium nomen*). In the passage quoted next, *praenomen* is set against *ipsum nomen*, the latter term obviously being synonymous with (*verum*) *nomen* in this context: *sed aliud est cum praenomen adscitur, aliud cum ipsum nomen inponitur. nam Pius verum nomen Antonini habuit, cognomen Pii, Marcus verum nomen Verissimi habuit, sed hoc sublato atque abolito non praenomen Antonini sed nomen accepit. Verus autem Commodi nomen habuit, quo abolito Antonini non praenomen sed nomen accepit.* If indeed the Gordians had *Antoninus* as *praenomen* (*OM* 3.5), then Marcus and Verus are said to have taken it as (*ipsum*) *nomen*, which must denote the *nomen gentile*.<sup>480</sup> The terminological disorder is treated extensively by Hartke (1951, 127-31), who concludes that the terms cannot be harmonised ('Letzen Endes geht daher alles durcheinander').

In the next four paragraphs, four emperors with the name of Antoninus are treated, after the aforementioned Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus. In *Dd.6.7*: Commodus<sup>481</sup>; in *Dd.6.8*, Caracalla; in *Dd.6.9*, Geta. And finally in *Dd.6.10*, we have Diadumenian. In the descriptions of these last three emperors, the usual themes are catalogued: in Caracalla's case, the dream: *vel somnii causa, quod Severus viderat, cum sibi Antoninum successorem praedictum sensisset* (mentioned in *S* 10.3-4, *G* 1.3, 5) and his acquisition of the name of Antoninus: *anno demum tertio decimo Antoninum dixisse* (copied from *S* 16.3-4, though historically incorrect, see § 5.2.2/4), and a corresponding remark about the imperial status of the man who acquired the rank of emperor, or of his name: *quando ei etiam imperatoriam addidisse dicitur potestatem* (see my remarks on *Dd. 5.5* and *7.2* above). In Geta's case, the shared appellation in order to succeed his father: *eadem ratione qua Bassianum appellatum satis constat, ut patri Severo succederet, quod minime factum est.* (repeated from *S* 10.5; 16.4) and the admission that there is a controversy about the name of Antoninus: *quem multi Antoninum negant dictum* (see also *S* 10.5, 16.4, *G* 5.3). In Diadumenian's case, the popularity of the *nomen Antoninorum* is repeated again: *post hoc ipse Diadumenus ut commendaretur exercitui senatui populoque Romano, cum esset ingens desiderium Bassiani Caracalli, Antoninum appellatum satis constat.* (*Cc.8.10, OM* 3.9, *Dd.* 1.2, 4). The various pieces of information have become recurring formulas.

Two inventively interwoven documents follow: a letter and verses. The documents are, as usual, introduced by an accurate description of their contents. The document itself only follows after the quotation of the verses, preceded by a *dispositio* (*Quam epistolam priusquam intexam, libet versus inserere...*). There is something curious about these verses, as they concern Commodus. Of all the emperors called Antoninus mentioned in the catalogue above (Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, Lucius Verus, Commodus, Caracalla, Geta and Diadumenian), only Commodus did not receive special comments in the preceding parts of the *HA*. Now it is his turn: (*versus*) *in Commodum dictos, qui se Herculem appellaverat, ut intellegant omnes tam clarum fuisse*

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analysis of *inde est quod...* in *OM* 3.5 (see § 5.3.1): the emperors mentioned there also called themselves *Antonini*, or were called so by others, because they bore the name as *cognomen* (whereas in *OM* 3.6 *praenomen* was mentioned: the author makes no difference between the two terms).

<sup>480</sup> It is typical of fourth-century families to invest themselves with important sounding names, as Turcan explains in an appropriate note, referring to Syme 1971, 84 and *Amm. Marc.* 28.4.7: *praenominum claritudine conspicui quidam, ut putant, in immensum semet attollunt.* This consideration shows that the author was working from a contemporary perspective.

<sup>481</sup> *Commodum autem Marcus Antoninum appellavit atque ita in publicas edidit die natalis sui.*

*Antoninorum nomen, ut illi (sc. nomini) ne deorum nomen commode videretur adiungi.*<sup>482</sup> This paradoxical statement is meant to prepare the reader for a new climax: the *nomen Antoninorum* is too sacrosanct to be combined with that of a god. In the verses, in *Dd. 7.3* (*versus in Commodum Antoninum dicti*) the same thought is expressed: *Commodus Herculeum nomen habere cupit, / Antoninorum non putat esse bonum, / expers humani iuris et imperii, / sperans quin etiam clarius esse deum, / quam si sit princeps nominis egregii. / non erit iste deus nec tamen ullus homo.* The brainless Commodus thought that it was more glorious to be a god than to be an emperor with a glorious name. But he will be neither. *Herculeum nomen* is compared with *Antoninorum nomen*, the latter of which Commodus despised. The poem is in pentameters, a metre sparingly used in Latin poetry.<sup>483</sup> It goes without saying that the verses are by the same hand as the verses in *OM 14.2*; a formal argument could be that *Antoninorum* in both poems occupies exactly the same position in v.2, as Baldwin (1978, 50) observed.

More interesting for our present purposes are the similarities with the poem in *OM 11.4*, which does not belong to the *nomen Antoninorum* theme. The second verse of this poem is *impius et felix sic simul esse cupit*,<sup>484</sup> and the sixth and final one: *impius infelix est, erit ille sibi*. Apart from the fact that these are also pentameters (though as part of disticha) and that the poem is about imperial names, it should be observed that the pun is accentuated with a play on tenses: *est – erit*, just as in the Herculean poem *sit – erit* is part of the joke. Den Hengst (1995, 145) shows, that the *Epigrammata Bobiensia* also contain a poem, translated from the Greek (*AP 11, 279*), on a *grammaticus* called *Felix* which makes use of the same elements: play on names and a pregnant use of tenses. Obviously, epigrammatic conventions are exploited here. A second observation is the position of *cupit* in both verses (*nomen habere cupit* in v.1 of *Dd.7.3* and *sic simul esse cupit* in *OM 11.4*), both referring to a desire to be called by some epithet. The contents of the last verses of these poems are very similar: the emperors do not become what they wish to be. There is a high degree of probability that the poems in *Dd. 7.3*, *OM 11.4* and 6, and *OM 14.2* are by the same author, though the verses in *OM 11*, which are not about the *nomen Antoninorum*, may have come from another source.<sup>485</sup>

A disclaimer is added to the quoted verses, as the author normally does (which we first find in *H 25.10* and repeated in *OM 11.5* and 7 and *OM 14.3*). The verses have an unknown Greek origin and were translated by an unskilled Latin poet: *hi versus a Graeco nescio quo*<sup>486</sup> *compositi a malo poeta in Latinum translati sunt.*<sup>487</sup> Apart from these traditional elements, the wording is curious and reminds one of the introduction to the poem:

<sup>482</sup> *G 2.3: ...simul quod nemo ei videretur felicior imperator ad commodandum nomen eo principe, cuius proprium nomen iam per quattuor principes cucurrisset.*

<sup>483</sup> Baldwin 1978, 50 and 57n3.

<sup>484</sup> The first half foot after the caesura is missing, which is why some mss. add [*et*].

<sup>485</sup> More about the verses in ch. 10 about repetition.

<sup>486</sup> Cf. *OM 11.3: Graeci cuiusdam poetae....*

<sup>487</sup> Cf. *OM 11.7: ...poeta ille, qui de Graeco Latine coactus est scribere* and *OM 14.3: videntur autem mihi ab aliquo poeta vulgari translati esse.*

*Dd. 7.2*  
*libet versus inserere in Commodum*  
*dictos, ...*  
*ut intellegant omnes*  
*tam clarum fuisse Antoninorum nomen,*

*ut illi ne deorum nomen commode*  
*videretur adiungi.*

*Dd. 7.4*  
*hi versus ... quos ego idcirco inserendos*  
*putavi,*  
*ut scirent omnes*  
*Antoninos pluris fuisse quam deos,*

*ac trium principum amore,*  
*quo **sapientia, bonitas, pietas** consecrata sit,*  
*in Antonino **pietas,***  
*in Vero **bonitas,***  
*in Marco **sapientia.***

The changes (underlined) are clear. The end of both sentences diverge; the paradox of the first text is replaced by an artfully elaborated tricolon. Meanwhile, the religious dimension of the Antonine name is now explicitly expressed: *Antoninos pluris fuisse quam deos*. The words fit the climax that the author has been working up to ever since he introduced the NA theme. That the name is *sanctum*, *venerabile* and *sacratum* is expressed in *S 20.3 (sanctum illud nomen)*, *S 21.11 (nomenque illud venerabile)* and *OM 7.7 (nomen illud sanctum)*, while in *Dd.7.2* the name is superior to the gods (*ut intellegant omnes tam clarum fuisse Antoninorum nomen, ut illi ne deorum nomen commode videretur adiungi*), an idea which is expressed more explicitly here (*pluris fuisse quam deos*). That an emperor called Antoninus is given by the gods is recorded in the acclamations in the first chapters of *Dd.* (*Antoninum nobis di dederunt*). The paradox in *Dd. 7.2* puts the name on an equal level with the gods. In *Dd. 7.4* the Antonines are rated even higher than the gods, as in *Dd. 7.1*, to be treated next. It should be taken into consideration that the three emperors were deified. *Sapientia*, *bonitas* and *pietas* are the virtues through which they earned their apotheoses.<sup>488</sup>

Macrinus' letter to his wife Nonia Celsa (*Dd.7.5-7*), an invention of the author's, is the first of a series of three letters, the second from Diadumenian to his father (*Dd.8.5-8*), the third to his mother (*Dd.9.1*). Only the first of these continues the themes that were treated in the NA passages. The letter was already announced in *Dd.7.1*, before the poems, apparently to upgrade the complexity of the narration (as explained below): *Extat epistola Opili Macrini, patris Diadumeni, qua gloriatur non tam se ad imperium pervenisse, qui esset secundus imperii, quam quod Antoniniani nominis esset pater factus, quo clarius illis temporibus non fuerat vel deorum*. The father-and-son motif crops up again, and the fact that Macrinus used to be *secundus imperii*, viz. *praefectus praetorio*, is brought up. Macrinus stresses the fact that it is even a greater honour to be the father of the Antonine name than to be a princeps. The wording that Macrinus is father *Antoniniani nominis* is surprising, a kind of *abstractum pro concreto*, adorned with the derivative form *Antoniniani* instead of the more obvious *Antonini* or *Antoninorum*. The central idea that is treated above in relation with *...Antoninos pluris fuisse quam deos,...* is found in *quo clarius illis temporibus non fuerat vel deorum*.

<sup>488</sup> The mention of imperial virtues in the form of tricola is repeated in *AS 9*, see my comments *ad loc.*

*Redeo nunc ad epistolam Macrini Opilii* (mark the inversion from *Dd.* 7.1 *Opili Macrini*) the author says next, and quotes the letter, *Dd.* 7.2-7: *Opilius Macrinus Noniae Celsae coniugi. Quid boni adepti sumus, mi uxor, caret aestimatione. Et fortassis<sup>489</sup> de imperio me putes dicere - non magnum est istud, quod etiam indignis fortuna concessit, - : Antonini pater factus sum, Antonini mater es facta. O nos beatos, o fortunatam domum, praeclaram laudem nunc demum felicis imperii. Di faxint et bona Iuno, quam colis, ut et ille Antonini meritum effingat, et ego, qui sum pater Antonini, dignus omnibus videar.* The letter contains several echoes, again, from ancient literature.<sup>490</sup> The NA theme is further developed in Macrinus' remark that it is a greater honour to be the father of an Antoninus than to rule the empire – possibly in view of Severus' alleged appointment of his sons to Antoninus. The most direct reference to an earlier NA motif is contained in the final words *ut et ille Antonini meritum effingat, et ego, qui sum pater Antonini, dignus omnibus videar*: the soldiers are claimed to have shouted to Macrinus: *Puer Antoninus dignus imperio*, whereafter the boy himself replies in *Dd.* 1.2: *si quidem dignos et me et patrem meum duxistis, quos imperatores Romanos diceretis... . Et pater quidem meus curabit, ne desit imperio, ego autem elaborabo, ne desim nomini Antoninorum.* The author's fabrications often contain a pleasant mixture of homemade invention and classical tradition. *Hac epistola indicatur, quantum gloriae adeptus sibi videretur, quod vocatus est filius Antoninus* says the epilogue; *quantum gloriae adeptus sibi videretur* being an amplified and resounding distortion of *qua gloriatur* in *Dd.* 7.1, and *quod vocatus est filius Antoninus* an adaptation of *quod Antoniniani nominis esset pater factus*. The author enjoys observing things from different perspectives.

After this letter, the NA theme, which produces a considerable amount of text for *Dd.*, does not recur except for a brief concluding remark in the last paragraph: *interfectis igitur ambobus et capitibus pilo circumlatis in Marcum Aurelium Antoninum caritate nominis inclinavit exercitus* – the underlined words mark the NA theme, stemming from *Cc.* 8.10 and *OM* 3.9; the technique is the same as in *OM* 10.2 *miro amore in eum omnibus inclinatis* and *OM* 10.3 *et amore Antonini*: a minimal addition to the underlying text. The order of events is wrong: the army already preferred Elagabalus before the deaths of Macrinus and his son, as the author knew well enough (*OM* 8.2, 8.4, 10.3, 15.1). Even historical fact falls victim to the author's manipulations, temporal inversion in this case.

When we review all the passages treated in *Dd.*, it immediately becomes clear that the volume of NS devoted to the NA theme is enormous. Other than in *S*, *Cc.*, *G* and *OM*, the passages in *Dd.* are presented by the author (and in later studies) as the only justification for its inclusion in the series of *HA*.<sup>491</sup> These NA passages are, successively: 1.1-3.1 (preface, narrations and documents); 5.4-5 (*omina*); 6.1-10 (programmatic

<sup>489</sup> *Fortassis* is a formal expression, used in letters, prayers and programmatic remarks (*Val.* 3.3, *Pr.* 4.3; *AS* 17.4 and *A* 10.1, *Pr.* 1.3, encountered particularly in the later lives): Den Hengst 1987, 162.

<sup>490</sup> *O nos beatos, o fortunatam domum* has an unmistakably Ciceronian flavour, and may be indebted to *O fortunatam natam me consule Romam* (from *De consulate suo* 7), cited by Iuvenalis 10.122, as Turcan (1993, 152n42) proposes. Den Hengst (1987, 161) points to *Cic. Cat.* 2.10: *praeclarem laudem* and for *Di faxint* *Cic. Ver.* 3.81 *di faxint, ne sit alter...*, (for the form *faxint*, see Den Hengst 1987, 162), while *et bona Iuno* is borrowed from Verg. *A* 1.734. The derivations mark the *HA*'s character as a 'Fundgrube' of literary imitation.

<sup>491</sup> In *HA*: *OM* 10.6, *Dd.* 1.1, 6.1, which has been noticed by Lécivain 1904, 266-7: 'idée-mère de la biographie'; Turcan (1993, 149): 'leitmotiv qui domine *OM* et *Dd.*'

statement and case of names), 7.1-8.1 (letter and verses), 9.4 (*Antoninum caritate nominis*). They can fairly well be separated from the other parts: *Dd.* 3.2-4 (physical appearance and *divisio*), 4.1-5.3, 5.6 (*omina*), 8.2-9.3 (death, cruelty, two letters, one of them containing a quotation from Vergil's *Aeneid*), 9.4-6 (conclusion and announcement of the next book). It appears that the passages without the *NA* theme contain the more biographical parts. It is striking that Diadumenian is not called Antoninus in either of these, when the *nomen Antoninorum* is the central idea of the book. When the name of *Antoninus* (all cases) and its derivatives (*Antoninorum*, *Antoninianus* etc.) are mapped out, there is a clear outcome:

| <i>NA</i> theme, <i>varia</i> (1.1-2.10) | <i>Omina</i> (5.4-5) | <i>Nom. / cognom.</i> (6.1-10) | Letters (7.1-8.1) | Epilogue (9.4) | physical appearance (3.1-3), <i>omina</i> (3.4-5.3, 5.6) letters (8.2-9.3), epilogue (9.4-6) |   |
|--|----------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|--|---|
| 30                                       | 4                    | 14                             | 10                | 1              | 0  |   |
| TOTAL                                    |                      |                                |                   |                | 59   | 0 |

Figure 5.3: Frequency of the name of Antoninus and its derivatives in *Dd.*

Thus, all the instances of the name of Antoninus appear in the passages that have been indicated as belonging to the *NA* theme on the base of recurring motives, while in the other passages in the book about Diadumenian the name is not mentioned a single time. The author surely would have used the name Antoninus in, for example, the letters in paragraphs 8 and 9, if they were based on the same source as the *NA* theme. The author has not taken much effort to harmonise the different parts of the text in this respect. As a result, there is a clear difference between the two types of passages, to be discerned at the hand of the *NA* theme. Hardly any text is left if all the passages devoted to the theme (59.4 per cent of the total text of *Dd.*) were left out. This observation with regard to *Dd.* will, together with *G* and *OM*, be further elaborated in the next paragraphs, as these three biographies have much in common.

#### 5.4 The Structure of *G*, *OM* and *Dd.*

The *NA* fragments, which occupy a third (33 per cent) of the total text of *G*, *OM* and *Dd.*, can be distinguished clearly from their context. They even turn out to be detachable from the text itself, without exception and without damage to (and often even to the advantage of) the narrative continuity of the text. This observation makes it interesting to investigate the remaining text as this is apparently based on other sources than the *NA* passages. In order to find out whether there is any coherency in the parts which do not include the *NA* theme, we shall have to determine what the structure of the three lives on both sides of the dividing line between EL and IL is like, beginning with a comparison of *G* and *Dd.*, the last of the Secondary Lives. To *OM* a separate chapter will be devoted (ch.6), as this book differs from the other two in that its subject is a single Augustus, in the series of legitimate emperors. Also, the structure of the book is quite different from the other two, as standard elements of biography such as physical appearance, origin, career, *mores* and death, are well represented. When the *NA* theme is left out completely, the following skeleton outline of the two biographies appears:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><i>G</i><sup>492</sup></p> <p>1.1-2 preface (minus <i>cur...adpositum</i>)</p> <p>1.3-4 dream of Severus</p> <p>2.1 <i>origo</i> (Marius Maximus)</p> <p>2.6-3.9 <i>genitura, omina</i></p> <p>4.1-5.8 <i>dicta, mores</i> (minus 5.3)</p> <p>6.1-7.6 <i>crudelitas Caracallae</i></p> | <p><i>Dd.</i><sup>493</sup></p> <p>1.1 preface (minus <i>quod...et</i>)</p> <p>3.2-3 physical appearance</p> <p>4.1-6 <i>omina</i> around birth (minus 5.4-5)</p> <p>8.2-9.3 <i>crudelitas Diadumeni</i>, letters</p> <p>9.4-6 epilogue</p> |
|---|---|

There are differences here as well as similarities. To begin with the latter: the *omina* in both biographies occupy a central position and in both cases consist of *omina imperii* and *mortis* simultaneously. Characteristic of both books is that they contain biographical elements, though they hardly can stand alone as biographies without the information from the *vitae* from on which they depend, as in the case of *Cc.* and *OM*. For example, Geta's death is described in *Cc.* 2.4, while his *funus* is only superficially referred to in *G* 7.1. It is a serious omission that Geta's death, announced by unmistakable *omina*, is not described in his own *vita*. For *Dd.* something comparable is found: here too, there is hardly any historical material about his boyhood, however short it may have been. Another feature of the biographies stands out: the paragraphs on *crudelitas*, conspicuously present in both biographies, are largely taken from the previous biographies, *Cc.* an *OM*. In *G* 6.1-7.6 there is a repetition of elements that were already recorded in *Cc.* with Caracalla as its subject. In *Dd.* 8.2-9.3, Diadumenian' letters to his father and his mother closely reflect the *crudelitas Macrini* in *OM* and even seem to be a direct continuation of *OM* 14.1.

#### 5.4.1 The Structure of G

It may be a good idea to linger a little longer over the *crudelitas Caracallae* in *G*. The paragraph that deals with this is particularly interesting with respect to the construction of the original *G*, as it contains the bulk of factual information in that biography. The repetitions and variations of *Cc.* in *G* reveal the author's technique of rewriting. In the inventory below we take *G* 6 and *Cc.* 2.7-8 as a basis for comparing the texts with the passages in *Cc.* on which they are apparently based. Words in bold are the verbal similarities, the underlined ones are the parallels (*synonymia* or *variatio*). Bold and underlined combined represent those verbal similarities which have been transported to a different place from the original text:

<sup>492</sup> As we have seen the *NA* passages are: *G* 1.1 *de cuius ... nomen adpositum*; 1.5-7: *quod cum fecisset ... de Antonini nomine*; 2.2-5 *fuit autem ... principes cucurrisset*; 5.3 *...et Antonini ut quidam dicunt...*

<sup>493</sup> As we have seen, the *NA* passages are: *Dd.* 1.1-3.1 *Antonini Diadumeni ... nomine celebrata est*; 5.4-5 *natus est ... illius emanasset*; 6.1-10 *haec sunt ... satis constat*; 7.1-8.1 *exstat epistola ... filius Antoninus*; 9.4 *caritate nominis*.

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>G 6.1 <u>Occiso eo pars militum, quae incorrupta erat, parricidium aegerrime accepit, dicentibus cunctis duobus se liberis fidem promisisse, duobus servare debere, clausisque portis diu non est imperator admissus.</u></p>   | <p>Cc.2.7-8 <u>pars militum apud Albam Getam occisum aegerrime accepit, dicentibus cunctis duobus se fidem promisisse liberis Severi, duobus servare debere, clausisque portis diu imperator non admissus.</u></p>                                |
| <p><i>occiso eo ... , parricidium ← Getam occisum</i><br/> <i>se liberis fidem promisisse ← se fidem promisisse liberis</i><br/> <i>non ... imperator admissus ← imperator non admissus</i></p>  |   |
| <p>G 6.2 <u>denique nisi querellis de Geta editis et animis militum delenitis, inormibus etiam stipendiis datis Romam Bassianus redire non potuit.</u></p>   | <p>Cc. 2.8... <u>nisi delenitis animis, non solum querellis de Geta et criminationibus editis, sed inormitate stipendii militibus, ut solet, placatis, atque inde Romam redit.</u></p>  |
| <p><i>nisi querellis de Geta editis ← nisi... querellis de Geta ... editis</i><br/> <i>animis militum delenitis ← delenitis animis / militibus placatis</i><br/> <i>inormibus ... stipendiis ← inormitate stipendii militibus</i><br/> <i>Romam ...redire (non potuit) ← Romam redit</i></p>   |   |
| <p>G 6.3 <u>post hoc denique et Papinianus et multi alii interempti sunt, qui vel concordiae faverant vel qui partium Getae fuerant, ita ut utriusque ordinis viri et in balneo et cenantes et in publico percuterentur, ...</u></p>   | <p>Cc.4.3 <u>isdem diebus occisi sunt innumeri, qui fratris eius partibus faverant. occisi etiam liberti, qui Getae administraverant. Caedes deinde in omnibus locis. Et in balneis factae caedes, occisique nonnulli etiam cenantes, ...</u></p> |
| <p><i>post hoc ← isdem diebus</i><br/> <i>Papinianus et multi alii interempti sunt ← occisi sunt innumeri</i><br/> <i>qui vel ... faverant vel qui partium Getae fuerant ← qui fratris eius partibus faverant</i><br/> <i>qui Getae administraverant</i><br/> <i>et in... et ...et in ... ← in omnibus locis</i><br/> <i>et in balneo et cenantes ... percuterentur ← et in balneis factae caedes...etiam cenantes</i></p> |   |
| <p>G 6.3 <u>Papinianus ipse securi percussus sit, inprobante Bassiano, quod non gladio res peracta sit.</u></p>  | <p>Cc.4.1 <u>dein in conspectu eius Papinianus securi percussus a militibus et occisus est. Quo facto percussori dixit: 'Gladio te exequi oportuit meum iussum.'</u></p>  |
| <p><i>Papinianus ... securi percussus sit ← Papinianus securi percussus ... et occisus est.</i><br/> <i>gladio res peracta sit ← gladio exequi oportuit meum iussum</i></p>  |   |
| <p>G 6.4 <u>ventum denique est usque ad seditionem urbanicianorum militum, quos quidem non levi auctoritate Bassianus compressit tribuno eorum, ut alii dicunt,</u></p>  | <p>Cc. 4.6-7 <u>et cum idem Chilo sublata veste senatoria nudis pedibus ab urbanicianis raptus esset, Antoninus seditionem compressit.</u></p>  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <i>interfecto, ut alii, relegato.</i>  |   |
| <i><u>seditionem urbanicianorum</u> militum ← <u>ab urbanicianis Bassianus compressit</u> ← Antoninus <u>seditionem compressit</u>.</i>  |   |
| <i>G 6.5 ipse autem tantum timuit, ut <u>loricam sub lato habens clavo etiam curiam sit ingressus atque ita rationem</u> facti sui et necis Geticae reddiderit.</i>  | <i>Cc. 8.5 tunc <u>sub veste senatoria loricam habens cum armatis militibus curiam ingressus est</u>. hos in medio inter subsellia duplici ordine conlocavit <u>et sic verba fecit</u>:<br/>...</i>                     |
| <i><u>loricam sub lato habens clavo</u> ← <u>sub veste senatoria loricam habens curiam sit ingressus</u> ← <u>curiam ingressus est atque ita rationem ...reddiderit</u> ← <u>et sic verba fecit</u></i>  |   |
| <i>G 6.6 quo quidem tempore <u>Helvius Pertinax, filius Pertinacis</u>, ..., recitanti fausta praetori et dicenti 'Sarmaticus maximus et Parthicus maximus' <u>dixisse dicitur</u>: 'adde et <u>Geticus maximus</u>', quasi Gothicus.</i>  | <i>Cc. 10.6 (...), <u>Helvius Pertinax, filius Pertinacis, dicitur ioco dixisse</u>: 'adde, si placet, etiam <u>Geticus Maximus</u>', quod Getam occiderat fratrem et Gothi Getae dicerentur, ....</i>                  |
| <i><u>Helvius Pertinax, filius Pertinacis</u> ← <u>Helvius Pertinax, filius Pertinacis dixisse dicitur</u> ← <u>dicitur ioco dixisse 'adde et Geticus maximus'</u> ← 'adde, ..., <u>etiam Geticus Maximus</u>'</i>   |   |
| <i>6.7 quod dictum altius in pectus Bassiani descendit, ut postea <u>nece Pertinacis est adprobatum, nec solum Pertinacis sed et aliorum</u>, ut supra dictum est, <u>passim et inique</u>.<br/>6.8 <u>Helvium</u> autem etiam suspectum habuit adfectatae tyrannidis, quod <u>esset in amore omnium et filius Pertinacis imperatoris</u>. quae res nulli facile privato satis tuta est.</i> | <i>Cc. 4.8 <u>Helvium Pertinacem, suffectum consulem, ob hoc solum, quod filius esset imperatoris, occidit</u>. Neque cessavit unquam <u>sub diversis occasionibus eos interficere, qui fratris amici fuissent</u>.</i> |
| <i><u>nece Pertinacis</u> ← <u>Pertinacem...occidit et aliorum</u> ← <u>eos...qui fratris amici fuissent passim et inique</u> ← <u>sub diversis occasionibus esset ...et filius ... imperatoris</u> ← <u>filius esset imperatoris</u></i>  |   |

Figure 5.4: Rewriting in G 6.1-8 from Cc. (passim).

Apart from the techniques that the author uses in reassembling the original text into something new, the analysis makes clear that the contents of G 6 are based on several parts of the preceding biography. In short: G 6.1-2 ≈ Cc. 2.7-8; G 6.3 ≈ Cc. 4.1; G 6.4 ≈

*Cc.* 4.6-7; *G* 6.5 ≈ *Cc.* 8.5; *G* 6.6 ≈ *Cc.* 10.6; *G* 6.7-8 ≈ *Cc.* 4.8. Chapter *G* 7 will show evidence of comparable techniques, which will not be spelled out in detail.<sup>494</sup>

As for the rest of *G*, it is not so easy to say what the source of the author may have been. He either had some knowledge about Geta's *genitura* and the *omina* accompanying his birth or simply made them up. These elements he used for a separate biography, which was justified by the fact that Geta had been co-ruler with his brother (*G* 1.2: *neque enim multa in eius vita dici possunt, ... quam cum fratre teneret imperium*). The idea of splitting off this information must have been provided by his source in the shape of a combined biography about Caracalla and Geta, and plainly resulted in a considerable measure of repetition and a shifting of *omina imperii* and *mortis* to Geta's biography. These *omina*, after all, especially relate to Caracalla's savage treatment of his brother and may well have been part of *Cc.*, in an earlier version. The *genitura* in *G* 2.6-8 is told in relation with Septimius Severus and Caracalla, and is not out of place in a narration about the relation of the two brothers. The greater part of the text of the original *G* is devoted to the *crudelitas Caracallae*, which mainly consist of rewordings of *Cc.* It suggests that the *omina* of *G* rather belong to the life and biography of *Cc.* There are two clear indications that this was the case. First, there is the beginning of *Cc.*, 1.1: *Ex duobus liberis, quos Septimius Severus reliquit, Getam et Bassianum, (...) Geta hostis est iudicatus, Bassianum notum optinuisse imperium*. The biography begins with the announcement of two brothers inheriting the throne, the first of whom was declared a public enemy, as the author euphemistically calls it, while the second was to be emperor. The beginning of *Cc.* carries the suggestion that both brothers were treated in a single book.<sup>495</sup> In this respect, the book of *Cc.* initially fulfills the expectations that are raised. Moreover, the first few chapters of *Cc.* stand out by their reliability<sup>496</sup> and even provide some plausible information not known from other sources, such as the detail about Caracalla being refused entrance through the gates (*Cc.* 2.8).<sup>497</sup> This action was a result of the soldiers' anger about Caracalla's murder of his brother: *dicentibus cunctis duobus se fidem promississe liberis Severi, duobus servare debere* (*Cc.* 2.7). That phrase is a direct echo of the point of departure of the biography: *ex duobus liberis, quos Septimius Severus reliquit, ...*. The author of the original *Cc.* probably also dealt with Geta and treated Severus's sons in a single book, as several aspects of the biography indicate.

The source used by the author of the *HA* did not treat the emperors and their co-emperors separately. It must have contained at least nine lives of reigning emperors, and there was no reason to separate the *omina* with regard to the death of Caracalla's brother from Caracalla's biography. This explains the small volume of text devoted to *Geta per se* in his own biography, and why all of the *omina* concern Caracalla as well. Only Geta's *mores* and *dicta* in *G* 4.1-5.8 (minus 5.3) are about the boy himself, which could

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<sup>494</sup> Compare for example *G* 7.3 ≈ *Cc.* 3.3; *G* 7.6 ≈ *Cc.* 8.4. Similarities between *G* 6 and several passages from *Cc.* have been briefly indicated by Hasebroek (1916, 77). See also Lécrivain 1904, 261, who makes the following observation: 'Entre les chapitres 5 et 6 il ya une lacune étrange sur l'assassinat de Geta'. This 'lacune' can be explained by the different character of the text in *G* 6-7, which is a compilation of several passages in *Cc.*

<sup>495</sup> As we have seen in § 4.2, the author tends to begin his narrations with the theme of the book, which is the name of the emperor.

<sup>496</sup> Reusch 1931, 63-5 ('Rekonstruktion der echten Überlieferung der Caracallavita'); Hohl 1950, 6.

<sup>497</sup> Hohl (1950, 8 and 18n34) notes the special nature of that fact and indicates Marius Maximus as the source.

similarly have been based on the author's source, which may well have treated these elements together with Caracalla's.

Such a hypothesis requires us to investigate in what place the source could have treated the *omina* about Geta's birth and death. For the answer to this question, there is a clue in *Cc.* 11.1: *Occidendi Getae multa prodigia extiterunt, ut in vita eius exponemus.* The author justly remarks *occidendi Getae ... prodigia*, which is more apt than *omina mortis*, because the perspective is Caracalla's. It is not Geta's death that is the point of departure but his murder by Caracalla. This programmatic remark may well mark the transfer of the *omina*-passages to the next book. Immediately after, the author adds another note, *Cc.* 11.2: *nam quamvis prior ille e vita excesserit, nos tamen ordinem secuti sumus, ut qui et prior natus est et qui prior imperare coeperat, prior scriberetur.* This statement tallies with the statement in *V* 1.1-2: *Scio plerosque ita vitam Marci ac Veri litteris atque historiae dedicasse, ut priorem Verum intimandum legentibus darent, non imperandi secutos ordinem sed vivendi: ego vero, quod prior Marcus imperare coepit, dein Verus, qui supersitite perit Marco, priorem Marcum, dehinc Verum credidi celebrandum.* The author states in *V*, that he will treat Marcus Aurelius first, *quod prior Marcus imperare coepit*, and because he follows the *ordinem imperandi*. Consequently, in *Cc.* 11.2, he promises to write the life of Caracalla *qui prior imperare coeperat*. Strictly speaking, the clause *qui et prior natus est* is of no importance at all, and only confusing, because in *V* 1.2 the clause *qui supersitite perit Marco* suggested that the *ordo vivendi* was about the date of the emperor's death, not his birth. Such changes of argument are characteristic of the author's lack of coherence. Style seems to be more important than logic, as witness the reformulations of the words (*plerosque ... secutos ordinem* → *nos ... ordinem secuti sumus*; *priorem legentibus darent* → *prior scriberetur*; *supersitite perit Marco* → *prior ille e vita excesserit*; *quod prior Marcus imperare coepit* → *qui prior imperare coeperat*). Plainly, the element *qui et prior natus est* does not tally with *qui ... perit*, and, what is more, is irrelevant in the present context.

Meanwhile, the statement is meant to announce a new biography. The author announces his intention with a formula based on the the biographies of Marcus and Verus, who were co-regents. In his own words, *MA* 7.6: *Atque ex eo pariter coeperunt rem publicam regere. Tuncque primum Romanum imperium duos Augustos habere coepit, cum imperium sibi relictum cum alio participasset.*<sup>498</sup> Geta, however, never attained the emperorship, but the first sentence just quoted suggests that he was destined to reign, but effectively he never gained the throne: the *ordinem imperandi* is not relevant. In *G* 1.2 it is stated about Geta: *...qui prius rebus humanis exemptus est quam cum fratre teneret imperium.* Geta did not have a separate biography in the author's source, which is why he comes up with his own innovative program in *Ael.* 1.1 (§ 3.2). Only after this did the separate biography of *G* come into existence. In order to justify this proposal, the author rather inaccurately applied the formula of *V* 1.1-2, and shifted some elements from *Cc.* (*omina, dicta*) to the new biography. A preface was added: *Scio, Constantine Auguste, et multos et clementia tuam quaestionem movere posse, cur etiam Geta Antoninus a me tradatur. ... Neque enim multa in eius vita dici possunt, qui prius*

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<sup>498</sup> Derived from Eutropius 8.9.2, see § 5.2.1, recurring in *Ael.* 5.12-3.

*rebus humanis exemptus est quam cum fratre teneret imperium.*<sup>499</sup> The author followed this up with a vast rewording of passages in *Cc.*

Next, a remark about the source of Geta's *origo* was added: *Geta autem dictus est vel a patris nomine vel avi paterni, de cuius vita et moribus in vita Severi Marius Maximus primo septenario satis copiose rettulit* (*cuius* referring to Septimius' son Geta). The remark in *Cc.* 1.2 serves as material for comparison, about Caracalla's ancestors: *de cuius maioribus frustra putamus iterandum, cum omnia in Severi vita satis dicta sint*, which is more apt, because in *S* 1.2 the ancestors are actually summed up. *G* begins with a superfluous amplification of the *origo*-theme. The scheme at the beginning of *G* is copied from *S* 1.2:

*Geta* 2.1 – 3.1

*Geta autem dictus est vel a patris nomine vel avi paterni, de cuius vita et moribus in vita Severi Marius Maximus primo septenario satis copiose rettulit. (...)*  
*Natus est Geta Severo et Vitellio consulibus Mediolanii, etsi aliter alii prodiderunt, VI. kal. Iunias (ex Iulia...)*

*S* 1.2-3

*Cui (sc. Severus) civitas Lepti, pater Geta, maiores equites Romani ante civitatem omnibus datam; mater Fulvia Pia, patris magni Aper et Severus, consulares, avus maternus Macer, paternus Fulvius Pius fuere. ipse natus est Erucio Claro bis et Severo cons. VI. idus Apriles.*

This comparison makes clear that the source of *G* provided information about family and *origo*, as long as it is accepted that 3.1 is a continuation of 2.1 paralleling *S* 1.2-3, after which the *NA* passage (2.2-5) was added. The fabrication about Severus' knowledge of Geta's horoscope (2.6-9: *de hoc eodem...*) may have been based on the source, as a pseudo-biographical topic complementing its factual information. After the mention of Geta's birthday, the narration continues with the same kind of fictional elements as before: *...ex Iulia, quam idcirco Severus uxorem duxerat, quod eam in genitura habere compererat, ut regis uxor esset,...* The question how the various kinds of texts (factual information, biographical elements and *NA* theme) were unified cannot be answered readily, though distinct parts of the text are still clearly discernable.

In conclusion, the author composed *G* out of the following elements:

- the *omina* and *genitura* passages were composed with recourse to the source that also provided the information for *Cc.* (*G* 2.6-3.4).
- in order to upgrade *G* into a complete biography, the fictitious dream from *S* 10.6 was repeated, a remark on *origo* (3.1) was added, and *mores* and *dicta* (4.1-5.8, minus 5.3) were taken from the primary text. .
- a small preface (1.1-2) was added to explain why a separate biography is devoted to *G* (namely, that they were co-regents), which indicates that Caracalla and Geta were treated together in the source.
- the historical narration, especially about the *crudelitas Caracallae* (6.1-7.6), was based on parts of *Cc.*

<sup>499</sup> Den Hengst (1992, 157) gives another analysis when he considers *de cuius priusquam... nomen adpositum* the answer to the first question. As the quoted clause appears to be an interjection, the author does not seem to answer the question at all, but only explains the question with *neque enim... teneret imperium*.

- the *NA* theme was added to link the biography to the other books, for which an extension of the preface (*G* 1.1') was required, a dream and letter (1.3-7), the *origo nominis* (2.2-5) and a small piece of historical narration (5.3).
- the biography was not rounded off properly by an epilogue, survey, dedication or anything similar.

#### 5.4.2 The Structure of *Dd.*

The structure of *Dd.* shows similarities with *G*, which induces us to investigate the development of this book along similar lines. There is one important difference: the *NA* theme takes up the largest volume of NS by far in *Dd.* and is presented as the sole reason for its existence, in which it follows *G*. If all the passages in which the *NA* theme plays a part (999 words, which is 59 per cent) are lifted from the text (1679 words), only a few passages remain (680 words or 41 per cent), hardly enough for the justification of a separate biography that even in its final shape is one of the shortest in the *HA*. The passages outside the *NA* theme contain the biographical parts and documents but hardly any historical narration. For the latter one is obliged to take recourse to *OM*. Applying our observations about *G* to *Dd.*, we may surmise that the source treated father and son together in one book (if it treated Diadumenian at all).<sup>500</sup>

There are indications that the biographical parts in *OM* and *Dd.* are based on a biography that treated them together, as for instance the letters that show up Diadumenian's cruelty, which link the paragraph to Macrinus' *crudelitas* (*OM* 12.1-14.1). The texts are related, for example by the word *asper*: 13. 3 *in verberandis aulicis tam impius, tam pertinax, tam asper...* In *Dd.* 8.5-8 a letter is quoted (which contains, just as *OM* 12.9, texts from Vergil's *Aeneid* concerning the relation between father and son) which is concluded by (*epistulam ...*) *ex qua apparet, quam asper futurus iuvenis, si vixisset*.<sup>501</sup> The passage on Diadumenian's cruelty is introduced by the words (*Dd.* 8.3): *Quamvis etiam istum ultra aetatem saevisse in plerosque repperiam, ut docent litterae ab hoc eodem ad patrem missae*. It could be imagined that this sentence once closely followed *OM* 14.1: *Sed cum eius vilitatem homines antiquam cogitarent, crudelitatem morum viderent, hominem putidulum in imperio ferre non possent, et maxime milites, qui multa eius meminerant funestissima et aliquando turpissima, inita factione illum occiderunt cum puero filio Diadumeno...* The author uses examples of Diadumenian's cruelty (*etiam istum!*) for the separate biography, while he continues the biography of *OM* with: *scilicet Antonino nomine... etc.* In *Dd.* 8.1 the missing link between Macrinus' and Diadumenian's cruelty is found: *Hic tamen quarto decimo mense imperii ob*

<sup>500</sup> Mommsen (1890, 249-51) conjectured *Dd.*'s dependence on *OM* (with objections by Klebs, see for the arguments: Klebs 1890, 458-9; one of the points being that *OM* 8.2 has *anno amplius imperavit* (Herodian 5.2.2: one year), *Dd.* 8.2 has *quarto decimo mense imperii (...)* *interfectus est cum patre (...)*). This improvement on *OM* is confirmed by Barnes 1978, 57.

<sup>501</sup> See also the first verse of *OM* 11.4: *histrion iam senior turpis, gravis, asper, iniquus...* Klebs (1888, 340-2) observed several parallels between the letters in *Dd.* and some in *AC*, e.g. Faustina's letter in *AC* 10.2: *non enim pius est imperator qui non cogitat uxorem et filium* / *Dd.* 8.5: *Non satis, mi pater, videris in amore nostro tenuisse tuos mores* and the epilogue to Avidius' letter *AC* 14.8: *haec epistula eius indicat, quam severus et quam tristis fururus fuerit imperator* / *Dd.* 8.9: *ex qua apparet, quam asper futurus iuvenis, si vixisset*.

*incivilem patris atque asperum principatum interfectus est cum patre, non suo nomine*,<sup>502</sup> the final words meaning ‘not on his own account’. Diadumenian’s letters in 8.1-9.3 are fabrications by the author, meant to fill up the biography in order to make the separation possible, on the model of *Cc.-G*. It is hard to say where Diadumenian’s *omina imperii* (*Dd.* 4.1-5.6) had a place of their own in the combined biography.

The distinction between the biography and the added *NA theme* can also be noticed in the programmatic statements. Turcan (1993, 142) rightly observes that the prefatory remark in *Dd.* 1.1 ... *et quod ei stupenda omnia sunt facta imperii non diutini, ut evenit*, is loosely linked to the previous line *Antonini Diadumeni...est dictus*. The author may have intended to write a full biography on the emperor Macrinus’ son, using the *omina*-passages that were already at his disposal. To this theme he added his own ideas about the *Nomen Antoninorum* (5.4: *natus est praeterea...*). In *Dd.* 3.4 the transition from one part to the other were marked by *Haec sunt quae de puero sint dicenda. Nunc veniamus ad omina imperii, quae cum in aliis tum in hoc praecipue sunt stupenda*. The most revealing statement is in *Dd.* 6.1 (*cuius vitam iunxissem patris gestis, nisi Antoninorum nomen me ad edendam pueruli specialem expositionem vitae coegisset*). The author pretends that the *NA theme* forced him to come up with a different construction for the combined description of Macrinus and Diadumenian. In fact, he thought up the *NA theme* himself in order to be able to add an extra book to the series. The fraud is in *iunxissem*: in his source, the life of Diadumenian was told in a book devoted to Macrinus. In order to integrate the two letters by Diadumenian to his father (*Dd.* 8.3-9) and mother (*Dd.* 9.1-3), the author tries to delude the reader. First, he remarks that there is a letter (*extat epistula Opili Macrini...*), introduced by a paraphrase of the contents of the letter, as he normally does.<sup>503</sup> Then comes the figure of *dispositio*, *Dd.* 7.2: *quam epistulam priusquam intexam, libet versus inserere, ....* After citing and commenting on the verses, the author continues: *redeo nunc ad epistulam Macrini Opilii: ....* By creating embedded structures the author tries to conceal the lack of coherency of the fragments.

This leads us to the following inventory of the book of *Dd.*:

- a preface in *Dd.* 1.1 and a programmatic statement in *Dd.* 6.1, both concerning the *Nomen Antoninorum*.
- a description of Diadumenian’s physical appearance, a traditional element in biography (*Dd.* 3.2-3).
- *omina imperii* in *Dd.* 4.1-6 (announced with a programmatic remark in *Dd.* 3.4) and 5.1-3, probably taken from a source that also provided information about other emperors<sup>504</sup> (?) or simply invented by the author.

<sup>502</sup> It is interesting to see that this sentence was one of Klebs’ arguments in his discussion with Mommsen when he argued that *Dd.* leaned on a different source than *OM* on account of the differences in the length of the reign, *quarto decimo mense* in *Dd.* against *anno amplius* in *OM*. The difference should however be explained as a matter of stylistic variation, especially because another element from *OM* is repeated here as well: cf. *OM* 10.5: *occisus est etiam filius, cui hoc solum attulit imperium, ut interficeretur a milite*, echoed in *non suo nomine*. This leads us to conclude that the paraphrase of the duration of the reign is also an echo of that passage.

<sup>503</sup> See e.g. *OM* 5.9, and Den Hengst 1987.

<sup>504</sup> Barnes 1978 proposes the existence of a ‘book of *omina*’; Syme (1976, 302) calls the message ‘Plain fiction, the authors own’.

- documents in the form of verses (*Dd.* 7.2-4) and two letters from Macrinus to his wife (*Dd.* 7.5-8.1), by Diadumenian to his father (*Dd.* 8.3-9) and mother (*Dd.* 9.1-3) were produced, accompanied by introductions, commentary and programmatic remarks (e.g. *Dd.* 7.2: *quam epistulam priusquam intexam, libet versus inserere, ...*).
- the only historical fact of importance, which is that Diadumenian was killed together with his father, mentioned in paragraphs 8.2 and 9.4.
- the *NA* theme, which is used to pad up the biography and especially added to the beginning of the book.
- a repetition of Macrinus' and Diadumenian's deaths and an announcement of the next biography, which serves to rounded off the biography.

The main differences with *G* are that the *NA* theme is presented as a justification of the existence of the biography, and that no genuine information about the co-regent Diadumenian is given, apart from some very brief references to his death. The importance of the name of Antoninus is something the author invented, as his source probably did not mention more than what was described in *OM* 10.5: *occisus est etiam filius, cui hoc solum attulit imperium, ut interficeretur a milite*, in which the element of the name of Antoninus is missing.<sup>505</sup> Let us consider the introductions to *G* and *Dd.* once more, and see how the *NA* passages and the other parts relate:

#### *G* 1.1

*Scio, Constantine Auguste, et multos et clementiam tuam quaestionem movere posse, cur etiam Geta Antoninus a me tradatur. de cuius priusquam vel vita vel nece dicam, disseram, cur et ipsi Antonino a Severo patre sit nomen adpositum. neque enim multa in eius vita dici possunt, qui prius rebus humanis exemptus est quam cum fratre teneret imperium.*

#### *Dd.*1.1

*Antonini Diadumeni pueri, quem cum patre Opilio Macrino imperatorem dixit exercitus occiso Bassiano factione Macriniana, nihil habet vita memorabile, nisi quod Antoninus est dictus et quod ei stupenda omina sunt facta imperii non diutini, ut evenit.*

The implicit justification of a separate biography of Geta is the fact that he was an emperor's son and heir to the throne (as a consequence of the author's promise in *Ael.* 5.7 (*omnes qui ...singulis libris exponere*), while the *NA* theme is supplementary. In *Dd.*, the *NA* theme is one of two reasons for the biography, while its historical contents are summarised in a subordinate sentence and the *omina* have a secondary importance only. This makes *Dd.* (59 per cent *NA* against 41 per cent other parts) an amplified negative of *G* (17 per cent *NA* and 83 per cent other parts).

<sup>505</sup> Cf. *Val.* 8.2 about Valerianus' son of the same name: *nihil habet praedicabile in vita, nisi quod est nobiliter natus, educatus optime et miserabiliter interemptus.*

### 5.4.3 The Structure of *OM*

The life of *OM* is quite unique in the series of the *HA*, in that it contains, after the preface, a summary that functions as a table of contents: *Occiso ergo Antonino Bassiano Opilius Macrinus, praefectus praetorii eius, qui antea privatas curabat, imperium arripuit, humili natus loco et animi atque oris inverecondi seque nunc Severum nunc Antoninum (...) nuncupavit statimque ad bellum Parthicum profectus ...*. The narrative starting point is the moment when Caracalla dies (*occiso ergo Antonino Bassiano*), after which the subject of the narrative is introduced: *Opilius Macrinus, praefectus praetorii eius*. The biographical nature of the text leads to two cases of backtracking to earlier events in the subject's life (underlined in the text: *qui antea privatas curabat* and *humili natus loco* – concerning early career and birth), as well as a characterisation of his 'mores' (*et animi atque oris inverecondi*), while the events during and briefly after his seizure of power are reported in the middle of these biographically prerequisite elements (1: *imperium arripuit*, 2: *seque nunc Severum nunc Antoninum (...) nuncupavit* and 3: *statimque ad bellum Parthicum profectus ...*). These three events reflect the most important historical parts of Macrinus' biography (the usurpation, the imperial names and the war with the Parthians), while the retracing of his earlier career and the description of his character constitute the biographical part. The narrative starting point, as has been said, is the moment of his bid for power. In chapter 4 we have seen that three of the following biographies (*Hel.*, *AS* and *MB*) have this same starting point, the moment when the new ruler seized the throne (see § 4.2.2), a phenomenon that is not encountered in the lives before *OM*.

What was announced in the summary of *OM* 2 is elaborated in the next chapters: in *OM* 3, there is a flashback to an oracle about the Antonine name, in *OM* 4 the early career of Macrinus is told by a senator called Aurelius Victor, in *OM* 5 Macrinus' first measures as emperor are reported, in *OM* 6 – 7.4 the letter which he sent to the senate is quoted, while in *OM* 7.5 considerations about the Antonine name echo the oracle in *OM* 3, after which in *OM* 8 - 10 the Parthian war and Macrinus' death are described. In *OM* 11-14 the historical order of events is abandoned, and descriptions of the character and mores of the subject are given. *OM* 15 rounds off the biography with a repetition of Macrinus' death and the announcement (in narratological terms: prolepsis) of the reign of the next emperor. The last two paragraphs *OM* 15.3 and 15.4 contain two specims of paratext again: the theme of *inventio* (see § 8.4) and the dedication to Diocletian respectively.

|   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| <i>Occiso ergo Antonino Bassiano</i>                  | 4.7                  |
| <i>Opilius Macrinus</i>                               | <i>passim</i>        |
| <i>praefectus praetorii eius</i>                      | 4.7-8                |
| <i>qui antea privatas curabat</i>                     | 7.1                  |
| <i>imperium arripuit</i>                              | 5.4                  |
| <i>humili natus loco</i>                              | 5.5-6, 7.1           |
| <i>et animi atque oris inverecondi</i>                | 11.1, 12, 13.3, 14.1 |
| <i>seque nunc Severum nunc Antoninum...nuncupavit</i> | 5.7                  |
| <i>cum in odio esset omnium et hominum et militum</i> | 5.5, 13-14.1         |
| <i>statimque ad bellum Parthicum profectus ...</i>    | 8-10                 |

It is striking that the element to which most space is devoted is not announced: the *nomen Antoninorum*. None of the elements in *OM* 2.1-2 refer to any part of the *NA* theme. The table of contents, which, in all probability, reflects the textual situation before the insertion of the theme, shows that the emperor calls himself Antoninus and Severus, which is repeated in *OM* 3.6 (*inde est quod se et Severus Antoninus vocavit... et idem Macrinus*) and 5.7 (*Infulsit praeterea in nomen Severi*). In *OM* 7.2 and 5, however, only the names of Pius (*Pii nomine decreto*) and Felix are mentioned, while Macrinus' son Diadumenian is called Antoninus in 7.5. In *OM* 11.2 the name of Pertinax is added (*nam et Severum se et Pertinacem voluerat nuncupari*) and the names of Pius and Felix are repeated, though Macrinus refused the former (*...et cum illum senatus Pium ac Felicem nuncupasset, Felicis nomen recepit, Pii habere noluit*). This results in *OM* attributing the following names to the two co-regents:

| <i>OM</i>     | Macrinus  | Diadumenian |
|---------------|---|-------------|
| 2.1           | Severus, Antoninus                              |             |
| 2.5*; 3.4, 8* |   | Antoninus   |
| 3.6*          | Antoninus (as <i>praenomen</i> )                |             |
| 5.7*          | Severus   | Antoninus   |
| 6.6-7*        |   | Antoninus   |
| 7.2           | Pius  |             |
| 7.5           | Felix   | Antoninus   |
| 10.6*         |   | Antoninus   |
| 11.2-4        | Severus, Pertinax, Felix, (Pius) <sup>506</sup> |             |
| 14.1-2*       |   | Antoninus   |

Figure 5.6: The imperial names borne by Macrinus and Diadumenian as mentioned in *OM*.

What may be concluded from this is that in all the passages not belonging to the *NA* theme (2.1, 7.2, 11.1-4), Macrinus is called Severus (2.1, 11.2), Antoninus (2.1), Pius

<sup>506</sup> Macrinus wished to bear the names of Severus and Pertinax, according to the author (*OM* 11.2: *voluerat nuncupari*), but it is not recorded whether he received them or not. Yet, the name of Severus is historical (Kienast 1996, 169). In the account of *OM*, Macrinus refused the name of Pius.

(7.2, 11.2), Pertinax (11.2) and Felix (7.5, 11.2). Two of these names are nullified in the text, namely Antoninus in 3.6, where it appears to serve only as a *praenomen*, and Pius in 11.2-4, where Macrinus refuses the name of Pius. Both names were borne by the emperor Antoninus Pius: it seems that the author does not want Macrinus to figure among the *veri successores Antonini*, as he puts it in *OM* 3.7. The removal of the name of Antoninus becomes even more striking when *OM* 11.2 is compared with *OM* 2.1. On the occasion of a remark about Macrinus' *severitas*, the author adds: *nam et Severum se et Pertinacem voluerat nuncupari*, a formula structured along the lines of *OM* 2.1: *seque nunc Severum nunc Antoninum (...) nuncupavit: et ...et* is changed into *nunc...nunc* and *nuncupavit* into *voluerat nuncupari* and *Antoninum* to *Pertinacem*. The latter name fitted the present passage better, because Macrinus' harshness had to be demonstrated: *...quae duo illi asperitatis nomina videbantur* (viz. Severus and Pertinax).<sup>507</sup>

The removal of the name of Antoninus corresponds with the author's opinion that Macrinus is only a usurper, as we have seen in § 3.2. It is not impossible that he initially styled Macrinus as an Antoninus (as is indicated by *OM* 2.1) but later corrected this in an added *NA* passage (*OM* 3.6), just as he did with the name of Pius (in 7.2, corrected in 11.2-4). The correction was necessary in order to crown Diadumenian exclusively with the name of Antoninus, as a justification for devoting a separate biography to the emperor's son. It should also be noted that Diadumenian does not play an important role outside the *NA* passages, which may indicate that in the author's source Macrinus is treated with only a bare mention of his teenage son.<sup>508</sup> The source for Macrinus' life must have provided poor material. The author of the *HA* preferred to stress Diadumenian's name of Antoninus, which makes his treatment of Macrinus, who after all was only a usurper, more acceptable to the reader. In fact, the author inverts the importance of the two rulers: whereas Macrinus was only a tyrant and the father of the Antonine name, Diadumenian was a *verus successor Antonini*. In *AS* 9.3 the innocence of Diadumenian is stated explicitly: *Diadumenus autem nec tempus habuit nec aetatem et arte patris hoc nomen incurrit*.

The chief conclusion to be drawn from our comparison of the table of contents in *OM* 2.1 and the rest of the biography is that the *NA* passages are not in any way announced. Our earlier analysis of the *NA* theme showed that the *NA* fragments are loosely attached to the other parts of the text and exactly the same holds good here. The implications of these observations will be mapped out in the conclusion to this chapter (§ 5.6).

<sup>507</sup> In *OM* 12.2, too, Macrinus praises Severus for his severity: *...incusans quin etiam superiorum temporum disciplinam ac solum Severus prae ceteris laudans*.

<sup>508</sup> E.g. in *OM* 14.1: *...illum occiderunt cum puero filio Diadumeno...*, whereafter the *NA* theme is added.

## 5.5 The NA Theme in the Intermediary Lives II

### 5.5.1 The NA Theme in *Hel.*

After the preface, in which he justifies himself for devoting a book to the worst of emperors, Elagabalus, the author continues with a plain factual account of events (*Hel.* 1.4): *occiso Macrino eiusque filio Diadumeno, **qui pari potestate imperii Antonini etiam nomen acceperat**, in Varium Heliogabalum imperium conlatum est,...* The subclause in bold type contains, apart from its reference to the Antonine name, a repetition of the information given in *OM* 10.4: ... *Diadumenus puer, quem plerique pari fuisse cum patris imperio tradiderunt.*<sup>509</sup>

The next mention of the Antonine name contains two reasons for its adoption by Elagabalus' (*Hel.* 1.5): ...*Antonini sibi nomen adsciverat* (1) *vel in argumentum generis* (2) *vel quod id nomen usque adeo carum esse cognoverat gentibus, ut etiam parricida Bassianus causa nominis amaretur.* The first reason is proof of kinship with the emperor Caracalla (just as Septimius Severus wanted to be part of Marcus' family, *S* 10.6), the second the popularity of the name, now with a new element added: even a fratricide like Caracalla became popular with this name. In fact, the name of Antoninus was popular among the soldiers (*Cc.* 8.10), a message that must have been borrowed from the original source for that part of the text, but the notion that Caracalla owed his popularity to this name is an element that was not introduced until *Dd.* 6.10.<sup>510</sup> In *Cc.* 9.2 Elagabalus' assumption of the name was explained by the assertion that ...*omnium pectora velut Augusti nomen obsederat.* Then, his earlier names Varius and Heliogabalus are discussed and rounded off with (*Hel.* 1.7) *postremo cum accepit imperium, Antoninus appellatus est atque ipse in Romano imperio ultimus Antoninorum fuit.* The quoted elements, which all correspond in content with the preceding NA passages, are detachable from the text without damage to its narrative continuity.

At the end of the second chapter, something special in the development of the NA theme is found: the dedication to the emperor, Constantine in casu, is combined with the NA theme (*Hel.* 2.4): *sed de nomine hactenus, quamvis sanctum illud Antoninorum nomen polluerit, quod tu, Constantine sacratissime, ita veneraris, ut Marcum et Pium inter Constantios Claudiosque, velut maiores tuos, aureos formaveris adoptans virtutes veterum tuis moribus congruentes et tibi amicas caras.* An important theme in the ideological design of the HA is the emperor Constantine's descent from Claudius Gothicus, for reasons that will not be explained here.<sup>511</sup> In the passage quoted, the first bearers of the *nomen Antoninorum*, Marcus and Pius, are on a par with the ancestors of

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<sup>509</sup> Cf. *S* 20.1 *duos Antoninos pari imperio*, on Caracalla and Geta.

<sup>510</sup> In other parts, it is the name itself that is popular, *OM* 3.9, 10.2, 10.3; *Dd.* 1.5, 2.10, 7.2, 9.4. This is in contradiction with a message such as *S* 21.11 *vixit denique in odio populi diu Antoninus, nomenque illud venerabile diu minus amatum est...*

<sup>511</sup> Festy 2005; Bird 1997, 9-17; Syme 1983, 63-79 ('The Ancestry of Constantine'); Dessau 1889, 340-4.

the dedicatee Constantine:<sup>512</sup> gold statues of the two are placed between Constantius, Constantine's father, and Claudius, who was adopted as an ancestor in 310 AD. Two major themes of *HA* are thus united, to the glory of both. Compare the formula *sanctum illud Antoninorum nomen ..., quod tu, ... ita veneraris, ut...* with the wording in *S* 19.3 (*Antoninum tantum coluit, ut Antonini nomen omnibus deinceps quasi Augusti adscribendum putaret*) and *S* 21.11 (*nomenque illud venerabile*). After acclamations, letters, prefaces, programmatic remarks, oracles, *omina*, etc., the *NA* theme is again used in a new literary context: the dedication.

A new combination of motifs appears in *Hel.* 3.1': *excitatisque omnibus ordinibus, omni etiam populo ad nomen Antoninum, quod non solum titulo, ut in Diadumeno fuerat, sed etiam in sanguine redditum videbatur, cum se Antonini Bassiani filium scripsisset, ingens eius desiderium factum est*. According to the author, Macrinus knew that there was a great desire for the Antonine name (*OM* 3.9) because Caracalla as a bearer of the Antonine name was sadly missed (as attested by Aurelius Victor, 22.2). The *ingens desiderium* returns, now with regard to Elagabalus. Not only Caracalla's name, but also a representative of his bloodline returns to the Roman throne, in contrast with Diadumenian's emperorship. This is the first time that the Antonine's bloodline is brought up, which indeed was an important justification of Elagabalus' claim to the throne. This claim is presented in a letter (*Romam nuntios misit, Hel.* 3.1)<sup>513</sup>, as the subordinate clause *cum se Antonini Bassiani filium scripsisset* underlines. The letter was read in the senate (*Hel.* 3.3: *denique ubi in senatu lectae sunt litterae Heliogabali, statim fausta in Antoninum et dira in Macrinum eiusque filium dicta sunt, ...*). Unlike his quotation of Macrinus' letter in *OM* 6, the author does not produce any such evidence here. Its contents are not revealed, apart from the claim of Elagabalus' kinship with Caracalla.

In *Hel.* 8.4, the next mention of Antoninus' name, a confusing account conceals an interesting fact. The passage is quoted here in full, as only an analysis of its textual structure can clarify the logic of the narration<sup>514</sup>: *insecutus est famam Macrini crudeliter, sed multo magis Diadumeni, quod Antoninus dictus est, Pseudoantoninum ut Pseudophilippum eum appellans, simul quod ex luxuriosissimo extitisse vir fortissimus, optimus, gravissimus, severissimus diceretur. coegit denique scriptores nonnullos nefanda, immo potius iniqua de eiusdem victu et luxuria disputare, ut in vita eius dictum*. According to the author, Elagabalus attacked Macrinus, but Diadumenian in particular, because of his Antonine name. The label Pseudantoninus was given to Elagabalus by Cassius Dio, but now applied by Elagabalus himself to Diadumenian. Pseudophilippum is a historical name that refers to the alleged son of king Perseus of Macedon, a usurper called Andriscos in 148 BC.<sup>515</sup> The passage that follows next (*simul quod...*) is suspect, as its contents are not in concordance with the previous biography *Dd*: there is no indication of

<sup>512</sup> Diocletian's reverence for Marcus is attested in *Cod. Iust.* 5.17.5, where he addresses his predecessor with the words *divus Marcus, pater noster, religiosissimus imperator*. This is a topos in the literature of the fourth century: Van Sickle 1932, 52.

<sup>513</sup> The dispatch of the letter is confirmed by Dio 80.1.2, in which fragments are quoted – it appears that Heliogabalus spoke *dira* about his predecessor and his son. The reaction in the senate as attested in *Hel.* 3.3 may have been all about this vicious letter.

<sup>514</sup> I follow the conjecture [*iniqua*] by Zinsli (2007, 127) instead of Hohl's *impia*, based on ms. Σ.

<*Dictum*> at the end of the passage as supplemented in the edition of Chastagnol 1994, 514.

<sup>515</sup> Chastagnol 1994, 514n1.

Diadumenian being a *vir fortissimus, optimus, gravissimus, severissimus* (moreover, this Diadumenian is a *puer*, not a *vir*, see e.g. *Dd.1.1: Antonini Diadumeni pueri...*) nor is his wasteful lifestyle (*de eiusdem victu et luxuria*) described in his biography, as this passage seems to indicate. The chief question, however, is if *eiusdem* refers to Diadumenian.<sup>516</sup> It is more probable that *eius* refers to Macrinus and *eiusdem vita* to *OM*. There are several indications that serve to support this idea: Macrinus is indeed a *vir*, and there is a description of his base lifestyle in *OM* 4, interrupted by the remark (*OM* 4.5): *sed et haec dubia ponuntur, et alia dicuntur ab aliis, quae ipsa quoque non tacebimus*. Could it be that the author refers to the several sources about Macrinus' life (which include a fictitious senator named Aurelius Victor) when he says that Elagabalus forced some authors to write *nefanda, immo potius iniqua* about Macrinus? In that case, *eiusdem* refers to Macrinus, which is the author's normal way of referring to someone mentioned before when taking up the narration about that person again.<sup>517</sup> Moreover, there is indeed a mention of Macrinus's luxurious life in *OM* 8.5: *...ac luxuriae operam daret...*<sup>518</sup> The textual structure indicates that there is a passage added to the primary text: when the passage *sed multo magis ... appellans, simul* is left out, the account makes more sense. The addition about Diadumenian interrupts the narrative flow, and has even left a striking trace in the sentence structure: *simul quod...* indicates a redundant addition to the earlier *quod Antoninus...* in the same passage which the author thought appropriate in order to focus attention on Diadumenian's Antonine name. Thus, there is every reason to assume that *ut in vita eius <dictum>* is about *OM*.

In *Hel.* 9 a story about Marcus Antoninus (viz. Aurelius) is told, who through incantations and magical formulas made the Marcomanni permanent friends of the Romans (*Hel.9.1*). Elagabalus wishes to undo the spell in order to wage war, but the formula was kept secret (*Hel.9.2*). Then, an afterthought about the Antonines is added (*Hel.9.2*): *...et idcirco maxime quod audierat responsum fuisse ab Antonino bellum Marcomannicum finiendum, cum hic Varius et Heliogabalus et ludibrium publicum diceretur, nomen autem Antonini pollueret, in quod invaserat*. The line of thought is difficult to follow: because Elagabalus had heard an oracle that an *Antoninus* should successfully conclude the war against the Marcomanni, he wanted to be both an Antonine and wage war in order to be the presaged victorious Antoninus. The problem, however, was that this was not one of his names, which were Varius and Heliogabalus. Being something of a public laughing stock as well, he has polluted the adopted Antonine name. The addition *idcirco quod...diceretur* is part of the story about the oracle, while *nomen ...in quod invaserat* seems to be typical of the *NA* theme.<sup>519</sup> The motif of the 'pollution' of the name occurred in *Hel.* 2.4: *sed de nomine hactenus, quamvis sanctum illud*

<sup>516</sup> As posed by Birley 1976, 297; 1997, 2693 and n20 (where Bireley suggests 'given the carelessness of the author of the HA' that the reference is to Maximus' *vita Heliogabali*'); Chastagnol 1994, 514n2; Zinsli 2007, 127 *etc.* Syme (1983, 57-8) proposes four options with regard to the author of the biography referred to, which shows the difficulty to press for logic in the phrase.

<sup>517</sup> See for example *G* 2.6: *De hoc eodem...*

<sup>518</sup> The trait of *luxuria* is typical in the description of tyrants. See for a treatment of this theme in the *HA*: Von Haehling 1991, Neri 1999.

<sup>519</sup> Note that *in quod invaserat* is a typical description of tyrants seizing power by force: *S* 19.6: *invadentibus multis rem p.*; *PN* 5.1: *Niger ... cum in imperium invasit, etc.* see Lessing ad *invado*. The same holds good for *adfectato* in *Hel.* 17.4.

*Antoninorum nomen polluerit*, which began with Commodus, witness *OM 7.7* (*Commodus vero etiam polluisse sacrati nominis reverentiam* (sc. *videatur*)).<sup>520</sup>

The next variation on the *NA* theme is in *Hel.17.4*, in a passage that treats the emperor's death, after which his corpse is dragged along and thrown into the Tiber (*Hel.17.1-2*). This is why he was allegedly called Tiberinus later (*Hel.17.5: Appellatus est post mortem Tiberinus et Tractatitius et Inpurus...*). The contemplations about Elagabalus' names inspires the author to add his own thoughts: the narration is interrupted, just before these names are introduced, by a report on Elagabalus' Antonine name (*Hel.17.4: nomen eius, id est Antonini, erasum est senatu iubente emansitque Varii Heliogabali, si quidem illud adfectato retinuerat, cum vult videri filius Antonini*). That the *NA* theme is an addition here, becomes very clear when the parallel message in the *Epitome de Caesaribus* (23.5-7) is compared to the present text, as G. Alföldy (1976, 13-4) pointed out (the parallels are underlined):<sup>521</sup>

*HA Hel. 17.1-5*

*post hoc in eum impetus factus est atque in latrina, ad quam confugerat, occisus. tractus deinde per publicum. addita iniuria cadaveri est, ut id in cloacam milites mitterent. sed cum non cepisset cloaca fortuito, per pontem Aemilium adnexo pondere, ne fluitaret, in Tiberim abiectum est, ne umquam sepeliri posset. tractum est cadaver eius etiam per circi spatia, priusquam in Tiberim praecipitaretur. [nomen eius, id est Antonini, erasum est senatu iubente emansitque Varii Heliogabali, si quidem illud adfectato retinuerat, cum vult videri filius Antonini] Appellatus est post mortem Tiberinus et Tractatitius et Inpurus et multa, si quando ea erant designanda, quae sub eo facta videbantur.*

*Epit. De Caes. 23.5-7*

*Ipse tumultu militari interfectus est. huius corpus per urbis vias more canini cadaveris a militibus tractum est militari cavillo appellantium indomitae rabidaeque libidinis catulam. Novissime cum angustum foramen cloacae corpus minime reciperet, usque ad Tiberim deductum, adiecto pondere, ne umquam emergeret, in fluvium proiectum est.*

*vixit annos sedecim, atque ex re, quae acciderat, Tiberinus Tracticiusque<sup>522</sup> appellatus est.*

The excursus about Elagabalus' names,<sup>523</sup> based on a lost source that may have been Marius Maximus, was evidently thought a proper place to insert some new variations on the *NA* theme.<sup>524</sup> Meanwhile, the interpolation shows that this same Marius Maximus is

<sup>520</sup> And Elagabalus' 'pollution' in *Cc. 9.2, OM 7.6, 7.8, Hel. 2.4, 9.2*

<sup>521</sup> The relation between the two quoted texts was determined by Barnes (1972, 71 and 73), namely that Marius Maximus served as common source; the assumption is followed by Schlumberger (1974, 122-3: 'Nur Marius Maximus kann hier die gemeinsame Quellenbasis gebildet haben'), G. Alföldy (1976, 21) and Festy 1999, 137n11 ('...un récit très proche qui, comme celui de l'E., doit provenir de Marius Maximus').

<sup>522</sup> Note the difference *Tractatitius* (*HA*) – *Tractitius* (*Epit.*), see ed. Festy 1999, 32. Dio (80.21.3) calls Elagabalus Τιβεριός.

<sup>523</sup> Dio 80.1.1 confirms the nickname of Tiberinus after Elagabalus' death.

<sup>524</sup> Just as in *Hel. 9.2*, the additions occur on a place where a discussion about the names of the emperor is already present: the designations of *Varius*, *Heliogabalus* and *ludibrium publicum* in *Hel. 9.2* and *Tiberinus*

not the source of the theme. Some well-known elements of earlier *NA* passages are repeated: that Elagabalus pretended to be the son of Caracalla was mentioned before in some passages with the *NA* theme, namely *Hel.* 1.5, *Hel.* 3.1 and earlier in *OM* 7.7.<sup>525</sup> The senate's ordering the erasure of his name is the author's way to treat Elagabalus' *damnatio memoriae* after his death.<sup>526</sup>

The term *ultimus Antoninorum*, mentioned before in *Hel.* 1.7 (...*ipse in Romano imperio ultimus Antoninorum fuit*), recurs in *Hel.* 18.1, immediately followed by two repeated *NA* motifs: *Hic ultimus Antoninorum fuit (quamvis cognomine postea Gordianos multi Antoninos putent, qui Antonii dicti sunt, non Antonini) vita, moribus, improbitate ita odibilis, ut eius senatus et nomen eraserit. quem nec ego Antoninum vocassem nisi causa cognitionis, quae cogit plerumque dici ea etiam nomina, quae sunt abolita.* The author denies that the Gordiani were called Antoninus, but says that they bore the name Antonius instead. It is interesting to trace the origin of this report. The first time that the Gordiani as Antonini are brought up is in *OM* 3.5: *nec inter Antoninos referendi sunt duo Gordiani, (1) aut quia praenomen tantum Antoninorum habuerunt (2) aut etiam Antonii dicti sunt, non Antonini.* That the Gordiani were no Antonini is supported by two reasonings: they were either called Antoninus by way of *praenomen* or Antonius. In *Dd.* 6.3, the second instance, *praenomen* and *cognomen* are mixed up, and *quidam* is mentioned as a 'source'.<sup>527</sup> This report is clearly meant to shore up the first option in *OM* 3.5. but the passage just cited rather tends to support the other option, as it brings to mind the confusion of *Antoninus* and *Antonius*. Meanwhile, an element from *Dd.* 6.3 has also slipped in, as Antoninus is labelled a *cognomen* here, not a *praenomen*, as in *OM* 3.5 (though the two terms seem to be used as synonyms within the *NA* theme). Also, the alleged source (or sources even, *multi*) is a variation on *quidam* in *Dd.* 6.3. In the author's conception, the entire exposition is necessary because Elagabalus would not have been the *ultimus Antoninorum* if the Gordiani also were Antonini – and so seeks to demonstrate that this was not the case. On the other hand, he rather wished that Elagabalus had been no Antoninus at all, which was actually made to come true (so the author says), when the senate erased his Antonine name from the record, as was also reported in *Hel.* 17.4. But historical scrupulousness (*causa cognitionis*)<sup>528</sup> forces the author to call Elagabalus also by his abolished names (*nomina, quae sunt abolita*). The passage is attached loosely among other passages dealing with entirely different matters, namely the construction of the *opera publica* and the death of his mother Symiamira.

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and *Tractatitius* in *Hel.* 17.4 are supplemented by the *Nomen Antoninorum*. As Hohl 1950 shows, the jokes on names of emperors can be taken from different sources, while Dessau dismissed most of them as the author's fiction (1889, 384-5).

<sup>525</sup> *Hel.* 1.5: ...*Antonini sibi nomen adsciverat vel in argumentum generis...* and 3.1: (...*cum se Antonini Bassiani filium scripsisset*); *OM* 7.7: (*Varius Heliogabalus, qui se Bassiani filium diceret...*).

<sup>526</sup> Kienast 1996, 172; Turcan (1993, 192) confirms on the base of inscriptions that the erasure of the names is historical. See also Lukaszewicz (1992, 44) about papyri proving Antoninus' bad reputation and the erasure of the name of Antoninus. Cf. Commodus' *damnatio memoriae* in *C* 17.6 (*sed nomen eius alienis operibus incisum senatus erasit*) and 20.5 (*nomenque ex omnibus privatis publicisque monumentis eradendum*).

<sup>527</sup> *Dd.* 6.3: *unde etiam quidam et Severum et Pertinacem et Iulianum Antoninorum praenominibus honorandos putant, unde postea duos Gordianos, patrem et filium, Antoninos cognominatos putant.*

<sup>528</sup> See the statement in *OM* 1.2: *sed eius qui vitas aliorum scribere orditur, officium est digna cognitione perscribere.*

There is no clear narrative line here, which must have made it easy to interpolate a new passage in the middle of the work.

Only in the last part of the work does the theme reappear, in *Hel.* 33.8 (*Hic finis Antoninorum nomini in re p. fuit, scientibus cunctis istum Antoninum tam vita falsum fuisse quam nomine*) and 34.6. *Hel.* 33.8 brings up the term *ultimus Antoninorum* again (attested in *Hel.* 1.7 and 18.1), now in the variation of *finis Antoninorum* after it memorised again how the corpse was thrown into the Tiber. The author also plays with the term Pseudantoninus (... *tam vita falsum fuisse quam nomine*). In *Hel.* 34.6: *et quoniam hic ultimus Antoninorum fuit neque postea hoc nomen in re p. loco principum frequentatum est, etiam illud addendum est, ne quis error oriatur, cum duos Gordianos narrare coepero, patrem et filium, qui se de Antoninorum genere dici volebant: non nomen in illis primum fuit sed praenomen; deinde, ut in plerisque libris invenio, Antoni dicti sunt, non Antonini*. Remarkable is the designation of *duos Antoninos* (like in two other *NA* passages: *OM* 3.5 and *Dd.* 6.3), as in other places the author not only shows his awareness (*Max.* 16.7; 20.2-3) that there are three of them (father, his son and his daughter's son) but also treats them in his book *Gd.*<sup>529</sup>

It is interesting to note that the *NA* passages only occur in the first half (*Hel.* 1.4, 1.5, 1.7, 2.4, 3.1, 8.4, 9.2, 17.4, 18.1) and in the last part (*Hel.* 33.8, 34.6) of the biography of *Hel.* There is a clear distinction between chapters 1.1-18.3 on the one hand<sup>530</sup> and 18.4-33.8 on the other, followed by a kind of epilogue in chapters 34-35. The difference, meticulously described by Barnes (1972, 73 and 1978, 56-6),<sup>531</sup> lies in the fact that the first part contains an accurate description of facts with a high amount of historical reliability, whereas the second part consists of the emperor's excessive behaviour, introduced by *De huius vita multa in litteras missa sunt obscaena. quae quia digna memoratu non sunt, ea prodenda censui, quae ad luxuriam pertinebant*, the wording of which is reminiscent of the preface to *OM* (1.1): *ea quidem quae memoratu digna erunt*. The author clearly marks the caesura in the biography, at this moment of changing to another source or, rather, his own mystifications. Barnes (1972, 72) notes the similarities with Suetonius, whose works provide some striking parallels.<sup>532</sup> It may well be that he reveals his source in his introduction *Hel.* 18.4 by mentioning three Suetonian emperors: ... *quorum aliqua privatus, aliqua iam imperator fecisse perhibetur, cum ipse privatus diceret se Apicium, imperatorem vero Neronem, Othonem et Vitellium imitari*, that are partly repeated in *Hel.* 33.1: ... *et omnis apparatus Tiberii et Caligulae et Neronis norat*,

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<sup>529</sup> Chastagnol 1967, 90; 1968, 60. The sources contradict each other on this figure: the abbreviators Aurelius Victor (27.1) and Eutropius (9.2.1-2) only mention two Gordiani, while the third-century sources Herodianus and Dexippus mention the correct number of three, which the author of *HA* follows in his books on the Maximini and Gordiani. Finally, the mistaken number of two Gordiani rests on a fourth-century tradition, attested in Aurelius Victor, Eutropius and the aforementioned *NA* passages (*OM* 3.5, *Dd.* 6.3) in the *HA*.

<sup>530</sup> That the preface in *Hel.* 1.1-3 does not belong to this first part, will be made clear below, at the end of the paragraph.

<sup>531</sup> Chastagnol 1994, LVI-VII. This last conclusion, Marius Maximus being the main source of the primary lives from *H-Cc.*, is not in Barnes, as he follows Syme in assuming an unknown biographical source styled *Ignotus* (Syme 1971, 30-53, earlier postulated by Lécivain 1904, 191-2); Müller 1870, 11 *sqq.* indicates Marius Maximus as the source of *Hel.*, but also of *AS* (1904, 208-11; 235-5), while Lécivain supposes that Marius Maximus was the principal source for the first part of *Hel.*, up to 18.3 (1904, 210).

<sup>532</sup> Some examples proffered by Barnes (1972, 72): *Hel.* 24.4 ~ *Vit.* 1.3 *sqq.*; 31.5 ~ *Nero* 30.3; 32.9 ~ *Cal.* 11, *Nero* 26.1 *sq.*; 33.1 ~ *Tib.* 43.1, *Cal.* 16.1.

and though in a changed context, in *Hel.* 34.1: ...*cum Neroni, Vitellio, Caligulae ceterisque huius modi numquam tyrannicida defuerit.* All the parallels with the biographies of Tiberius, Caligula, Nero and Vitellius that are mentioned by Barnes (1972, 72) are implicitly present in the three imperial trios of emperors described by Suetonius (Nero, Otho, Vitellius / Tiberius, Caligula, Nero / Nero, Vitellius, Caligula). Meanwhile, the preface anticipates the theme (*Hel.* 1.1): *Vitam Heliogabali Antonini (...) numquam in litteras misissem, ne quis fuisse Romanorum principem sciret, nisi ante Caligulas et Nerones et Vitellios hoc idem habuisset imperium.* Apart from the factual content it is clear that the author wished to leave his own imprint on the biography. His signature is recognizable in the preface and the second and third parts as discerned by Barnes, as well as in the *NA* passages in the first part.

This brings us to the third and last part, *Hel.* 34 and 35, which consists of an epilogue, in which the biography is dedicated to Constantine (*Hel.* 34.1-5, 35.1-7), the *NA* theme is brought up again (*Hel.* 34.6), and programmatic remarks are made about the range of the whole series of *HA* (*Hel.* 35.2-7). Another pertinent remark may be made about the use of the *NA* theme in the biography of *Hel.*: it is linked directly to the dedication to Constantine in *Hel.* 2.4, resulting in a combination of two items (*NA* theme and dedications) that had not occurred before.<sup>533</sup> The biography of *Hel.* gives us a clear picture how the author proceeds: using a biographical source in *Hel.* 1.4-18.3, he expands this with a preface (*Hel.* 1.1-3), the Suetonius-inspired sentence (*Hel.* 18.4), the gossip part as far as *Hel.* 33.7 and the epilogue with its dedications to Constantine as well as programmatic remarks about the scope of the *HA*. On top of it all, the *NA* theme is added (*Hel.* 1.4, 1.5, 1.7, 2.4, 3.1, 8.4, 9.2, 17.4, 18.1, 33.8, 34.6) totalling 287 words, which is 5 per cent of the entire biography. In the biography of the emperor who was one of the chief reasons why the theme of the name of Antoninus was added (see conclusion, § 5.6), considerably less attention is paid to the Antonine name than in *G*, *OM* or *Dd.*, the former two subjects of which were not even called Antoninus historically. It is striking that the biography of *C* lacks the theme entirely, with the result that the two bad Antonini, Commodus and Elagabalus, only receive poor treatment with regard to the *nomen Antoninorum*. The author likes to turn things upside down, and surprises by adding the theme where it is least expected.

### 5.5.2 The *NA* Theme in *AS*

Alexander's biography opens, like the beginning of the factual part of other biographies,<sup>534</sup> with an ablativus absolutus that links the biography to the previous life (*AS* 1.1-2): *Interfecto Vario Heliogabalo (sic enim malum dicere quam Antoninus, quia et nihil Antoninorum pestis illa ostendit et hoc nomen ex annalibus senatus auctoritate erasum est) ad remedium generis humani Aurelius Alexander (...) accepit imperium,....* The parenthesis (indicated with brackets by Hohl) dealing with the Antonine name is attached to the name of Varius Heliogabalus. The clause *ad remedium generis humani...*

<sup>533</sup> The *NA* theme appears in *S* 20.1-3, after which a dedication to Diocleation follows (*S* 20.4), just before the theme of the *fili imperatoris*. There, however, they are not combined in a single passage, and the dedication follows on the *NA* theme.

<sup>534</sup> Cf. *S* 1.1: *Interfecto Didio Iuliano Severus Africa oriundus imperium optinuit; OM* 2.1: *Occiso ergo Antonino Bassiano Opilius Macrinus ... imperium arripuit,...* see § 4.2.1-2.

echoes the preface to *Hel.* 1.2, in which the good and bad emperors are compared with *venena* and *frumentum* and *alia salutaria*: after the bad Elagabalus, the new emperor Alexander will bring health to humanity.<sup>535</sup> The plain narrative style of the abbreviator is recognizable in *Interfecto Vario Heliogabalo (...) Aurelius Alexander accepit imperium*. The text between brackets returns the erasure of a name as a motif which was earlier brought up in *Hel.* 17.4 (*Nomen eius, id est Antonini, erasum est senatu iubente...*) and 18.1 (*...ita odibilis, ut eius senatus et nomen eraserit*).<sup>536</sup> *Pestis illa* is a designation used before in *Hel.* 10.1 (*sed milites pestem illam imperatoris velari nomine pati nequierunt...*).

In *AS* 2.2, the name of Antonine in relation with Elagabalus turns up again, in a passage treating Alexander's appointment as Augustus: *huc accessit nimia et senatus et populi inclinatio post illam cladem, quae non solum Antoninorum nomen decoloravit, sed etiam Romanum dehonestavit imperium*. The words *Antoninorum nomen decoloravit* are a variation on the pollution motif, which first occurred in *Hel.* 2.4 and 9.2 and began with Commodus in *OM* 7.7.<sup>537</sup> That people preferred Alexander was stated before in *Hel.* 10.1: *in Alexandrum omnes inclinantes, qui iam Caesar erat a senatu eo tempore...*. The main point in the passage *AS* 2.1-4 is the discussion about imperial names and offices to be granted to the new emperor (as just discussed above in *AS* 1.3),<sup>538</sup> in which Elagabalus' Antonine name is a detachable interpolation. This theme will occupy a considerable part of Alexander's biography.

The defamation of the Antonine name by Elagabalus is replaced by a contrasting idea in Alexander's biography: the new emperor, who is credited with such virtues as *innocentia, prudentia, castitas* and *verecundia* (*AS* 10.6), should purify the name (*AS* 7.2). Despite the senate's wish that he accept the name Antoninus, Alexander refuses it because he thinks himself unworthy (*AS* 8.4-5).<sup>539</sup> Moreover, the name was used by the basest of rulers, Elagabalus (*AS* 9.4). The author discusses the *nomen Antoninorum*

<sup>535</sup> As Pliny puts it in *Pan.* 5.9: *Habet has vices conditio mortalium, ut adversa ex secundis, ex adversis secunda nascantur. Occultat utrorumque semina deus, et plerumque bonorum malorumque causae sub diversa specie latent*. Earth containing the seeds of good as well as evil, is a common idea, attested in Seneca *NQ* 6.28.1: *Multa autem terras habere mortifera vel ex hoc intellege, quod tot venena nascuntur non manu sparsa, sed sponte, solo scilicet habente ut boni ita mali semina*.

<sup>536</sup> Note the repetition and the variation on the earlier passage (*senatus auctoritate erasum est* from *erasum est senatu iubente* in *Hel.* 17.4).

<sup>537</sup> Hönn (1911, 165) acknowledges the similarities. *Hel.* 2.4: *...quamvis sanctum illud Antoninorum nomen polluerit...* and 9.2: *...nomen autem Antonini pollueret, in quod invaserat; OM* 7.7: *Commodus vero etiam polluisse sacrati nominis reverentiam* (sc. videatur).

<sup>538</sup> Hönn (1911, 108) points at the similarities of the appointment procedure in the senate of *AS* 1.2-3 (*...et ius proconsulare et tribuniciam potestatem et ius quintae relationis deferente senatu uno die adsumeret*) and *OM* 7.4 (*denique statim Macrino et proconsulare imperium et potestatem tribuniciam detulerunt*), in which passages the offices of the new emperors are described (cf. also *Pr.* 12.8 for these and other corresponding elements).

<sup>539</sup> The refusal of the names Antoninus and Magnus are the author's variation on the traditional *recusatio imperii*, which is traditional when an emperor accesses the throne. Huttner (2004, 151-2) finds it remarkable that the biography of Alexander Severus in the *HA* lacks this theme, and the author even seems to excuse himself for this behaviour of the good prince: *exponam causas, quibus id et senatus coactus est facere et ille perpeti. Non enim aut gravitati senatus congruebat omnia simul deferre aut bono principi raptum ire tot simul dignitates* (*AS* 1.4-5). Cf. Pliny *Pan.* 5.5, in which the *recusatio* is presented as a sign of good government: *recusabas enim imperare, recusabas; quod bene erat imperaturi*; and in *HA: Tac.* 7.7: *sed inde deductus huic senatus consulto interfuit, quasi vere privatus et qui vere recusaret imperium*. Béranger (1953, 139-40) gives a list of instances in which power is refused, see also *MA* 9.1 (below).

together with the name of Magnus, derived from Alexander's Macedonian namesake, which name Alexander refuses as well (AS 11.2-4). These themes are treated in an extensive description of the senate's acclamations and the emperor's answers to it in chapters 6-12, allegedly taken from the *gesta senatus* from March 6, 222 AD (see ch.6). The passages serve to give the NA theme a new impulse, both to contrast the good ruler Alexander to the bad emperor Elagabalus, and to round off the NA theme properly (apart from the Antonine coda in *Gd.*). Meanwhile, the *nomen Antoninorum* is related to Alexander Magnus, whom many *imperatores* from Pompeius Magnus on admired and imitated, most prominently of all Augustus and Trajan. Precisely these two emperors left their traces in the biography of Alexander Severus,<sup>540</sup> which is even more reminiscent of Alexander the Great because of his name. This last theme is the point of departure in AS 5.

The association of Alexander Severus with Alexander Magnus in AS 5 is presented by way of an anecdote about the former Alexander's birth, as an *omen*. The author tells the fictitious story that Alexander Severus was born on the same day that Alexander the Great of Macedon died (AS 5.1-2). The story is interrupted by a phrase about the *nomen Antoninorum*, after which a consideration of its association with Alexander Magnus follows. This passage, too, ends on a remark about an imperial name, this time the *nomen Magni*. The two sentences concluding the first and second part of the story are much alike:

AS 5.3  
*delatum* sibi Antonini nomen a senatu  
*recusavit.*

AS 5.5  
*recusavit et Magni nomen, quod ei quasi*  
*Alexandro est oblatum senatus iudicio.*

It is clear that in the biography of Alexander, the title of *Magnus* is connected to the Antonine name. When we consider the place where the two phrases occur, it is striking that the clause in AS 5.3 is an unexpected temporal prolepsis, inconsistent with the course of the narration. When the passage is left out, the *si quidem...* phrase must be linked to *<cum> hic magis adfinitate Caracalli iungeretur quam ille subditivus...* So the original reasoning must have been that Alexander Severus is born in a temple dedicated to Alexander Magnus, on the day the latter died, which is why he received his name, and also why he is closer connected to Caracalla, who considered himself as the reincarnation of Alexander Magnus.<sup>541</sup> This is all true, the author reasons, if Marius Maximus is right in

<sup>540</sup> Bertrand-Dagenbach 1990, 107-113. *Imitatio Alexandri* is an important phenomenon among Roman generals and a frequently studied object, see for examples (Pompeius, Caesar, Augustus, Germanicus, Traianus, Caracalla and Julianus), sources and bibliography: Den Hengst 1999, 3-24.

<sup>541</sup> Cf. *Hel.* 17.9 *porticus (...) quae postea ab hoc subditivo Antonino extructae sunt...* - the designation *subditivus* for Heliogabalus must be based on the source used for the first part of *Hel.* The passage is reminiscent of the story told in *S* 3.9: *cum amissa uxore aliam vellet (sc. Septimius Severus) ducere, genituras sponsarum requirebat, ipse quoque matheseos peritissimus, et cum audisset esse in Syria quandam, quae id geniturae haberet, ut regi iungeretur, eandem uxorem petit, Iuliam scilicet, et accepit interventu amicorum. ex qua statim pater factus est.* Given the fact that in the clause *<cum> hic magis adfinitate Caracalli iungeretur quam ille subditivus...* two words from the biographical source are used (*subditivus, iungeretur*) are used, and that Hohl had to add *<cum>* to link the two sentences, only the words *delatum...recusavit* consitute the NA theme here. When we leave them out, it would make sense to replace *<cum>* by *<ut>*: '...so that he was more connected to Caracalla than that supposititious (*i.e. Elagabalus*).'

saying that Septimius Severus married a woman who was destined to be the wife of an emperor. The *nomen Alexandri* triggered the addition of the *N* passage, by which the author prepares the reader for the long disquisitions on the Antonine name in ch. 6-12. At the end of the passage, the author continues his considerations on the *nomen Antoninorum* in AS 5.5 with the *Magni nomen*. The passage on the *nomen Alexandri* (5.1-2 / 5.3'-4) and that on the *nomina Antonini* and *Magni* (5.3 and 5.5 respectively) have to be interpreted separately in order to reconstruct the original lines of thought.<sup>542</sup>

The two remarks which the author adds here are an introductory phase to prepare the reader for the elaborate documents in the next paragraphs, which are introduced in AS 6.1. Here, the two themes - the names of Antoninus and Magnus - are combined: *Interest relegere*<sup>543</sup> *orationem qua nomen Antonini et Magni delatum sibi a senatu recusavit*. This is immediately followed by a remark about *divisio* AS 6.2): *quam priusquam praebeam, proferam etiam adclamationes senatus, quibus id decretum est*, postponing the promised document to a later moment in the text. This resembles the procedure in *Dd.* 7.1, where verses about the *nomen Antoninorum* are quoted (*Dd.* 7.1: *...quam epistolam priusquam intexam, libet versus inserere in Commodum dictos,...*) before the promised letter makes its appearance. In AS 7.1, however, it is the other way round: before the Antoninus/Magnus passage is presented, fragments from the *acta urbis* are quoted, which contain acclamations of the new Augustus (AS 7.2-5).<sup>544</sup>

The new acclamations in AS 7.1 follow the bestowal of the name of Augustus (AS 6.2-6). For the sake of analysis this passage has been arranged in seven sections:<sup>545</sup>

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<sup>542</sup> Chastagnol (1994, 569n5) tries to explain the illogical passage about the relation of Alexander and Elagabalus to Caracalla, who are both related to their predecessor in the same degree of kinship. Bertrand-Dagenbach (1991, 88-9) rightly states that it is not the genealogical *adfinitas* that is paramount (as Magie 1924, 187n5 and Chastagnol 1994, 569n5 suppose), but the link with Alexander the Great. There is a sort of competition, brought about by the claim of the two sisters Soaemias and Mammaea that Caracalla was the father of their sons, between the two cousins about the legacy of Caracalla's Antonine name. The fact that Alexander's name is identical with his Macedonian predecessor and that the Antonines are associated with Alexander Magnus (by reincarnation, as Caracalla wanted to have it) make the claim of Alexander Severus' *adfinitas* with both Caracalla and Alexander more legitimate, hence: *...hic magis adfinitate Caracalli iungeretur quam ille subditivus* ('although this man was closer connected with Caracalla than that usurper of the name'). Bertrand Dagenbach's interpretation is confirmed, I think, in the quote in AS 11.3 *facilius fuit, ... ut Antoninorum nomen acciperem, aliquid enim vel adfinitati deferrem vel consortioni nominis imperialis*, in which *vel* introduces the interpretation: *consortio nominis imperialis*.

<sup>543</sup> *Interest + inf.* is a typical formula for the author to introduce a document, cf. *interest scire* in AC 12.1, Cc. 10.1, OM 6.1; Max.25.1; *interest ... cognoscere* in Cl.4.1; *interest ... nosse* in Aur. 11.1. Also *interest + ut + conj.* (*interest ut senatus consultum litteris propagentur*) in Gd.11.1. Note that the instances only occur in the secondary life AC, the historically less reliable part of Cc. (capita 7-11: Barnes 1978, 48) and in intermediary and later lives.

<sup>544</sup> The only instance in which the author pretends to derive his 'documents' from the *acta urbis*; in C 15.4 the *acta* are mentioned but not cited. In AS 56 the *acta senatus* are thought to have been the source (Peter 1892, 222). It should be questioned if he discerned between the *acta publica* and the *acta senatus* (probably not, in view of the use of *acta urbis* in AS 6.2 and the *acta senatus* in 56.2) which in the first century AD and in the works of Suetonius and Tacitus were clearly distinguished, see below.

<sup>545</sup> We have the extraordinary opportunity to compare these acclamations with those in the *Gesta senatus* AD 438, as addressed to Theodosius and Valentinianus and preserved in the *Codex Theodosianus* (ed. Mommsen, Zürich 1971 (1904)). In the following notes, the *Gesta senatus romani de Theodosiano publicando* AD 438 (pp. 1-4) is material for comparison. An important article dealing with imperial acclamations in late antiquity is Roueché (1984, 181-99), in which acclamations of a certain Albinus in Aphrodisias are analysed on the basis of epigraphic evidence. Baldwin (1981, 138-49) inventarises the

*Et cum egisset gratias Alexander, adclamatum est: (1) 'Antonine Alexander, di te servent. Antonine Aureli, di te servent. Antonine Pie, di te servent. (2) Antonini nomen suscipias rogamus. praesta bonis imperatoribus, ut Antoninus dicaris. (3) nomen Antoninorum tu purifica. quod ille infamavit, tu purifica. redde in integrum nomen Antoninorum. (4) sanguis Antoninorum se cognoscat. iniuriam Marci tu vindica. iniuriam Veri tu vindica. iniuriam Bassiani tu vindica. peior Commodus solus Heliogabalus, nec imperator nec Antoninus nec civis nec senator nec nobilis nec Romanus. (5) in te salus, in te vita. ut vivere delectet, Antoninorum Alexandro vitam. ut vivere delectet, et Antoninus vocetur. (6) Antoninorum templa Antoninus dedicet. Parthos et Persas Antoninus vincat. sacrum nomen sacratus accipiat. sacrum nomen castus accipiat. (7) Antonini nomen di cognoscant, Antoninorum honorem di conservent. in te omnia, per te omnia. Antonine, haveas.'*

The acclamations contain several well-known motifs from the *NA* theme, after (1) the address in the form of a tricolon in which the emperor is hailed by three different names: Alexander, Aurelius and Pius. The first two are his *praenomen* and *nomen gentile*, the third does not belong to his official titles; only in *AS* 4.5 is the name hinted at: *...ab aliis pius appellabatur, ab omnibus certe sanctus et utilis rei publicae*.<sup>546</sup> The repeated wish that the gods see to the emperor's prosperity is traditional<sup>547</sup>, as witness the previous acclamations in *AS* 6.3 or *Dd*.1.6 (*Macrine imperator, di te servent. Antonine Diadumene, di te servent*).<sup>548</sup> Then, (2) the senate asks to accept the name of Antoninus and be worthy of it.<sup>549</sup> (3) That name has been polluted by Elagabalus (*infamavit*), to whom *ille* refers. The opposite of *polluere* is *purificare* or *in integrum reddere*, words normally used in connection with *sacra*.<sup>550</sup> (4) The *sanguis* motif first occurred in *Hel*. 3.1 (*sed etiam in sanguine redditum videbatur, sc. nomen*). The injustice towards Marcus, Verus, and Caracalla must be undone, the degeneration of the Antonine line began with Commodus and ended with Elagabalus. The first Antoninus Pius and two other bearers of the name (in the author's conception), Geta and Diadumenian, are not mentioned.<sup>551</sup> (5) Alexander is placed in the dynastic line of the Antonini; two anaphorae (*in te, ...in te; ut vivere delectet...*, *ut vivere delectet...*)<sup>552</sup> underline the claim. (6) The new emperor should

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acclamations in *HA*; Lorient (1981, 225-35) studies the imperial acclamations of Alexander Severus and Gordianus III in inscriptions.

<sup>546</sup> Kienast 1996, 177; however, the inscriptions cited in Lorient (1981, 225) do mention the adjective *pius* among the common designations in inscriptions.

<sup>547</sup> Pliny the Younger elaborates on this habit in his *Panegyricus* 1.1, a laudatory speech which took place in the senate in praise of Trajan in 101 AD: *Bene ac sapienter, Patres Conscripti, maiores instituerunt, ut rerum agendarum, ita dicendi initium a precationibus capere*.

<sup>548</sup> Cf. *AP* 3.1: *nam cum tribunal ascendisset, inter alias adclamationes dictum est 'Auguste, dii te servent'*.

<sup>549</sup> Cf. Diadumenus, who says in his *contio* to the soldiers (*Dd*.2.3): *ego autem elaborabo, ne desim nomini Antoninorum*, and the corresponding words of the soldiers (*Dd*.1.8): *puer Antoninus dignus imperio*.

<sup>550</sup> *ThLL* ad *polluo* (10.1, 2566.43 sqq., *dedecore, ignominia, infamia*) gives the example of *Hel*. 2.4; 9.2. With *nomen* as object: *Gel. NA* 9.2.10.

<sup>551</sup> Diadumenus mentions three of his predecessors in *Dd*.2.3: *scio enim me Pii, me Marci, me Veri suscepisse nomen, quibus satis facere perdifficile est*.

<sup>552</sup> The wish of (a long) life is traditional and also uttered in the acclamations of Diadumenus and his father: *Dd*. 1.6-7: *Antoninum diu vivum omnes rogamus. Iuppiter optime maxime, Macrino et Antonino vitam*. The

consecrate the temples of his ancestors, the Antonini.<sup>553</sup> The conquest of the Parthian and Persian empire, which is a very glorious deed looked forward to ever since Trajan first undertook his campaigns in the East, is earnestly desired.<sup>554</sup> Alexander should receive the holy (*sacrum*) Antonine name *sacrat* and *castus*,<sup>555</sup> like a priest who handles sacred objects, in order to purify the name again. (7) The gods know the name and see to the preservation of the Antonines' honour.<sup>556</sup> Formulas containing the word *omnia* are traditional in acclamations, cf. *Dd.1.8: Antoninum habemus, omnia habemus*.<sup>557</sup> The concluding greeting *haveas*, reserved for generals, also occurs in *Cl.18.2*, in an acclamation: *Claudi, dux fortissime, haveas!*<sup>558</sup>

The emperor's answer in *AS 8.1 (et post acclamationes Aurelius Alexander Caesar Augustus: ...)* does not include a reaction to the offer of the Antonine name. The name *Aurelius Alexander Caesar Augustus* is repeated from *AS 6.3*, which suggests that the intermediate acclamations regarding the *nomen Antoninorum* are interpolations added to the basic text. The first words are *Gratias vobis, p.c., ...*, while in *AS 7.1* it was already stated *et cum egisset gratias Alexander* – thus suggesting that the word of thanks fits in better after the first acclamations in *AS 6.3-5*. The answer concerns Alexander's names (Caesar, Augustus) and *honores (pontificatus maximus, tribunicia potestas, proconsulare imperium)*, which again are a reaction to the penultimate acclamations and narration (*AS*

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text corresponds with early fifth-century practice under Theodosius, see *CTh 2* line 45: *ut vivere delectet Augustos nostros semper*, which is repeated 22 times.

<sup>553</sup> Bertrand-Dagenbach (1991, 97: '...étonnante acclamation qui ne trouve pas son équivalent dans les *gesta senatus*') sees in this item a reaction to Elagabalus' religious policy of replacing the cult of the deified emperors by his own god.

<sup>554</sup> The mention of victories in the acclamations is traditional, cf. *Dd. 1.6: tu scis, Iuppiter, Macrinus vinci non potest. tu scis, Iuppiter, Antoninus vinci non potest*. The term *invictus* is traditional in acclamations, and also occurs in epigraphic sources with regard to Alexander Severus, e.g. an inscription from Noricum: *Imp(erator) Caes(ar) Mar(cus) Aurel(ius) Severus Alexander pius felix invictus Aug(ustus)...*, see Loriot 1981, 225-6. The victory titles *Parthicus Maximus* and *Persicus Maximus*, assigned to Alexander in the acclamation of the senate in *AS 56.9* are not historical (Kienast 1996, 178).

<sup>555</sup> *Sacrat*: late antique (Souther); *castus*, connected to priests. Cf. *Hel.2.4: Sanctum illud Antoninorum nomen*. Addressing an emperor as *sacrat* / *sacratissimus* equates the veneration of the emperor to the worship of the gods (Seager 1983, 130). See also Gaius *Inst. 1.53: ex constitutione sacratissimi imperatoris Antonini*, from which appears that the designation was also applied to Antonius Pius. The combination *castus – sanctus*, as here *sacrat* and *castus*, also appears in Plinius' *Paneg. 1.3*, as well as the equation to gods: *Quod enim praestabilius est aut pulchrius munus deorum, quam castus et sanctus et diis simillimus princeps?* In *Hel. 2.4* Constantine is addressed as *sacratissime*, which was customary for the panegyrici in his and Diocletian's times, and honours *sanctum illud Antoninorum nomen*. This combination of *sanctum nomen* and *sacrat* *imperator* recurs here. *Sanctus* and *sacrat* are characteristics frequently attributed to Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius (*AP 4.3; 13.3; MA 1.1; 15.3; 19.6; 19.10; 19.12*). *Sacratissime* *imperator* or *sacratissime princeps* were normal addresses to the emperors at the beginning of panegyric speeches from Diocletian's times onwards (Lassandro 2000, 12).

<sup>556</sup> Cf. *Dd. 1.8: Antoninum nobis di dederunt*. Divine protection is also attested in the *gesta senatus*, ed. Mommsen 1971, 2 line 41: *deus vos nobis dedit, deus vos nobis servet*.

<sup>557</sup> See my note *ad loc.* about the religious devotion that this term implies.

<sup>558</sup> Cf. *AP 3.3 ('ave pro consule' and 'have imperator')* and *AS 17.4 ('have, Alexander')*. *ThLL ad have* (2, 1301, 14-21) gives these examples, and *AS 7.6; Cl. 13.2; A 4.7; Q 13.2*. Cf. *Paneg. 11.29 (ave, consul amplissime)* and Suet. *Cl. 21 (have, imperator)*. For *aveas* in acclamations e.g. *Cod. Th. (o.c.) p.3 line 13: fauste, aveas*.

6.2: ...rogatusque esset Aurelius Alexander Caesar Augustus, ut consideret, ac primo recusasset, quod sciret de honoribus suis agendum,...).<sup>559</sup>

Then, the acclamations are about the *nomen Antoninorum* again (AS 8.2-5).<sup>560</sup>

(1) *et cum diceret, adclamatum: 'haec suscepisti, Antonini nomen suscipe. mereatur senatus, Antonini mereantur. Antonine Auguste, di te servent, di te Antoninum conservent. monetae nomen Antonini reddatur. templa Antoninorum Antoninus consecret.'*

(2) *Aurelius Alexander Augustus: 'ne, quaeso, p. c., ne me ad hanc certaminis necessitatem vocetis, ut ego cogar tanto nomini satis facere, cum etiam hoc ipsum nomen, licet peregrinum, tamen gravare videatur. haec enim nomina insignia onerosa sunt. quis enim Ciceronem dicat mutum? quis indoctum Varronem? quis impium Metellum? et, ut hoc di avertant, quis non aequantem nomina ferat<sup>561</sup>, degenerantem<sup>562</sup> in clarissima specie dignitatum?'*

(1) *Haec* refers to the names and offices accepted by the emperor in AS 8.1, among which are *Caesar* and *Augustus* (historically false, as we have seen, since the *dies Caesaris* had already taken place in June 221 AD). The senate asks Alexander to accept the *nomen Antonini* also, as this is pleasing to the senate as well as his Antonine predecessors (cf. AS 7.2 *praesta bonis imperatoribus, ut Antoninus dicaris*), rhetorically arranged in a chiasmic construction (*mereatur senatus, Antonini mereantur*). The acclamations with use of *variatio* (*servent – conservent*): *Antonine Auguste, di te servent, di te Antoninum conservent* are variations on AS 7.1. The acclamations about coins with the Antonine name ('let the name of Antonine be struck on the coins again') ignore the fact that Elagabalus had coins struck with this name on the obverse side<sup>563</sup>, while it is also a fact that Diadumenian had coins struck with the Antonine name<sup>564</sup> - either of which may have been the author's source of inspiration. The acclamation *templa Antoninorum Antoninus consecret* is a repetition of AS 7.6.

(2) The emperor asks the senate not to involve him in a match about names, which refers to his struggle to comply with the *nomen Antoninorum* (cf. *Dd.2.3: nomen, quibus satis facere perdifficile est*). His own name of Alexander (*licet peregrinum* 'be it from abroad') is already difficult to bear, as famous names are *onerosa* ('burdensome'). Then, a remarkable reasoning follows<sup>565</sup>: *quis enim Ciceronem dicat mutum? quis indoctum Varronem? quis impium Metellum?* Three famous men of the republican period are staged here. The adjectives attached to them do not correspond with their reputation, as

<sup>559</sup> See AS 2.1, 2.3-4 for a description of the same (*nominum genera et potestate*) – another passage that is interrupted by the *NA* theme in AS 2.1.

<sup>560</sup> Or, as Bertrand-Dagenbach (1990, 99) puts it: 'une nouvelle série d'acclamations interrompt les remerciements d'Alexandre'.

<sup>561</sup> I favour Soverini's reading *aequantem* (as a synonym of *satis facientem*) where Hohl conjectured *aequiperantem* (the mss. read *equitatem* in  $\Sigma$  or *equi antem* in P).

<sup>562</sup> Again Soverini's reading: *degenerantem* (as paralleled in *OM 7.7 degenerasse*) for the manuscript reading *digerentem* ( $\Sigma$  and P).

<sup>563</sup> Bertrand-Dagenbach 1990, 99n136.

<sup>564</sup> *Dd.2.6: ...statim apud Antiochiam moneta Antonini Diadumeni nomine percussa est*. Turcan (1993, 144-5, with numerous references to literature) deems it impossible that this happened in Antioch immediately after the appointment, though later there were such coins.

<sup>565</sup> Peter 1892, 222 'retorisch ausgeschmückt', 'nicht überall ganz logisch'.

Cicero is all but silent; nobody calls Varro unlearned or Metellus a religious slacker. Alexander's ostensible reasoning in refusing the Antonine name must be that for such an humble man as he pretends to consider himself, the Antonine name is just as unsuited as the adjectives used here to characterise these three Romans. The *clarissima species dignitatum* refers to the titles and names just conferred upon the emperor, as reported in AS 8.1, whose implicit expectations he will hopefully fulfill.

The senate's answer is reported only indirectly (*item adclamata, quae supra*, the last word probably referring to AS 8.2-3). Then, the emperor's speech follows (AS 9.1-7), introduced by *item imperator dixit*:

(1) *'Antoninorum nomen vel iam numen potius quantum fuerit, meminit vestra clementia: si pietatem, quid Pio sanctius? si doctrinam, quid Marco prudentius? si innocentiam, quid Vero simplicius? si fortitudinem, quid Bassiano fortius? nam Commodi meminisse nolo, si quidem hoc ipso deterior fuit, quod cum illis moribus Antonini nomen obtinuit. Diadumenus autem nec tempus habuit nec aetatem et arte patris hoc nomen incurrit.'* *item adclamatum ut supra.*

(2) *item imperator dixit: 'nuper certe, p. c., meministis, cum ille omnium non solum bipedum sed etiam quadrupedum spurcissimus Antonini nomen praeferret et in turpitudine atque luxurie Nerones, Vitellios, Commodos vinceret, qui gemitus omnium fuerit, cum per populi et honestorum coronas una vox esset hunc inepte Antoninum dici, per hanc pestem tantum violari nomen.'*

(3) *et cum diceret, adclamatum est: 'di mala prohibeant. haec te imperante non timemus. de his te duce securi sumus. vicisti vitia, vicisti crimina, vicisti dedecora. Antonini nomen ornabis. tibi certe sumimus, bene praesumimus. nos te et a pueritia probavimus et nunc probamus.'*

(4) *item imp(erator): 'neque ego, p. c., idcirco timeo istud venerabile omnibus nomen accipere, quod verear, ne in haec vitia delabatur vita, aut nos nominis pudeat, sed primum displicet alienae familiae nomen adsumere, deinde quod gravari me credo.'*

(1) The word play *nomen-numen* corresponds with the divine dimension of the *nomen Antoninorum*, earlier brought up in *Dd. 7.2. (Antoniniani nominis [...], quo clarius illis temporibus non fuerat vel deorum)*. The association of *nomen* with *numen* stands in a long tradition which is already attested in Accius' works (*Trag. 646*): *nomen et numen Iovis*, from which appears that a divine force (*numen*) may be connected with a name (*nomen*).<sup>566</sup> The divinity of the Antonines is also linked to the *templa Antoninorum*

<sup>566</sup> Prior to Accius, the notion of *nomen* is associated with *omen*, as attested in Plautus *Pers. 625: nomen atque omen* (Pötscher 1978, 371: 'Das *nomen* gilt dem Antiken nicht als ein *flatus vocis*, sondern als Inbegriff des Wesens'). The first attestation of the association of *nomen* with *numen* is in the quoted clause from Accius, about which Pötscher (1978, 369) remarks: 'Auch die Wortstellung in den beiden Accius-Fragmenten könnte eher auf eine Steigerung von *nomen* zu *numen*, also vom Götternamen zur göttlichen Wirkung, die in ihm mitbeschlossen ist, deuten und in zwei Aspekten die ganze Wirklichkeit des Gottes zum Ausdruck bringen'. Two later parallels are Varro *Ling.Lat.7.85: multis nomen vestrum numenque ciendo* and 646 R (Nonius) 173.27: *alia hic sanctitudo est, aliud nomen et numen Iovis* (see Pötscher 1978, 357-8 for an analysis of the notion *numen* and *numen Augusti* in Roman religion). Wagenvoort (1947, 78-83) treats the development of the notion *numen* from Accius onwards. Whereas in first instance a *numen* is an abstract divine force, it is a name that can give the *numen* the identity of a god, p.78: 'The name gradually became a proper name and the *numen* a god, for it is the name that makes a *numen* a god, or

mentioned twice in the earlier acclamations (AS 7.5 and 8.3). The emperor addresses the senators with *vestra clementia*, as Macrinus did in OM 7.2. This title is also apt for addressing an emperor, as witness the address of Diocletian in Ael.2.2.<sup>567</sup> Five ‘good’ Antonines and their virtues are summed up as examples of the potency of the name: Antoninus Pius (*pietas, sanctitas*), Marcus Aurelius (*doctrina, prudentia*), Verus (*innocentia, simplicitas*) and Caracalla (*fortitudo*).<sup>568</sup> Commodus, who was not included in the ranks of the Antonines until Dd. 7.3, represents the opposite – Alexander would have been ashamed to name him. The duration of Diadumenian’s reign and his age did not enable him to show his qualities, but the name was only given to him *arte patris*, not on his own account. The total of seven Antonini (after the enumerations in OM 3.4; 7.7-8; Dd. 6.5-8; AS 7.3-4) prepare the ground for Alexander’s answer in AS 9.4, in which the *ultimus Antoninorum* is treated.

The emperor continues the enumeration of Antonines in his reply to the senators with a severe attack on his predecessor, who figures among such ‘bad emperors’ as Nero, Vitellius and Commodus. Triplets of bad emperors are frequent in the HA. The nearest example is in the preface of Hel.(1.1), where Caligula, Nero and Vitellius are mentioned and contrasted to Augustus, Trajan, Vespasian, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Titus and Marcus as exemplary rulers. Elagabalus is made out to have been the basest of men (*bipedes*) and even animals (*quadrupedes*).<sup>569</sup> He is called *gemitus omnium* and *pestis*, the latter epithet repeating the interpolations in AS 1.1 (*Antoninorum pestis illa*) and Hel.10.1 (*pestem illam*), the first of which is in an NA passage. The violation of the name of Antoninus (*tantum violari nomen*) is comparable to its pollution by Antonini unworthy of the name (Commodus and Elagabalus). Elagabalus not only shares the qualification *spurcissimus* with his predecessor Macrinus (OM 4.1), but also his *turpitude* (OM 11.4, 14.1) and *luxuria* (OM 8.4). These character traits are again summed up in the closing passage of OM (15.2).<sup>570</sup>

The acclamations by the senators are stylised, with use of *synonymia* and *variatio* (*haec – de his* (referring to *mala*); *te imperante – te duce*; *non timemus – securi sumus*; *certe – bene*), *anaphora* (three times *vicisti*) and *tricolon* in ‘wachsende Glieder’ (*vitia, crimina, dedecora*), *antithesis* (*dedecora – ornabis*; *a pueritia – nunc*), and *repetitio*

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rather concludes its deification’. In the case of the *nomen Antoninorum*, the *nomen* is defined as a *numen* in AS, as if an unknown godhead was incorporated by the emperor’s use of this *nomen*.

<sup>567</sup> Bertrand-Dagenbach (1990, 158) points to the fact that *clementia* is a characteristic shared by the emperor and the senate, for which she aptly refers to Marcus Aurelius’ words in AC 12.3: *nunc ... vos oro atque obsecro, p. c., ut censura vestra deposita meam pietatem clementiamque servetis, immo vestram ...*

<sup>568</sup> Bertand-Dagenbach (1990, 158) sums up the places in HA where some of these virtues are mentioned: *pietas* in AC 12.3 and 7; C 18.9 and AS 11.1; *sanctitas* in Max. 18.2; A 20.5; 40.1; 41.2; *prudentia* in Val. 5.6; *fortitudo* in AC 2.7; Cl. 18.2; T 12.14. The first two are also attributed to Alexander (*pius* in AS 4.5, 20.4, 26.8; *sanctus* in AS 4.5). *Innocentia* (opposed in Hel. 10.4 to *stultitia*) is a virtue that occurs twice again in acclamations, AC 13.5 and AS 10.6, not counting the present passage (AS 9.1), and a total of ten times (*innocentia / innocens*) in HA, as against just once in Suetonius, *Vitellius* 5 (Bertrand-Dagenbach 1990, 92-4). Cf. the imperial virtues of *sapientia, bonitas, pietas* ascribed to Antoninus (*pietas*), Verus (*bonitas*) and Marcus (*sapientia*). All the instances are quoted in Lessing 1901-6.

<sup>569</sup> Klebs (1892, 43) and Peter (1892, 222n1) point to the parallel with Cic. *De dom.* 18.48: *omnium non bipedum solum sed etiam quadripedum impurissimo*.

<sup>570</sup> Also Commodus is called *turpis* in C 1.6: *nam a prima statim pueritia turpis, improbus, crudelis, libidinosus...* and C 15.4: *...ut omnia quae turpiter, quae impure, quae crudeliter, quae gladiatorie, quae lenonie faceret, actis urbis indi iuberet, ut Marii Maximi scripta testantur*.

(*sumimus - praesumimus; probavimus - probamus*). The emperor echoes some of the acclamations in his reply (*timemus* → *timeo, verear; vitia* → *vitia*). With *vitia*, it is clear that Elagabalus' excesses are meant; Alexander plays with words by linking it to the word *vita*.<sup>571</sup> The *venerabile nomen* (cf. the *NA* passage *S* 20.11) is refused not because Alexander fears to fall into vices or looks down on the name. Rather, he dislikes adopting the name of another family, and thinks that its burden will be too heavy for him to bear. The former argument is important in the light of Alexander's namesake Septimius Severus, who explicitly took the name in order to link his own family to that of Marcus Aurelius (*S* 10.6: *quod Severus ipse in Marci familiam transire voluerit*). The latter concerns the consideration that the bearer of the name may fail to live up to the high expectations that come with the name (cf. *AS* 8.4: *ut ego cogar tanto nomini satis facere, cum etiam hoc ipsum nomen, licet peregrinum, tamen gravare videatur haec enim nomina insignia onerosa sunt*, and *Dd.* 2.3). *Alienae familiae nomen* corresponds with *nomen, licet peregrinum* in the earlier answer by the emperor.

#### 10.1-8

(1) *et cum diceret, adclamatum est ut supra. item dixit: 'si enim Antonini nomen accipio, possum et Traiani, possum et Titi, possum et Vespasiani.'*

(2) *et cum diceret, adclamatum est: 'quomodo Augustus, sic et Antoninus.' et imp(erator): 'video, patres conscripti, quid vos moveat ad hoc nobis nomen addendum. Augustus primus primus est huius auctor imperii, et in eius nomen omnes velut quadam adoptione aut iure hereditario succedimus; Antonini ipsi Augusti sunt dicti. sic Antoninus id est Pius Marcum et item Verum iure adoptionis vocavit, Commodus autem hereditarium fuit, susceptum Diadumeno, adfectatum in Bassiano, ridiculum in Vario.'*

(3) *et cum diceret, adclamatum est: 'Alexander Auguste, di te servant. di faveant verecundiae tuae, prudentiae tuae, innocentiae tuae, castitati tuae. hinc intellegimus, qualis futurus sis, hinc probamus. tu facies, ut senatus bene principes eligat. tu facies optimum esse iudicium senatus. Alexander Auguste, di te servant. templa Antoninorum Alexander Augustus dedicet. Caesar noster, Augustus noster, imperator noster, di te servant. vivas, valeas, multis annis imperes.'*

(1) The emperor answers by referring to a trio of good emperors (*AS* 10.1): Trajan, Titus, Vespasian, in contrast to the bad emperors of *AS* 9.4 (Nero, Vitellius, Commodus). His reasoning is that he might just as well accept the names of these good emperors as that of the Antonines, thus implying that the name of the Antonines is a good name after all but should not be blown up to divine proportions.

(2) The senators reply with the acclamation of *quomodo Augustus, sic et Antoninus*, which means that someone who is called Augustus should also be called Antoninus, in other words, that the titles are equal. The emperor does not give in: Augustus is the founder of the empire and has given his name to all who succeed him, either by way of adoption or by heritance (*velut quadam adoptione aut iure hereditario*).<sup>572</sup> For the first

<sup>571</sup> The author associates word by likeness: *vita* ~ *vitia*, like *nomen* ~ *numen*.

<sup>572</sup> Praise for hereditary emperorship is found in Pliny *Pan.* 7. Hartke (1951, 23) sees the author's inclusion of the *NA* theme in the *HA* as an attempt to emphasise the dynastic lines from Antoninus Pius' reign onward, based on third-century sources.

time since the elaboration of the theme in Septimius Severus' biography, the Antonini are represented as successors of Augustus, the founder of the empire. *Sic* bears on the similarity between the namegiving of Augustus and that of Antoninus: just as the emperors from the early empire were all called Augustus, so the successors of Antoninus Pius are called Antoninus, as Septimius Severus' intention was described in *S* 19.3 ...*et Antonini nomen omnibus deinceps quasi Augusti adscribendum putaret*. Alexander's answer to the senate sweeps away his bold step to turn all the *Augusti* into *Antonini* as well, just as his reason for this - a desire to be part of Marcus' family - is rejected by Alexander in *AS* 9.7: *alienae familiae nomen adsumere*. With this, the theme almost comes to an end, but only after repeating the emperors who bore the name: Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, Lucius Verus, Commodus, Diadumenian, Caracalla, Elagabalus. The degeneration is marked by the sequens *hereditarium – susceptum – adfectatum – ridiculum*. Bassianus and Varius are emphatically called by their own names. Alexander Severus appears to be antagonistic towards Septimius Severus, whose two measures with regard to the Antonines he implicitly but unequivocally rejects.

(3) An enumeration of imperial virtues of *verecundia*, *prudentia*, *innocentia*, *castitas* confers a high level of respectability on Alexander: *verecundia* (modesty, restraint) may refer to his refusal of titles, which is considered a great virtue that Marcus Aurelius also displayed.<sup>573</sup> The same goes for *prudentia*, with which Marcus is credited in *AS* 9.1, though not in his own biography.<sup>574</sup> The virtue of *innocentia* was mentioned in *AS* 6.3 and *AS* 9.1 in the case of Verus (*si doctrinam, quid Marco prudentius? si innocentiam, quid Vero simplicius?*). *Castitas* appeared in *AS* 7.6 (see my remarks *ad loc.*). The virtues are summarised in a repeated *hinc*. The figure of *anaphora* is also used in *AS* 10.7: *tu facies...tu facies*, which may well be traditional in acclamations.<sup>575</sup>

The consultation of the senate in choosing emperors is important, as so many emperors seized power by force of arms or were appointed by their predecessors without any involvement of the senate. In *H* 4.9 it is told that Trajan presented a list of candidates for the senators to choose from,<sup>576</sup> while Clodius Albinus went so far as to plead for the restoration of the senators' authority (*CIA* 13.3-10). It is a characteristic of a *bonus princeps* that he consults the senate. The rest of the acclamations mainly contain repetitions from earlier passages, and come to an end with the senators' wish that *multis annis imperes*. This is a traditional formula, attested in the *Codex Theodosianus*: *multis annis imperetis*.<sup>577</sup> In *AS* 12.1 the senators once again raise their voices.

The final answer by the emperor runs thus (*AS* 11.1-4):

<sup>573</sup> It is interesting to set off Marcus' refusal of names against the virtue of *verecundia*, *MA* 9.1: ...*delatumque Armeniacum nomen utrique principum. Quod Marcus per verecundiam primo recusavit, postea tamen recepit. profligato autem bello uterque Parthicus appellatus est. sed id quoque Marcus delatum nomen repudiavit, quod postea recepit. Patris patriae autem nomen delatum a fratre absente in eiusdem praesentiam distulit*. Béranger (1953, 139-40) gives a list of instances in which power is also refused.

<sup>574</sup> *Prudens / prudentia* is typical of the biographies in the later part of *HA*, see the enumeration in Bertrand-Dagenbach 1990, 155.

<sup>575</sup> Baldwin (1981, 144-5) states that it recurs on Suet. *Nero* 46.3: *cum ex oratione eius...recitaretur in senatu datus poenas sceleratos ac brevi dignum exitum facturos, conclamatum est ab universis: 'Tu facies, Auguste'*.

<sup>576</sup> See Fündling (2006, 370-1, K 127), who thinks the report is the author's invention meant to stress the senate's authority and Trajan's positive approach towards the senators.

<sup>577</sup> ed. Mommsen 1971, 2.

*Alexander imperator dixit:*

(1) *'intellego, p. c., me optinuisse, quod volui, et in acceptum refero, plurimas gratias et agens et habens enisurus, ut et hoc nomen, quod in imperium detulimus, tale sit, ut et ab aliis desideretur et bonis vestrae pietatis iudiciis offeratur.'*

(2) *post haec adclamatum est: 'Magne Alexander, di te servent. si Antonini nomen repudiasti, Magni praenomen suscipe. Magne Alexander, di te servent.'*

(3) *et cum saepius dicerent, Alexander Augustus:*

*'Facilius fuit, p. c., ut Antoninorum nomen acciperem, aliquid enim vel adfinitati deferrem vel consortioni nominis imperialis. Magni vero nomen cur accipiam? quid enim iam magnum feci? cum id Alexander post magna gesta, Pompeius vero post magnos triumphos acceperit. quiescite igitur, venerandi patres, et vos ipsi magnifici unum me de vobis esse censete, quam Magni nomen ingerite.'*

(1) The emperor accepts his office gratefully and will exert himself to make his name - that is, Alexander - beloved by others (to wit, his successors) and that the right honourable senate will grant it to them as an honourific.<sup>578</sup> The word *intellego*, which was also used by the senators in AS 10.6 (*intellegimus*) seems to mark a reciprocal acceptance ('Je vous ai compris'). *Bonis vestrae pietatis iudiciis offeratur* can be interpreted as a reaction to the senators' wish in AS 10.7: *tu facies optimum esse iudicium senatus*. (2) Now that the emperor has declined the Antonine name, the senate, anticipating his acceptance of the *praenomen Magni*, addresses the emperor as *Magne Alexander*. (3) The emperor, however, states that it would be easier to accept the name of Antoninus, on account of its link with Caracalla (cf. the excursus on *adfinitas* in AS 5.3-4) and its aura as a *nomen imperiale*. The name of *Magnus* poses a more serious problem, as Alexander feels that he simply does not deserve so great a compliment as to be equated with his illustrious namesake through the bestowal of the *nomen Magni*.<sup>579</sup> As the honourable senators themselves are *magnifici*, he had rather that they considered their new emperor one of them than grant him the name of *Magnus*.

After the final acclamations (AS 12: *post haec adclamatum est: 'Aureli Alexander Auguste, di te servent.' Et reliqua ex more*), the senate session is dismissed and Alexander returns home triumphantly, AS 12.2: *Dimisso senatu, cum et alia multa eo die essent acta, quasi triumphans domum se recepit*. The scene resembles the events described in Herodian 5.8.10, in which the soldiers accompany the emperor to his palace: οί δὲ στρατιῶται αὐτοκράτορα τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον ἀναγορεύσαντες ἐς τὰ βασίλεια ἀνήγαγον. The term αὐτοκράτορα is Greek for *imperator*.<sup>580</sup> Historically,

<sup>578</sup> The senators' virtue of *pietas* occurs earlier in AC 12.3 and 7; C 18.9.

<sup>579</sup> Note that Alexander of Macedon ('the Great') acquired the honorific 'Magnus' many years, if not centuries, after his death (Den Hengst 1999, 3). The argument that Pompey (a prominent imitator of Alexander) only received the title *Magnus* after great triumphs contains a parallel with Hadrian, who refused the title of *Pater Patriae* because Augustus only received it late in his reign. H 6.4: *patris patriae nomen delatum sibi statim et iterum postea distulit, quod hoc nomen Augustus sero meruisset*. Note also the idiomatic wording *patris patriae nomen delatum sibi*, which corresponds with AS 5.3 *delatum sibi Antonini nomen*.

<sup>580</sup> Alexander was hailed as *imperator* on 13 or 14 March 222; in HA this takes place on 6 March in the following terms: AS 6.3: *Alexander imperator, di te servent*; AS 10.8: *Caesar noster, Augustus noster, imperator noster, di te servent*. For a reconstruction of the historical events: Lorient 1984, 227.

the pretorians hailed Alexander as *imperator*; and *quasi triumphans* may be an echo of that happening. The next few sentences are laudations.<sup>581</sup> We should be aware that the passage AS 12.3: *multo clarior visus est alienis nominibus non receptis quam si recepisset* does not necessarily relate to the names of Antoninus and Magnus. As the whole NA theme here seems to be produced as an addition to other sources about Alexander Severus, the author may well have seized the opportunity to blend his message into the acclamations. There are other titles that Alexander refused (such as *dominus*, AS 4.1: *Dominum se appellari vetuit. epistolas ad se quasi ad privatum scribi iussit servato tantum nomine imperatoris*), reminding us that a refusal of imperial names in the senate is a traditional token of humility. The clause in AS 12.4 is well-placed, as far as it goes, though the connector *sed* is dubious: *sed quamvis senatu rogante non potuerit persuaderi, ut vel Antonini vel Magni nomina susciperet*.<sup>582</sup> If this should be an interpolated fragment, then AS 12.4 *tamen ob ingentem vigorem animi et mirandam singularemque constantiam contra militum insolentiam Severi nomen a militibus eidem inditum est* would originally have followed *senatus totus persuadere non potuit*, which makes sense, as the soldiers hailed the emperor as Severus, whereas the emperor rejected the names proposed by the senate.<sup>583</sup>

Thus, once the Antonine acclamations are left out, what is left are the acclamations *ex actis urbis* (AS 6.2-5) and the emperor's reply (AS 8.1). This situation is comparable to the passages *ex actis senatus* in AS 56.2: a speech by the emperor, acclamations by the senate, ending on a similar formula (AS 57.1: *dimisso senatu Capitolium ascendit...*) and in AS 12.2 (*dimisso senatu ... quasi triumphans domum se recepit*). Again, what this indicates is that the NA passages, this time presented by way of acclamations, are products not belonging to the composition of the biographies proper but inserted in places where these speeches were already present (AS 6.3-5). The following diagram maps the extent of the additions (rendered in dotted lines) to what may be assumed to have been the original passages (in continuing lines):

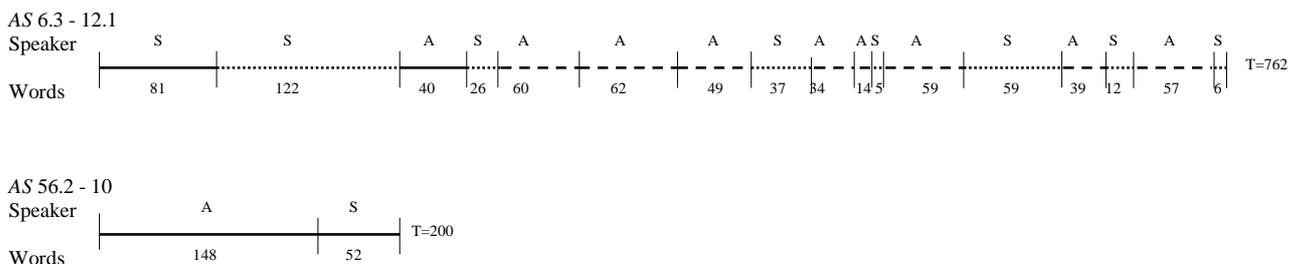


Figure 5.6: Acclamations by the senate (S) and answers by Alexander (A) in the passages in AS 6.3-12.1, and the NS that they occupy.

<sup>581</sup> Moreno-Ferrero (1999, 196n25) compares the passage to *Cl.6.3: sed credo, ut Claudii gloria adcreveret eiusque fieret gloriosior toto penitus orbe victoria* as an example of panegyric argumentation.

<sup>582</sup> Note the reformulations in the last sentence: *...senatus totus persuadere non potuit - ...senatu rogante non potuerit persuaderi...*

<sup>583</sup> AS 12.5. The name of Severus, is according to Barnes (1978, 57) 'based on 59.4/5 or its source', which might be Aurelius Victor 24.2-3 or Eutropius 8.23.

The senate produces a total of 348 words on as many as 8 occasions, while Alexander uses 414 words on 9 occasions. The predominance of Alexander's speeches only appears in and after AS 9, after repeated requests by the senate to accept a number of specific names and offices. It is interesting to compare these figures to the number of speeches without the NA theme that are delivered in AS 56.2-10: Alexander speaks 148 words to the senators in AS 56.2-9, who need 52 words for the acclamation in AS 56.9-10. The speech and acclamations in this session comprise a total of 200 words, which is more or less comparable to the passages in AS 6.3-5 and 8.1, which consist of 121 words each. In these passages (italicised in the scheme), there are the acclamations by the senate followed by Alexander's word of thanks, which is mirrored by the speech in AS 56.2-9 (in which a *supplicatio* is asked) and after which the senate responds by acclamation. The mirror effect of these speeches has become obscured by the addition of a vast volume of NA passages in the early part of the life.

What can be the underlying reason for the inclusion of the NA passages in the guise of acclamations? In general, it may be said that the insertion of the acclamations and the emperor's replies corresponds with a development that, since the reign of Trajan, had been going on for centuries, namely that senatorial proceedings were made public. Roueché (1984, 181-4) describes the growing public access to the *acta* since Pliny wrote in his *Panegyricus* (75.2) that acclamations were always kept within the walls of the senate until Trajan's reign.<sup>584</sup> The evidence of acclamations in papyri and epigraphic and literary documents adds to our knowledge of the procedures, of which the *Codex Theodosianus* is one of the finest examples. The inclusion of fictitious *acta senatus* reporting the acclamations and the emperor's answers, which in first century literature would have been hardly thinkable, reflects that development and the public nature of the senate's proceedings in late antiquity.

Pliny's words perfectly apply to the present acclamations in AS, which present us with the image of a *bonus princeps* Alexander.<sup>585</sup> The *Panegyricus* addressed to Trajan is also meant to praise the new emperor, like the senatorial acclamations in AS. It is worth having a closer look at the passage in which Pliny makes clear the public nature of the *acclamationes* in the *acta publica* (Plin. *Pan.* 75.1-5):

*Sed quid singula consector et colligo? Quasi vero aut oratione complecti aut memoria consequi possim, quae vos, patres conscripti, ne qua interciperet oblivio, et in publica acta mittenda et incidenda in aere censuistis. Ante orationes principum tantum eius modi genere monimentorum mandari aeternitati solebant, acclamationes*

<sup>584</sup> Note that Augustus forbade the publication of the *acta senatus*, Suet. *Aug.* 36.1: *auctor et aliarum rerum fuit, in quis: ne acta senatus publicerentur, ...*

<sup>585</sup> As I argued in 'Pliny's *Panegyricus* and the *Historia Augusta*' (forthcoming), it was Pliny who provided the author with the notion of *bonus princeps*, that occurs all over the speech, also in contrast with *malus princeps*: *bonus princeps*: 7.2, 26.5, 36.4, 44.4, 45.3, 53.6, 59.5, 76.9; *bonus princeps - malus*: 45.5, 68.7, 88.9; *optimus - malus*: 74.3; *boni principes - mali*: 4.1, 53.3, 63.1, 68.7, 75.3, 90.2; *malus princeps*: 53.6, 67.3, 68.3, 94.2; *mali principes*: 40.3, 44.1, 53.3, 53.5, 46.3. *Bonus princeps* only occurs in Suetonius in *Tib.* 29.1 (*bonum ac salutarem principem*), and in Tacitus in *Ann.* 15.66.1, *H* 1.16.1, 2.37.2 and *H* 1.46.4. *Malus princeps* is read in *Agr.* 43.4 (...*ut nesciret a bono patre non scribi heredem nisi malum principem*), *H* 4.42.6 (*optimus est post malum principem dies primus*) and *Agr.* 42.4 (*posse etiam sub malis principibus magnos viros esse*). In the other panegyrici Latini a poor two occurrences in 5.2.2 (*boni sit principis*) and 5.7.5 (*boni principis est libenter suos videre felices*). The occurrences in the *panegyrici* (including Pliny) are based on Janson 1979.

*quidem nostrae parietibus curiae claudebantur. Erant enim quibus nec senatus gloriari nec principes possent. Has vero et in vulgus exire et in posteris prodi cum ex utilitate tum ex dignitate publica fuit,*

- (1) *primum ut orbis terrarum pietatis nostrae adhibetur testis et conscius,*
- (2) *deinde ut manifestum esset audere nos de bonis malisque principibus non tantum post ipsos iudicare;*
- (3) *postremo ut experimento cognosceretur et ante nos gratos, sed miseros fuisse, quibus esse nos gratos probare antea non licuit.*

*At qua contentione, quo nisu, quibus clamoribus exostulatum est, ne adfectus nostros ne tua merita supprimeres, denique ut in posterum exemplo provideres! Discant et principes acclamationes veras falsasque discernere, habeantque muneris tui quod iam decipi non poterunt.*

After a disquisition about the love of the gods for the emperor and the emperor's love for the senate, Pliny continues with the reasons for making the acclamations known to the public. Up to Trajan's time, only the emperor's decrees were published in the form of the *acta diurna*, initiated by Julius Caesar<sup>586</sup>, but the acclamations were kept within the senate's walls – if only because they were not something to be proud of. Now, the acclamations of the senators are made public for all the world to know, for present and future generations, in their general interest and for the sake of public dignity. There are three reasons underlying this: (1) the whole world should know about the senate's loyalty (*pietas*), (2) the senate is empowered to judge its rulers, and not merely after their deaths, (3) the senators appreciate being able to express their gratitude for the gift of such a ruler, whereas previously they were denied this opportunity. With an eager show of gratitude, the senate requests their ruler not to depreciate either its feelings or his own qualities, so that he may also set an example for his successor. By this example, future rulers may learn how to discern between false and honest acclamations.

There are many elements in Pliny's text that may have been imitated by the author of the *HA*. First, he boasts about his use of senatorial sources in two places in *AS*. In *AS* 6.1 he says *proferam etiam adclamationes senatus, quibus id decretum est* – an opportunity that was made possible by the publication of the acclamations since Trajan's times. The *acta senatus* mentioned in *AS* 56.2 also contain the senators' acclamations (*AS* 56.9). That its acclamations were made public and thus preserved for posterity (*Paneg.* 75.3) has proved to be useful also for the author of the *HA* with regard to Alexander's acclamations (which is of course what the author wishes us to understand). Secondly, the senate's virtue of *pietas* is echoed in a speech by Alexander (*AS* 11.1: *hoc nomen, quod in*

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<sup>586</sup> Suet. *Div. Iul.* 20.1. One should discern between the *acta senatus* and the *acta publica* – the latter is also referred to by Suetonius as *populi diurna acta* (*Div. Iul.* 20.1), *publica acta* (*Tib.* 5.2), *acta* (*Cal.* 8.5, 36.6), or *diurna* (*Claud.* 41.6); Tacitus designates the *acta senatus* also with *commentarii senatus* (*Ann.* 15.74.3: *reperio in commentariis senatus...*). Gascou 1984, 480-5 (*acta senatus*), 485-9 (*acta diurna*). The *acta* as a source open to the public is described in Suet. *Div. Iul.* 20.1: *inito honore primum omnium constituit, ut tam senatus quam populi diurna acta confierent et publicarentur*. Like the author of *HA*, Tacitus also made use of these *acta diurna*, in *Ann.* 3.3: *matrem Antoniam non apud auctores rerum, non diurna actorum scriptura reperio ullo insigni officio functam*. The author of the *HA* mentions the *acta urbis* in *C* 15.4 and *AS* 6.2, the *acta senatus* in 56.2, though probably not seeking to make a distinction between these two different kinds of *acta*. Cf. *Pr.* 2.1 *actis etiam senatus ac populi* (sc. *usus sum*). Baldwin 1979 traces the history of all kinds of *acta* and concludes that they were not existent anymore from the later fourth century.

*imperium detulimus, tale sit, ut et ab aliis desideretur et bonis vestrae pietatis iudiciis offeratur*). Meanwhile, the emperor wants to set an example for his successors by good government, presented in the acclamations of imperial virtues, just as the senate wished the emperor to do in Pliny's oration (...*denique ut in posterum exemplo provideres!*). The approval of the good emperor by the senate (Pliny: ... *ut experimento cognosceretur et ante nos gratos, sed miseros fuisse, quibus esse nos gratos probare antea non licuit*) is echoed in the acclamations of the senators in AS 10.6: *hinc intellegimus, qualis futurus es, hinc probamus*. It is clear that the senators are in a position to judge between (*iudicare*) *de bonis malisque principibus* (*Pan.* 75.3), a theme that plays an important part in the biography of AS. *Tu facies ut senatus bene principes eligat, tu facies optimum esse iudicium senatus* is the author's variation on Pliny's *de bonis malisque principibus iudicare*. *Discant et principes acclamationes veras falsasque discernere, habeantque muneris tui quod iam decipi non poterunt* is a lesson that Alexander should keep in mind as well: as a good prince, he will recognise his own morals in the speeches, in contrast with the bad prince, who will have to learn a lesson. In this way, the *speculum principis* as described by Pliny works both ways. *Acclamationes falsae*, on the other hand, are nothing but flattery.

### 5.5.3 The NA Theme in *Gd.*

After reading the first four of the Intermediary Lives, it should come as no surprise that the NA theme is rounded off in *Gd.*, as the author has given ample clues about his intention to end his series of Antonines with the biography of the three Gordiani.<sup>587</sup> By relating the three Gordiani to the Antonines, the theme exceeds its limits, as the historical *ultimus Antoninorum* was Elagabalus.<sup>588</sup> The author however paid much attention to the conclusion of his dealing with Antonine name by inserting acclamations in the biography of Alexander Severus, after whose *vita* the two Maximini follow. In *Gd.* it appears for a final time, as if the author cannot take leave of his theme. With regard to the content of *Gd.*, it can be said that the NA theme fits the author's intention to picture Gordianus as 'an old senator of cultivated tastes', as Syme<sup>589</sup> put it, against the savage soldier Maximinus. A good deal of invention is required to get to this point, as the Gordiani were at no time called Antonini. This is why the author introduces a special motif of doubt about the cognomen of these emperors.

This, however, is not the only idea, as the author lets his subject, Gordian, produce an epic poem about the first two Antonines, *Gd.*3.3: *scripsit praeterea, quemadmodum Vergilius Aeneidos et Statius Achilleidos et multi alii Alexandridos, ita etiam ille Antoniniados, hoc est Antoninum Pium et Antoninum Marcum, versibus disertissimis*

<sup>587</sup> The three Gordians are in fact depicted as a dynasty, descending from Trajan: Arrigoni Bertini 1980, 201-2.

<sup>588</sup> The number of three Gordiani is historically correct, while in *OM* 3.5, *Dd.* 6.3 and *Hel.* 34.6 the author speaks of two Gordiani. In *Gd.* 2.1 the author remarks that the number of two is erroneous '*ut quidam imperiti scriptores loquuntur*'; Mazarino (1966, 235) states that the author hints at some authors of the fourth century: Victor, Eutropius and the *KG*. See Syme 1983, 26.

<sup>589</sup> Syme 1971, 253: 'various devices are enlisted to parade him as an Antonine ruler'.

*libris triginta vitam illorum et bella et publice privatimque gesta perscribens.*<sup>590</sup> The word *praeterea* marks the fact that Gordian also wrote poems about subjects that Cicero wrote about before him in his poetry.<sup>591</sup> Just as Virgil composed his *Aeneis*, Statius his *Achilleis* and other poets their *Alexandridos*, Gordian wrote his *Antoniniados* when young. This work lends an epic dimension to the Antonines, which is both mythical (with the references to Aeneas and Achilles) and historical (the reference to Alexander the Great). A number of thirty books is very high for an epic poem. Its contents are suggested to have included his warfare (*bella*) as well as public and private behaviour (*et bella et publice privatimque gesta*), which are in fact the normal elements for biographical works to contain (cf. AS 29.1: *Antequam de bellis eius et expeditionibus et victoriis loquar, de vita cottidiana et domestica pauca disseram*).

The epic style is not the only one in which the author of the *HA* described the emperors, as he also wrote a prose eulogy about all the Antonines, *Gd.4.7-8*, attached to a passage about plays that the emperor had staged: *scripsit et laudes soluta oratione omnium Antoninorum, qui ante eum fuerunt. tantum autem Antoninos dilexit, ut sibi quoque, ut multi dicunt, Antonini, ut plerique autem adserunt, Antonii nomen adscripserit. iam illud satis constat, quod filium, Gordianum nomine, Antonini signo inlustraverit, cum apud praefectum aerarii more Romano professus filium publicis actis eius nomen insereret*. That Gordian granted the name of Antoninus (source: *multi*) or Antonius (source: *plerique*) to himself is something that was recorded before only in *Hel. 34.6*,<sup>592</sup> while the earlier occurrences of the motif attributed the mistake to their sources.<sup>593</sup> Thus *multi* think that Gordian was called Antoninus (*Hel. 18.1, Gd.4.7*), while *plerique* assign the name of Antonius to Gordian (*Hel. 34.6: in plerisque libris, Gd. 4.7*); that Gordian bore the name of Antoninus as *praenomen* (*OM 3.5, Hel. 34.6*), *cognomen* (*Dd. 6.3, Hel. 18.1*) or *nomen* (*Gd.4.7*) is recorded on the authority of *quidam* (*Dd.6.3*) and *multi* (*Hel. 18.1, Gd. 4.7*), which is intended to convince the reader but has an extremely narrow basis in fact. The motifs of the *nomina* (Antoninus, Antonius) and their sources are widely scattered over various passages and regrouped in different compositions by virtue of *repetitio* and *variatio*. All the same, they reflect a development from a neutral speculation on the names (*OM 3.5*) to sources being brought to bear (*Dd. 6.3, Hel. 18.1*), and finally to the message that Gordian himself was responsible for the naming (*Hel. 34.6, Gd. 4.7*), because he esteemed his Antonine predecessors so highly (*Gd. 3.1, 4.7*). In the seemingly random variations, some system can nevertheless be detected. Gordian's own responsibility is certified by the fact that he himself had his son

<sup>590</sup> Note the remarkable forms *Aeneidos*, *Achilleidos* and *Alexandridos*, the former of which is the Greek genitive of *Aeneis*, and the latter two are made up in analogy of the first, but function as accusativi pluralis.

<sup>591</sup> Note that many of the famous men mentioned here were also the ones who were gathered in Alexander Severus' *lararia*, AS 31.4-5: *Vergilium autem Platonem poetarum vocabat eiusque imaginem cum Ciceronis simulacro in secundo larario habuit, ubi et Achillis et magnorum virorum. Alexandrum vero Magnum inter optimos et divos in larario maiore consecravit*.

<sup>592</sup> *Hel. 34.6: duos Gordianos..., patrem et filium, qui se de Antoninorum genere dici volebant: non nomen in illis primum fuit sed praenomen; deinde, ut in plerisque libris invenio, Antoni dicti sunt, non Antonini*.

<sup>593</sup> In *OM 3.5* it is only stated that *aut ... praenomen tantum Antoninorum habuerunt aut etiam Antonii dicti sunt, non Antonini*; in *Dd.6.3 ... unde postea duos Gordianos, patrem et filium, Antoninos cognominatos putant*, with *quidam* as a source; in *Hel. 18.1 ... cognomine postea Gordianos multi Antoninos putent, qui Antonii dicti sunt, non Antonini*. It is interesting to compare *Pr. 4.3-4: est (sc. Probus) adulescens vere probus; numquam enim aliud mihi, cum eum cogito, nisi eius nomen occurrit, quod nisi nomen haberet, potuit habere cognomen*.

inscribed in the *acta publica* as Gordianus Antoninus,<sup>594</sup> the latter name serving as a so-called *signum* by which the author adds a new variation to the problem of nomenclature (Antoninus as *nomen*, *praenomen* or *cognomen*).<sup>595</sup> It is remarkable that this report is allegedly taken from the *acta publica* and introduced with *iam illud satis constat*, while earlier passages seem to indicate a complex historiographical problem and deviant sources. In many dubious passages in the *HA* it may be questioned whether the author is merely careless or mendacious, but here, after this recital of considerations about the various versions of Gordian's names, the variations bear all the signs of literary artistry.

There is more to come. In *Gd.9.3-4* it is told that Gordian was granted the surname of Africanus by youngsters, not because his reign had begun in Africa, but because he was supposedly related to Scipio Africanus. A short passage about the *nomen Antoninorum* follows: *in plurimis autem libris invenio et hunc Gordianum et filium eius pariter imperatores appellatos et Antoninos cognominatos, alibi vero Antonios*. The formula *pariter imperatores appellatos* corresponds with one of the very first occurrences of the *NA* theme in *Ael. 5.12-3*: *Eius est filius Antoninus Verus (...) et cum eodem aequale gessit imperium. Nam ipsi sunt qui primi duo Augusti appellati sunt,...*, that was based on the remark in *MA 7.6*: *Atque ex eo pariter coeperunt rem publicam regere...* (see above, § 5.2.1). As the source of the *cognomen* Antoninus the author mentions *in plurimis libris*, which is reminiscent of *Hel. 34.6*: *ut in plerisque libris invenio* – but what he found there is that father and son were called *Antonii*, not *Antonini*. In this instance, the account corresponds with *Dd. 6.3* and *Hel. 18.1*, where the Gordiani have Antoninus as their *cognomen*. The report rendered on the authority of *alibi*, that they were called Antonius, corresponds with *OM 3.5*, *Hel. 18.1*, *34.6* and *Gd. 4.7*, but deviates in on one respect from these four passages: the name of Antonius was never known as a *cognomen*, as it is here. It is worth repeating the two options in *OM 3.5*: *aut ... praenomen tantum Antoninorum habuerunt aut etiam Antonii dicti sunt, non Antonini*, where doubt about the names is raised either because Antoninus was a *cognomen*, or because the Gordiani were called *Antonii*, but not both. That the Gordiani had Antonius as a *cognomen* is one of the author's variations.

In *Gd.17.1-5*, the beginning of the biography of Gordian junior, the *nomen Antoninorum* is again linked with the *nomen Africani*. The author does his best to prove that the family of the Gordians is an aristocratic breed, as he mentions no less than four families to prove their high birth:<sup>596</sup> that of Scipio Africanus, whose success in Africa is linked to Gordian senior (*quod Africanus Gordianus senior appellatus est cognomine Scipionum*), that of Pompey, whose house he is said to have possessed in Rome (*quod*

<sup>594</sup> Gordian's step of having his son's name recorded in the *acta publica* may be related with the passage in *MA 9.7*, where we find Marcus Aurelius' measure to have all freeborn children registered with a name by the *praefecti aerarii* within thirty days after their birth.

<sup>595</sup> *Signum* is also used in *PN 8.4-5*: *item cum quaesitum esset, quis illi (sc. Septimio Severo) successurus esset, respondisse itidem Graeco versu dicitur: 'cui dederint superi nomen habere Pii.' quod omnino intellectum non est, nisi cum Bassianus Antonini, quod verum signum Pii fuit, nomen accepit*. Apparently, the author does not distinguish between *nomen* and *signum*. This use of *signum* is different from the use by senatorial families in the late antique aristocracy, such as Toxotius or Fasganius, to upgrade their stock (Syme 1968, 166-7: 'embodying weapons of war'; 1971, 8). Hartke (1951, 131) calls the *signa* 'quasi-gentilizische Herkunftsbezeichnungen (also *originum insignia = verum signum*)'.

<sup>596</sup> Which was customary for families at the end of the fourth century, Chastagnol 1994, 704n3 and Syme 1971, 12; 156-8; 169; Treucker 1966 gives several examples from the *HA* of families who claim to descend from famous ancestors.

*domum Pompeianam in urbe habuit*),<sup>597</sup> that of the Antonini (*quod Antoninorum cognomine semper est nuncupatus*) and that of Marcus Antonius, who reigned in the East during the late republic, to whom the family name Antonius refers<sup>598</sup> (*quod Antonium filium suum ipse significari voluit in senatu*). Three of the family names are taken from statesmen from the republican period, only the Antonines differ in this respect. Just as in many of the *NA* passages discussed, the *quod* sentence is detachable. The beginning of this part of the biography contains a similar addition, which is clearly recognizable in view of the vocabulary used, *Gd.* 17.1: *Hic Gordiani senis, proconsulis Africae, filius, qui cum patre et ab Afris et a senatu Augustus appellatus est, litteris et moribus clarus fuit praeter nobilitatem; [ut nonnulli, ab Antoninis, ut plurimi, ab Antoniis duxit.]* The sources of the report that Gordian took either Antoninus or Antonius as a *cognomen* are indicated as *nonnulli* and *plurimi*, corresponding respectively with the *multi* (*Hel.* 18.1, *Gd.*4.7), *quidam* (*Dd.*6.3) and *in plurimis libris* (*Gd.*9.5) who call Gordian Antoninus, and *plerique* (*Hel.* 34.6, *Gd.* 4.7) or ‘*alibi*’ (*Gd.*9.5) who assign the name of Antonius to Gordian. Note that *in plurimis libris* in *Gd.* 9.5 for the first version (Antoninus) is shifted to *plurimi* for the second version (Antonius), and *in plerisque libris* (*Hel.* 34.6) is similarly changed into *plerique* in *Gd.* 4.7. This kind of *variatio* is typical of the author’s literary technique.

If we leave out the report that Gordian wanted to trace his roots to the Antonine family, the following sentences ought to be interpreted in a slightly different fashion: *ex omnibus his familiis* (in *sed ego Iunium Cordum sequor, qui dicit ex omnibus his familiis Gordianorum coaluisse nobilitatem*) originally referred to the families of Scipio, Pompey and Antonius, to which the Antonines were added. The sentence *idem igitur natus patri primus ex Fabia Orestilla, Antonini pronepte, unde Caesarum quoque familiam contingere videbatur* contains a link with the Antonines of the second century. Though *Fabia Orestilla* is obviously a fictitious person<sup>599</sup> and presented as the granddaughter of

<sup>597</sup> For Pompey’s house, cf. *Gd.* 2.3 (*Romae Pompeianam domum possidens*), 6.5. *Gd.* 21.5 also makes a link with Pompey, and with Scipio Africanus, in the account attributed to the fictitious historiographer Vulcatius Terentianus. In addition to what Chastagnol (1994, CIII) suggests about the origin of the one of the six biographers of *HA*, namely the author of *AC*, I should like to point out that both names, Vulcatius / Vulcacius (*Gd.*21.5) and Gallicanus (*Gd.*22.8) are closely associated in the work. The name of Gallicanus is historical, and attested in Herodian 7.11.3-7 (cf. also *Max.* 20.6).

<sup>598</sup> About the ancestry of the Gordians nothing definite is known, save that the family was of Anatolian stock. The family name Antonius is possibly derived from Marcus Antonius, who could have given citizen rights to the family, as Birley (1965, 56-60) supposes.

<sup>599</sup> From *Gd.* 6.4 it can be distilled that Fabia Orestilla was the daughter of the similarly invented Annius Severus, Annius being the family name of Marcus Aurelius and Severus referring to Septimius Severus (Chastagnol 1994, 711n1, 722n2). Fabia is the name born by the daughter of Aelius Caesar (originally L. Ceionius Commodus), sister of Lucius Verus (*V* 10.3-4), and fiancée of Marcus Aurelius (*MA* 4.5, later dissolved, *MA* 6.3) before he became emperor (after the death of Marcus’ wife Faustina, Fabia again tried to marry him, *MA* 29.10). Her full name was Fabia Ceionia, and she may have been the basis for the author’s invention. Note that there is another invented granddaughter of an Antoninus (Chastagnol 1994, XVI does not explain why he indicates Marcus Aurelius as the Antoninus referred to) at the beginning of the biography of the younger Maximinus (*Max.* 27.6): *desponsa illi erat Iunia Fadilla, proneptis Antonini, quam postea accepit Toxotius...* (the latter, whose name is based on an historical figure from the fourth century, is similarly an invention and provided Dessau with one of his arguments (1889, 351) to date *HA* at the end of the fourth century). See Syme (1971, 12-3) for a portrait of Gordianus and the author’s attempts to link his family from both paternal and maternal side to famous’ ancestors (Antoninus, Trajanus, Gracchus), conform the fourth-century habit among the aristocracy to incorporate famous ancestors.

some Antoninus (*Antonini pronepte*, leaving unclear which Antoninus is meant), there is no need to assume that this link to the imperial family is part of the *NA* theme (a consideration confirmed by *Max.* 27.6 where there is also a granddaughter of an Antoninus). The particle *quoque* shows that beyond the three republican aristocratic families, there is also a link with the *Caesarum familia*, not necessarily by name but by bloodline. The last sentence of the passage, however, bears all the signs of an *NA* passage, as the names of Antoninus and Antonius are mentioned in one breath (just as in *OM* 3.5, *Hel.* 18.1, 34.7, *Gd.* 9.3-4, 17.1): *et primis diebus sui natalis Antoninus est appellatus, mox in senatu Antonii nomen est editum, vulgo deinde Gordianus haberi coeptus*. The fact that Gordian is called Antoninus shortly after his birth was already recorded in *Gd.* 4.8, and the use of this name in the senate is a repetition from *Gd.* 17.2.

The author extended the *NA* theme to include the Gordians, even though Elagabalus was his projected *ultimus Antoninorum* and the *vita* of Alexander Severus already contained sufficient passages enabling him to end and evaluate the theme. It was only the resemblance of the Antonine name with the family name of the Gordians (Gordian I was called M. Antonius Gordianus Sempronianus Romanus, Chastagnol 1994, 693) that induced the author to add extra thoughts on the theme, which had been awaiting their part since the first appearance of the Gordians in *OM* 3.5. The formula attested there (*aut ... praenomen tantum Antoninorum habuerunt aut etiam Antonii dicti sunt, non Antonini*) is echoed several times, as described above, and shows how the author planned to include this variation of his theme from at least *OM* onwards. The repetitions and variations bear all the signs of a carefully planned literary approach, which in all its variety and contradiction remains coherent, in that its basic elements constantly recur in different combinations. The inconsistencies (to name just two of them: the confusion between *nomen*, *praenomen* and *cognomen*, and the alleged sources) are far less important than the author's associative play of words. This is an insight that should always be kept in mind when reading the *HA*: unravelling its literary game should prevail over any desire to harmonise the contradictions. The logic of the *NA* theme resides not in its contents, but in the continuous regrouping of its basic elements and the addition of new variations. It is difficult to grasp the regularities in this chaotic collection of different motifs and the idiom that each time appears in different guises, sometimes slightly changed, sometimes literally repeated in different contexts. Still, a kind of system can be discerned, that not only characterises the *NA* theme, but occurs in more places in the *HA*.

## 5.6 Conclusions about the *NA* Theme

Now that we have encountered the *NA* theme in dreams, oracles, letters, *contiones*, *orationes*, *acclamationes*, *omina*, poems, historical narrations, programmatic statements, prefaces, epilogues and dedications, let us examine all the constituent parts of the *NA* theme together. The theme will be reviewed both as a whole and in terms of its individual parts, internal correspondences and different motifs. As a first step, the *NS* that the author devotes to the theme will be mapped out, measured in words. This aspect falls under the heading of frequency and duration: frequency is the number of occurrences in the different books of the *HA*, while duration is the space (the sum as well as the individual

parts) which the theme takes up in the narrative.<sup>600</sup> Next, the motifs within the theme, which is what determines the internal coherency of the *HA*, will be inventarised, as well as some traits from the *NA* theme with regard to individual emperors: the theme is often adapted to the emperor discussed. Finally, origins and sources will be investigated and some of the implications of our findings will be considered.

### 5.6.1 Frequency and Duration

Before summarising the *NA* passages, one note of caution must be sounded: not every passage in which the *nomen Antoninorum* occurs will be counted as belonging to the *NA* theme. This may sound odd but there are cases in which the *nomen Antoninorum* is mentioned without being part of this particular literary theme. For example: when in *G* 1.4 it is mentioned that Septimius Severus *statim ad milites processit et Bassianum, filium maiorem natu, Marcum Aurelium Antoninum appellavit*, this is not part of the theme, but simply a report based on the author's source.<sup>601</sup> Further considerations on the name are added in *G* 2.5, which is when the theme begins and marks the place where the author's imagination comes in.<sup>602</sup> Leaving these caveats aside, the following passages can be indicated as belonging to the *NA* theme:

| <i>Passages</i>  | Narrative space (words) | Total and percentage |
|--|-------------------------|----------------------|
| <i>S</i> 10.5 <i>unde ... in imperio</i>                 | 13                      |                      |
| 16.4 <i>eundem Antoninum ... appellantes</i>             | 8                       |                      |
| 19.2 <i>cui et ipsi ... nomen inposuit</i>               | 9                       |                      |
| 19.3 <i>et Antonini nomen ... adscribendum putaret</i>   | 9                       | (6 frgm.)            |
| 20.1-3 <i>Legisse me ... diutine mansit</i>              | 85                      | 131 / 4215           |
| 21.11 <i>nomenque illud ... amatum est</i>               | 7                       | = 3.1 %              |
| <i>Cc.</i> 1.1 <i>quorum unum ... pater dixit</i>        | 7                       | (3 frgm.)            |
| 8.10 <i>Qui ... desideratus est</i>                      | 22                      | 48 / 2033            |
| 9.2 <i>ita enim ... nomen obsederat.</i>                 | 19                      | = 2.4%               |
| <i>G</i> 1.1 <i>de cuius ... nomen adpositum</i>         | 19                      |                      |
| 1.5-7 <i>quod cum fecisset ... de Antonini nomine.</i>   | 74                      | (4 frgm.)            |
| 2.2-5 <i>fuit autem ... principes cucurrisset.</i>       | 115                     | 213 / 1231           |
| 5.3 <i>...et Antonini ut quidam dicunt...</i>            | 5                       | = 17.3 %             |
| <i>OM</i> 2.1 <i>seque nunc ... et militum</i>           | 14                      |                      |
| 2.5-3.7 <i>et mirum ... non putarent</i>                 | 225                     |                      |
| 5.1 <i>quem continuo ... a militibus iussit</i>          | 9                       |                      |
| 5.7 <i>infulsit praeterea...Diadumenus Antoninus</i>     | 21                      |                      |
| 6.6-7 <i>item infra: Diadumenum ... maxime diligitis</i> | 41                      |                      |

<sup>600</sup> The terminology is based on Genette 1980, 86 *sqq.* (duration) and 113 *sqq.* (frequency), see chapter 1.

<sup>601</sup> For the same reason, *PN* 8.5 (*quod omnino intellectum non est, nisi cum Bassianus Antonini (...) nomen accepit*) does not belong to the theme, as the passage provides a genuine fact concerning Caracalla's name of Antoninus.

<sup>602</sup> The same holds good for *S* 19.2 *reliquit filios duos, Antoninum Bassianum et Getam* and similar instances in, e.g., *S* 16.3-4. Also, the 'patent additions' (Syme) in the lives preceding *S* are not counted (treated in § 5.2.1), as these often only consist of a few words and are not really part of the literary theme.

|   |      |                                      |
|---|------|--------------------------------------|
| 7.5-8 <i>filium sane suum ... vixisse memoratur</i>                   | 106  |                                      |
| 8.4 <i>ac Bassiani ... appellatus</i>                                 | 19   |                                      |
| 9.2 <i>et Bassiani ... nomen accepit</i>                              | 6    |                                      |
| 10.2 <i>miro amore ... inclinatis</i>                                 | 6    |                                      |
| 10.3 <i>et amore Antonini</i>   | 3    | (12 frgm.)                           |
| 10.6 <i>non enim aliquid ... adpositus</i>                            | 19   | 584 / 2495                           |
| 14.2 <i>scilicet Antonino ... pervastata sunt</i>                     | 115  | = 23.4 %                             |
| <b>Dd.</b> 1.1-3.1 <i>Antonini Diadumeni ... nomine celebrata est</i> | 486  |                                      |
| 5.4-5 <i>natus est ... illius emanasset</i>                           | 68   |                                      |
| 6.1-10 <i>haec sunt ... satis constat</i>                             | 202  | (5 frgm.)                            |
| 7.1-8.1 <i>exstat epistola ... filius Antoninus</i>                   | 241  | 999 / 1679                           |
| 9.4 <i>caritate nominis</i>   | 2    | = 59.4 %                             |
| <b>Hel.</b> 1.4 <i>qui pari potestate ... acceperant</i>              | 8    |                                      |
| 1.5 <i>atque Antonini ... nominis amaretur</i>                        | 26   |                                      |
| 1.7 <i>postremo cum ... Antoninorum fuit</i>                          | 15   |                                      |
| 2.4 <i>sed de nomine ... amicas caras</i>                             | 38   |                                      |
| 3.1 <i>excitatisque omnibus ... factum est</i>                        | 34   |                                      |
| 8.4 <i>sed multo magis ... appellans, simul...</i>                    | 14   |                                      |
| 9.2 <i>nomen autem ... quod invaserat</i>                             | 7    |                                      |
| 17.4 <i>nomen eius ... filius Antonini</i>                            | 22   |                                      |
| 18.1 <i>hic ultimus ... sunt abolita</i>                              | 46   | (11 frgm.)                           |
| 33.8 <i>hic finis ... quam nomine</i>                                 | 18   | 287 / 5782                           |
| 34.6 <i>et quoniam hic ... non Antonini</i>                           | 59   | = 5,0 %                              |
| <b>AS</b> 1.1 <i>sic enim ... erasum est</i>                          | 22   |                                      |
| 2.2 <i>huc accessit ... dehonestavit imperium</i>                     | 22   |                                      |
| 5.1 <i>delatum sibi Antonini nomen a senatu recusavit</i>             | 7    |                                      |
| 5.5 - 6.1 <i>recusavit et ... a senatu recusavit</i>                  | 25   |                                      |
| 7.1-6 <i>et cum egisset ... Antonine haveas</i>                       | 128  | (7 frgm.)                            |
| 8.2-11.4 <i>et cum diceret ... nomen ingerite</i>                     | 581  | 799 / 10701                          |
| 12.4 <i>sed quamvis ... nomina susciperet</i>                         | 14   | = 7.5 %                              |
| <b>Gd.</b> 3.3 <i>scripsit praeterea ... gesta perscribens</i>        | 36   |                                      |
| 4.7-8 <i>scripsit et laudes ... nomen insereret</i>                   | 53   |                                      |
| 9.5 <i>in plurimis autem ... veros Antonios</i>                       | 20   |                                      |
| 17.1 <i>quam ut nonnulli ... ab Antoniis duxit</i>                    | 9    | (6 frgm.)                            |
| 17.2 <i>quod Antoninorum ... in senatu</i>                            | 15   | 153 / 5563                           |
| 17.5 <i>et primis ... haberi coeptus</i>                              | 20   | = 2.8 %                              |
| <b>Total</b>  | 3214 | (54 frgm.)<br>3214 / 32020<br>= 10 % |

Figure 5.7: The passages constituting the NA theme in the HA, according to book order from S to Gd., together with their NS frequency and percentage of the total book.

The distribution of the *NA theme* over the books, together with the intervals between the passages, can be seen in the following diagram (the horizontal line renders the numbers of words):

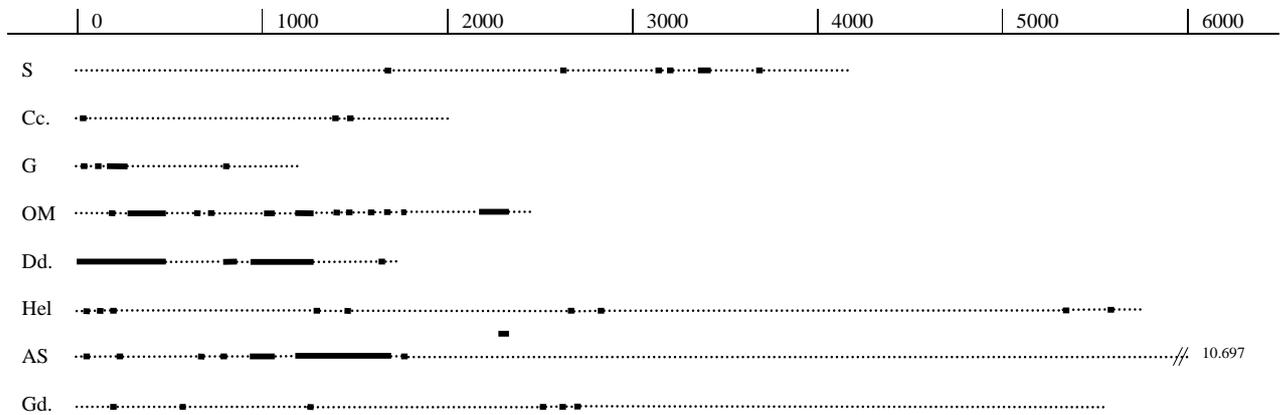


Figure 5.8: The distribution of the passages and their duration constituting the *NA theme* in the *HA*.

When the resulting information about frequency and duration is put together, the following picture is the result:

| A          | B  | C   | D    |
|------------|----|-----|------|
| <i>S</i>   | 6  | 131 | 3.1  |
| <i>Cc.</i> | 3  | 48  | 2.4  |
| <i>G</i>   | 4  | 213 | 17.3 |
| <i>OM</i>  | 12 | 584 | 23.4 |
| <i>Dd.</i> | 5  | 999 | 59.4 |

| A            | B  | C    | D   |
|--------------|----|------|-----|
| <i>Hel.</i>  | 11 | 287  | 5.0 |
| <i>AS</i>    | 7  | 799  | 7.5 |
| <i>Gd.</i>   | 6  | 153  | 2.8 |
| <b>total</b> | 54 | 3214 | 9.5 |

Figure 5.9: Books in the *HA* from *S* to *Gd.* with the *NA theme* (A) measured according to frequency (B), *NS* (C) and relative *NS* (D).<sup>603</sup>

The figures provides some interesting information: the frequency of the theme is high in *G*, *OM* and *Hel.*, which means that the motifs are distributed more widely over the narration than in the other *vitae*. The *NS* taken up, however, is significantly higher in *Dd.* (999 words) and *AS* (799), especially as a result of documents in direct discourse (see § 6.1.2). The briefness of the biographies of *OM* and *Dd.* make that in these lives the relative *NS* of the *NA theme* (as measured against the total length of the *vitae*) is higher than in other lives.

The only life that can hardly do without the theme is the life of *Dd.* Its use here shows that the author needed it to pad out a meagre subject and link *IL* to *EL* at the same time with a kind of ‘Leitmotif’. The section of *IL* is a transitional part of the *HA* in many respects: here we find the last pseudo-primary (*OM*) and pseudo-secondary lives (*Dd.*),

<sup>603</sup> Relative narrative space is the part of narrative space in proportion to the total of narrative space in a life, so: 3.1 per cent of the narrative in *S* is devoted to the *NA theme*.

and the change from single lives (*Hel.* and *AS*) to combined ones (*Max.*, *Gd.* and *MB*), with the *lacuna* as their terminus. A striking aspect here is that precisely in the life of the *ultimus Antoninorum* Elagabalus relatively little space is devoted to the theme. The neglect of the theme in *Hel.* may have been part of the author's literary plan, as in the life of Alexander Severus, Elagabalus' moral antipode who went so far as to refuse the name, the theme returns in full force. This paradox is prepared for in the preceding books: the name is extolled ever higher, as the emperors who bore it after Marcus Aurelius' death were increasingly vile. The theme is absent in the life of Commodus, which fits in well with the author's disappointment about bad rulers called Antoninus.

## 5.6.2 Motifs

From the introduction of the *NA* theme to the end of the Gordiani, many motifs pass review. Together, they make up the theme, which shows a high degree of coherency owing to a constant repetition of the same information. In the recurrent motifs many of the same words are recycled, but often changed and distorted. Here is an enumeration of all the major motifs, together with a registration of their provenance:<sup>604</sup>

- In accordance with Septimius Severus' wish, all the emperors should be called Antoninus (*S* 19.3, *G* 2.2), with Antoninus equalling the title of Augustus (*Cc.* 9.2, *AS* 8.1, 10.3).
- An emperor cannot do without the *nomen imperatorium* of Antoninus (*OM* 3.9; *Dd.* 7.2).
- The honor of being father to an Antoninus (*S* 20.1-2, *G* 1.6, *Dd.* 7.1, 7.5-7).
- The *desiderium*, *amor* or *caritas* for the name of Antoninus among the soldiers (*Cc.* 8.10, *OM* 3.9, 10.2, 10.3; *Dd.* 1.5, 2.10, 6.10, 7.2, 9.4) and even in the hearts of all men (*Cc.* 9.2, *Hel.* 1.5, 3.1). The opposite is the sorrow about the lack of an Antoninus (*Dd.* 1.2 *ingens maeror*)
- The number of Antonini is determined (four in *G* 2.3, eight in *OM* 3.1-4) and they are mentioned in *enumeratio* (*OM* 7.7, *Dd.* 6.3-10, *AS* 7.3, 9.1-2, 10.5).
- The name is also used as *praenomen*, *cognomen* or *signum* (*OM* 3.5-6, *Dd.* 6.3-10, *Hel.* 18.1, 34.6, *Gd.* 4.8, 17.2) not *proprium nomen* (*G* 2.3), in *Hel.* 3.1 it is called a *titulus* (for Diadumenian).
- The pollution of the name is caused by Verus, Commodus, Caracalla and Elagabalus (*Cc.* 9.2, *OM* 7.6-8, *Hel.* 2.4, 9.2, *AS* 2.2, 9.4), the opposite process of purification is mentioned in *AS* 7.2.
- In contrast to the degeneration of the name, as caused by some of the emperors who bore it, the name is described as ever more sacrosanct: *S* 20.3 (*sanctum illud nomen*), *S* 21.11 (*nomenque illud venerabile*) and *OM* 7.7 (*nomen illud sanctum*), *Hel.* 2.4 (*sanctum illud Antoninorum nomen*, *AS* 7.6 *sacrum nomen*, 9.7 *istud venerabile omnibus nomen*). The gods protect an emperor called Antoninus (*Dd.* 1.8, as 7.6, 9.5-6).

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<sup>604</sup> It is interesting to take into account Hartke's short list of motifs in the acclamations in *AS* (1951, 137): purification of the name, ancestry, tradition, popularity, imperial interests.

- The name is even rated higher than the gods (*Dd.* 7.1, 7.2, 7.4). *Nomen is numen*: *AS* 9.1; similarly, the reference to the *templa Antoninorum* (*AS* 7.5, 10.7) attests the divine status of the Antonines.
- The *sanguis*-motif makes clear that the name of Antoninus is more than a simple title: it is divine blood that flows through the Antonines' veins (*Hel.* 3.1, *AS* 7.3, 8.3).

There are some emperors, to whom individual motifs are ascribed; here are the chief ones:

- Severus grants the name of Antoninus to Geta, because he wants to be part of Marcus' family and admires his predecessor (*S* 19.2-3, *G* 2.2), or out of love for Antoninus Pius (*S* 10.6, 20.1, *G* 2.3).
- Macrinus calls his son Diadumenian Antoninus, to avert suspicion of involvement in Caracalla's murder (*OM* 3.8, 7.5), because the name was popular among soldiers (*OM* 3.9) or because he feared that the soldiers followed Antoninus Pius' associates (*Dd.* 1.2). Macrinus may have called himself Antoninus as a *praenomen* (*OM* 3.6).
- Diadumenian is called *Pseudantoninus* (*Hel.*8.4) by Elagabalus, while Cassius Dio (80.1.1) styles Elagabalus Ψευδαντωνίνος.
- Elagabalus was the *ultimus Antoninorum* (*Hel.* 1.7, 18.1, 34.6), and his name was erased (*Hel.* 17.4, 18.1, 2, *AS* 1.1). Cf. also *Hel.* 33.8: *Finis Antoninorum nomini in re p. fuit*. He is not styled Pseudantoninus, as Dio does, but there is an allusion to the name in *Hel.* 33.8: *scientibus cunctis istum Antoninum tam falsum fuisse quam nomine*.
- Gordian composes literature about the *Antonini* (*Gd.* 3.3, 4.7-8); they are also called *Antonii* (*OM* 3.5, *Hel.* 18.1, 34.7, *Gd.* 9.3-4, 17.1/5). He has his son inscribed as Antoninus in the *acta publica* *Gd.* 4.8 and wants him to be called Antoninus in the senate (17.2).

### 5.6.3 Description of the NA Theme

The books in which the *NA* theme occurs do not correspond with the books devoted to the canonical eight Antonines. *AP*, *MA*, *V*, *C* deal with Antonines, but the *NA* theme is absent from the books. In *Cc.*, *G* and *Dd.*, Antonines are treated but the theme, while increasingly present, hardly concerns Caracalla, the most prominent of these three alleged Antonines. In *OM* the theme is omnipresent, even if Macrinus was only the father of an Antonine, whose status seems to be as important for the author as an Antoninus himself. In *Hel.* the *NA* passages are surprisingly few for the last of the Antonines. Yet they reappear in full force in *AS* and *Gd.*, although the emperors in these books were no Antonini.

The author develops his theme artfully. He begins by using faulty information about Verus' name of Antoninus, and later he reckons Geta among the Antonines. In Verus' case, he merely adds the name of Antoninus, sometimes in a relative clause, to the basic text. In the life of Commodus, he surprisingly fails to insert any passages on the theme, while in later lives (from *OM*) Commodus is named as the first emperor to disgrace the name. In Severus's biography, he begins to elaborate on the theme with regard to Geta, while knowing that this is incorrect (as his source does not mention anything on the subject). For Caracalla's *vita*, he does not need the theme, as Caracalla

was actually named Antoninus, which would have made it a superfluous addition to his life of this emperor, apart from the *desiderium Antonini* that the author came up with when Macrinus gained the throne. The author finds it most interesting to make Septimius Severus the father of two Antonines, a theme that he developed ever since taking the idea from Eutropius 8.9.2 (echoed in *MA* 7.6 and *Ael.* 5.12.3). Accordingly, the theme is now expressed as a dual combination of *filius imperatoris* and co-emperorship. This is why he wants Geta to be an Antoninus (*G* 1.7, Septimius' address in a letter: *salutate Antoninos filios et successores meos*). Later, the venerability of the name is set off against the bad emperors bearing it. The *NA* theme enables the author to relegate Macrinus to second place with respect to his son: the latter was a real Antoninus, Macrinus merely a usurper. The responsibility for Caracalla's death has to be stressed, which causes some repetitive additions in *Cc.* Diadumenian's status among the Antonines as described by the good emperor Alexander Severus himself: Diadumenian was too young, and his father was responsible for the misuse of the name (*AS* 9.3: *Diadumenus autem nec tempus habuit nec aetatem et arte patris hoc nomen incurrit*). Just as in the case of Caracalla, relatively few words are devoted to the *NA* theme in the life of Elagabalus, who, though a real Antoninus, was seen as the worst of them all.

Then comes Alexander. In this book, many motifs come to an end, with occasionally surprising twists. In the first place: contrary to all expectations when considering the importance of the name and the quality of the emperor, Alexander refuses the name (*AS* 5.3/5, 6.1, 8.4-5, 9.1-4/7). In *AS* 10.4 something important happens: the name of Augustus is restored to its old glory: *Augustus primus primus est huius auctor imperii, et in eius nomen omnes velut quadam adoptione aut iure hereditario succedimus; Antonini ipsi Augusti sunt dicti*. The theme of adoptive and hereditary emperorship is brought up again, which was first encountered in *Ael.* 1.2 and 2.2. The clause *Antonini ipsi Augusti sunt dicti* proves that the name of Augustus prevails over that of Antoninus, and that Antoninus cannot compete with the founder of the empire. Alexander expresses the hope that there will be love and respect for the name of Alexander, by which he implicitly replaces the most important *NA* motif: the *desiderium nominis Antonini*, *AS* 11.1: *enisurus, ut et hoc nomen, quod in imperium detulimus, tale sit, ut et ab aliis desideretur et bonis vestrae pietatis iudiciis offeratur*. After the gratuitous *contiones* by Diadumenian, it is noticeable that an emperor himself seems to make an end to the *nomen Antoninorum* craze. We only have to call to mind the author's words in *Ael.* 3-5, in the digression of the *nomen Caesaris*: *Certe quaecumque illa, felix necessitas fuit, unde tam clarum et duraturum cum aeternitate mundi nomen effloruit*. Our point of departure on the treatment of the name of Antoninus was the *nomen Caesaris*, in § 5.1. The words uttered in *Ael.* were a premonition, a sign that the *nomen Antoninorum* would turn out to be less enduring than the names of Caesar and August. For all this, there is, as we have seen, a pause in the *vita Maximini*, after which the author continues the theme. While *AS* seems to make an end to the theme, the author still has something up his sleeve: the Gordians.

#### 5.6.4 The Origin of the *NA* Theme

The importance of the *NA* theme raises the question what the author based his idea on. It may be supposed that it was either taken from a source or invented by the author and

dressed up along the lines of his literary models. If taken from a source, it must be asked whether this source was contemporary with the Antonines, that is to say: written in the time of, or briefly after, the *ultimus Antoninorum* Elagabalus. Was the *nomen Antoninorum* already recognised as a canonical, sacrosanct imperial name to the extent that the author suggests, leaving aside for the moment that the first three Antonines were deified and worshipped. Septimius Severus, in calling his son Bassianus Caracalla, fell back on the names of his predecessors, just as Macrinus did, but this was mainly in order to claim a place in the Antoninian dynasty. There was a tale about Septimius' dream that an Antonine was destined to succeed him, probably derived from Marius Maximus, who seems to have had a preference for such details and supernatural intervention in imperial affairs. Whether other contemporary historiographers or biographers ever paid attention to the name's popularity as a theme cannot be determined: no traces survive, apart from Dio's designation of Elagabalus as Pseudantoninus.

Many scholars have studied the books in which the theme occurs, and some the theme as such. Hartke (1951, 123) took the historical popularity of the Antonines for granted and saw this as the explanation of the *nomen Antoninorum* obsession in the *HA*. Syme (1968, 90) assumed that Marius Maximus was the source and described the theme as a thread running through Maximus' biographies: writing under Alexander Severus in a time of prosperity ('ostensible peace and good government'), Maximus may have looked back on evil reigns and conceived the idea of decline and fall. The *nomen Antoninorum* could have served as symbol of this decline, especially as Elagabalus had been the last and worst of a series of Antonines. Three years later, in his *Emperors and Biography*, Syme repeated the idea that the label *ultimus Antoninorum* might well have been taken from Marius Maximus.<sup>605</sup> His earlier idea was adopted by Barnes (1972, 65 and 74), who gives it an even greater importance: 'taken up and developed by the *HA*, it may originally have been the major theme of the imperial biographies of Marius Maximus', though there are no traces left in the thirty-eight fragments that have been transmitted in the form of quotations in the *HA*.<sup>606</sup>

Not all scholars share the idea that the *NA* theme originates with Marius Maximus.<sup>607</sup> There is indeed much to be said against it. First, the designation of Verus

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<sup>605</sup> This idea was formulated after Syme had brought up *Ignotus* as a source for the first nine primary lives, which caused him to separate *Hel.* from the preceding biographies with regard to used sources. In that context, the evidence for Marius Maximus' 'decline and fall' on the basis of the *Nomen Antoninorum* becomes weaker. Den Hengst (1981, 42) also assumes that Marius Maximus was the source: 'It was a momentous event [viz. Severus calling his son Aurelius Antoninus and himself *divi Marci fil.*] in the history of the third century, which must have dominated Maximus' work'.

<sup>606</sup> Syme (1968, 90n1), after an idea from Barnes (1967, 66n11), argues that Ausonius may have based his twelve *Caesares post Tranquillum*, the poems about the emperors from Nerva to Elagabalus, on Marius Maximus' *vitae*. The last two transmitted verses, from the *Heliogabalus*, happen to contain the only formula that is reminiscent of the many Antonine variations in *HA*: *Antoninorum nomina falsa gerens...* (*Caesares* 98). Schwartz (1972, 269) on the other hand concludes that Ausonius' wording not necessarily depends on Marius Maximus, and that the author of the *HA* followed Ausonius in his formulations of the *NA* theme. Green (1981, 227) is also sceptical about Syme's reconstruction.

<sup>607</sup> In general, Aurelius Victor is indicated as the origin of the theme, in connection with *OM* 3.8, see § 5.3.1.

and Geta as Antonini appears to be based on fourth-century sources,<sup>608</sup> while in the early third century, the time of the *ultimus Antoninorum*, which is only half a century after Verus' death, such a mistake is less likely to have been made. This reduces the number of Antonini to six, which effectively shows that the oracle of the *vates Caelestis* in Carthage as described in *OM* cannot be based on Marius Maximus in its present form.<sup>609</sup> Next, in the parts in which Marius Maximus sometimes serves as a source, Geta is not called Antoninus, as we have seen.<sup>610</sup> Finally, in the detachable fragments of the *NA* theme, Marius Maximus is not cited even once. There is not much evidence for Marius Maximus or any one of his contemporaries as the author's source, while there are several fourth-century models (Eutropius for joint emperorship and the designation of Verus and Geta as Antonini, Aurelius Victor for the *desiderium nominis* and Ausonius for the *ultimus Antoninorum*) that may have inspired the author of the *HA*. For the rest, the artfully elaborated theme, with its complex paradox of the increasing popularity of the *nomen Antoninorum* and its ongoing pollution by those who bore the name, mostly occurring in the lives of emperors who were not called Antoninus<sup>611</sup>, clearly remains the author's own product.

A final remark may be in order. In the section of *LL*, the Antonini sometimes crop up, but only in the shape of the first three. In *Cl.*, the biography of the eulogised *senex* Claudius, the Antonini are praised collectively, in one breath with the *optimus princeps* Trajan: *Cl.* 18.4, *Tac.* 16.6 or *Pr.* 12.2.<sup>612</sup> Often, the *pietas* of Antoninus Pius is praised, e.g. in *Cl.* 2.3.<sup>613</sup> As a group, the eight Antonines disappear from the stage after *Gd.*, and with them the theme of the *nomen Antoninorum*.

### 5.6.5 The *NA* Theme and the Development of the *HA*

There is one very notable thing about the *NA* theme: in every single case, it can be omitted from the text, often to the advantage of the narrative flow. Interpolations of paraphrases of Herodian (*OM* 8.4 and 9.2) and the *Epitome* (*Hel.* 17.4) indicate that the theme has been added to these sources. On the other hand, the *NA* passages themselves never contain interpolations from other sources themselves. Meanwhile, scattered as they are, the fragments show a strong internal coherency. This situation may reveal something

<sup>608</sup> Eutropius 8.10.1, Festus 14.4; from the fifth century: Orosius 7.15.2-3. These sources possibly derive their information from the *Kaisergeschichte*. See also *Pan. Lat.* 4.24.6, where Lucius Verus is called Antoninus.

<sup>609</sup> Barnes 1970b considers the oracle an invention by the author, possibly taken from *P* 4.2 (see for bibliography on this passage Chastagnol 1994, 260n1).

<sup>610</sup> The *omina* in *G* 3 are *omina mortis* and do not belong to the *NA* theme.

<sup>611</sup> 58 per cent of the narrative space of the *NA*-passages is found in the lives of the emperors who were, historically, not called Antoninus (Septimius Severus, Geta, Macrinus, Alexander Severus, Gordianus).

<sup>612</sup> *Cl.* 2.3: *unum tamen tacere non debeo, quod illum et senatus et populus et ante imperium et in imperio et post imperium sic dilexit, ut satis constet neque Traianum neque Antoninos neque quemquam alium principem sic amatum*; *Tac.* 16.6: (*Probus*) *vir Aureliano, Traiano, Antoninis, Alexandro, Claudioque preferendus*; *Pr.* 12.2: *Si recte cogitemus, non nobis Aurelianus, non Alexander, non Antonini, non Traianus aut Claudius requirendi sunt*.

<sup>613</sup> *Cl.* 2.3: *in quo Traiani virtus, Antonini pietas, Augusti moderatio et magnorum principum bona sic fuerunt, ut non ille ab aliis exemplum caperet sed, etiamsi illi non fuissent, hic ceteris reliquisset exemplum*.

about how the author wrote parts of the *HA* and the order in which the different fragments entered the work: a difficult subject, requiring extreme caution. Still, the detachability of the *NA* fragments suggests that here lies an opportunity for distilling inferences about the development of the series. Accordingly, we shall consider the books in which the *NA* passages occur (as well as some in which they are lacking) and draw some tentative conclusions that may prove useful in the course of further research.

In the Primary Lives of *S* and *Cc.*, the picture is rather clear: thoughts about Geta as an Antonine and Severus being the father of two Antonines (*S*) and the popularity of the name (*Cc.*) are added to a basic text. In *S* 10.2-5, this leads to a confusing account in which two different Geta's are treated in one passage. Caracalla's appointment as Antoninus and Septimius' dream in *S* 10.4 are a reason for the author to add his faulty information about Geta here, apparently to prepare the reader for his massive fraud in the Secondary Life of *G*. In that biography, it appears that the author himself blended the information about Septimius' brother in his primary source with his own inventions about Septimius' son and brother's namesake (*S* 10.5 / *G* 2.5, see § 5.2.4). It is hard to say if this is deliberate, in an attempt to delude the reader, or whether it was an authorial slip. Still, the difference between the primary source and the author's addition is clearly discernible in the blending of the two passages in *S* in *G*. With regard to *Cc.*, the *desiderium Antonini* prepares the way for the theme in *OM* 3.9 and other places. It can be concluded that the *NA*-passages in *S* and *Cc.* were added to a basic source without much consequences for the overall structure of the books.<sup>614</sup>

In § 5.4 on *G*, *Dd.* and *OM*, we concluded that in the primary source Caracalla and Geta must have been treated together. The detachability of the *NA* passages provides the opportunity to reconstruct an earlier stage of the two books. Consider the following: *Cc.* consists of 2033 words, the shortest of the Primary Lives after *DI*; the 1231 words of *G* result in the second shortest of all the lives in *HA*, with the exception of the incomplete *Val*. Without their *NA* passages *Cc.* and *G* are even shorter, consisting of 1985 and 1018 words respectively. The presence of a short prefatory remark in *G* (from which the *NA*-clause must be detached) that resembles the preface of *V* indicates that the author had already separated the short biographies of *Cc.* and *G* before the addition of the *NA* theme. Again, an earlier stage can be postulated. The information in the passage *G* 6.1-7.6 (341 words) was taken from *Cc.*, and consequently was no part of the source that treated Caracalla and Geta together. Neither was the prefatory remark (37 words). So, at least 378 words were added to construct a separate biography of *G*, whose subject, Geta, was treated together with his brother in the source (a procedure comparable to that of *MA* and *V*<sup>615</sup>).

<sup>614</sup> Syme (1981, 87) drew a similar conclusion with regard to the additions of the *NA* theme to *S* and *Cc.*: 'He therefore [viz. the addition of the list of eight Antonini in *OM*] imported his new preoccupation into the *Vitae* had had already compiled'.

<sup>615</sup> Barnes (1967, 66) assumes that Marius Maximus did not write a separate life of Verus, while an unknown biographical source did (Syme's *Ignotus*: 1971, 33); Cameron 1971, 264-5 convincingly shows that the source must have treated Marcus and Verus together (be it in two books), as the author himself seems to indicate in *AC* 8.5. Schlumberger (1974, 133) agrees with this point of view, without reference to Cameron; See also Marriott 1979, 70; Den Hengst 1981, 38n16; Birley 1971, 317-21 (319: 'In fact, comparison of the Lives of Marcus and Verus in the *HA* shows that the material in the *Verus* could perfectly well have fitted into an original Life of Marcus.').

The reconstruction may well indicate that the two brothers were described together in the source (as attested in *Cc.* 1.1: *Ex duobus liberis, quos Septimius Severus reliquit...*).<sup>616</sup> The textual division also appears from *G* 1.1, in which the order of treatment (cf. *V* 1.1) is explained. The author must have inserted the *NA* passages - which he either had at his disposal already or invented as he went along - immediately after, and he added them to the first part of *G* (caput 1 and 2). As a result, he was obliged to add an extra element to the preface (*de cuius ... nomen adpositum*). Thus, the hypothesis may be ventured that in an earlier stage of their existence, *Cc.* and *G* were two lives of 1985 and 1018 words respectively, padded out with 48 and 213 *NA* words respectively to biographies of 2033 and 1231 words. The differences between the older parts and the *NA* parts are still discernible, as in the original biography of the two brothers Geta is never called Antoninus. The following figure shows the NS of the various parts:

|            | <b>Basic Text</b> | <b>NA theme</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| <i>Cc.</i> | 1985              | 48              | 2033         |
| <i>G</i>   | 1018              | 213             | 1231         |

Figure 5.10: NS of basic parts and additions of the NA theme in *Cc.* and *G*

Something comparable must have been the case with *OM* and *Dd.* (apart from the fact that almost nothing was known about the latter). *Omina* and letters concerning the emperor's son were already present in the basic text, and when the two biographies were separated, *Dd.* was incapable of standing by itself. Before the *NA* theme was added, *OM* and *Dd.* had 1911 and 680 words respectively, a sum of 2591 words (cf. 2625 words for the hypothetical *Cc.+G*).<sup>617</sup> After being split up and supplemented with *NA* elements (584 and 999 words), they now contained 2495 and 1679 words (cf. 2033 and 1231 words for *Cc.* and *G*). The break between the original parts and the *NA* theme is still visible, as discussed in § 5.4.2-3. The biographies can even be re-linked to one another, as shown in the structural analysis in that place.

|               | <b>Basic Text</b> | <b>NA theme</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| <i>OM</i>     | 1911              | 584             | 2495         |
| <i>Dd.</i>    | 680               | 999             | 1679         |
| <i>OM+Dd.</i> | 2591              | 1583            |              |

Figure 5.11: NS of basic parts and additions of the NA theme in *OM* and *Dd.*

The original parts and the additions from the *NA theme* in this part of the *HA*, the transition from EL to IL, can be pictured as follows (the basis parts in dark-grey, the *NA* additions in a brighter shade):

<sup>616</sup> The approximate length of this hypothetical biography in the source can be estimated thus: the basic texts of *Cc.* (1985 words) + *G* (1018) - prefatory remark (37) and rewritten part (341) = 3003 - 378 = 2625 words. The number is purely hypothetical, as it is not known what the source must have looked like: the author may have followed it more or less closely, or abbreviated the information he found in it.

<sup>617</sup> The number of 2625 is reached by subtracting the reformulated parts (341 words of *G* 6.1-7.6 and the 37 words of the short preface in *G* 1) from the sum of the basic parts of *Cc.* and *G* (1985+1018=3003), which results in a computation of the purely hypothetical base of the combined biography *Cc.+G*.

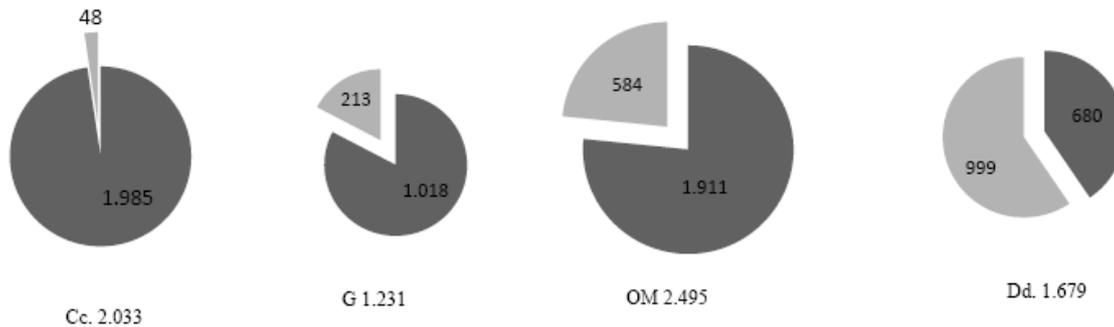


Figure 5.12: NS of the NA theme and basic parts in Cc., G, OM, Dd.

This analysis raises the question in what order the several redactions took place. So far, we can conclude that the author had at his disposal a source that consisted of at least nine lives (*H*, *AP*, *MA+V*, *C*, *P*, *DI*, *S*, *Cc.+G* and *Hel.*). The lives of *MA+V* and *Cc.+G* were split up at a certain stage of composition and were supplemented with information from other sources. In chapter 3, a distinction was made between the Secondary Lives of *AC*, *PN* and *CIA* and those of *Ael.* and *G*, as the first three are often mentioned together in the *HA*. Knowing that the lives of *G* and *Dd.* are announced in *Ael.* as a separate category, linking these two strongly together, and considering that *AC*, *PN* and *CIA* do not contain the *NA* theme, we may assume that the latter three were written before, or at least conceived separately from *Ael.*, *G*, *OM* and *Dd.* *Ael.* continues the *nomen Caesareum* theme from *CIA*, but only to prepare for its replacement by the *NA* theme. An original *Cc.+G* and *OM+Dd.* may have been present at the time that the Secondary Lives were added to the series,<sup>618</sup> but only after the *NA* theme was added.

The problems of the development of the *HA* are far from solved by this hypothesis, but one cannot simply turn a blind eye to the detachability of the *NA* theme, or what the structure of the text and the sharp breaks between its separate parts reveal about its genesis.<sup>619</sup> The *NA* theme, its function being to link EL and IL, must have been added at a late, if not final, redactional stage. In the Intermediary Lives of *Hel.* and *AS*, the *NA* theme also appears as an addition to an older textual nucleus. Still, the space that

<sup>618</sup> Mark, again (after § 5.4.2), the similarities Klebs (1888, 340-2), observed between *AC* and *Dd.* – but only with texts that we defined as the basic part of *Dd.*.

<sup>619</sup> It has been postulated that the author went back for a second redaction after the writing of *AS*: Syme (1971, 87-8) states that ‘The writing of the ‘Nebenviten’ and the revision of the nine primary Vitae might fall, not after the Caracalla (...) but somewhat later. That is to say, after the series which ends with Severus Alexander.’ The moment the author went back for a revision has been discussed heavily, see e.g. Cameron (1971, 254-67), who suggests that the *HA* originally led off with *AS*, and Syme’s reaction in *JRS* 62 (1972), 123 sqq. (= 1983, 12-29: ‘The Composition of the Historia Augusta: Recent Theories’). Barnes (1970, 35 and 1978, 58) struggles with the question in which order the similar passages *AS* 26.5/6 and *PN* 7.4 were written (see also Syme 1983, 18). Den Hengst (1995, 166), in support of Cameron, suggests on the basis of the author’s cross-references that the author wrote the lives from *AS* to *Car.* before the inclusion of the secondary vitae in the series. Further evidence is provided by the fact that the bogus author Cordus, extensively introduced in the preface to *OM* (1.3, see § 3.3), already occurs in *CIA* 7.2. The quest for more redactional stages has been ventured by Honoré 1987 and Callu 1992, whose theories were refuted by Paschoud 1996, XX-XXXVII. The question remains undecided.

these passages occupy is negligible compared to the total. The addition of the theme did not result in an essential change of structure. This makes it hard to determine at what stage the interpolations were effected, whether they were inserted during the writing process and while using the sources, or whether they were added later. No programmatic remarks appear in these lives with regard to structure. As we have seen in chapters 3 and 4, a new ordering of the material, viz. the description of lives in combined books, begins with *Max*. It can be concluded from the discussed passages that the *NA* theme in *Gd.* still has the characteristic of detachability, but at the same time nowhere truly interrupts the narrative flow, as it often does in the lives from *S* to *Dd.*, and to a lesser extent in *Hel.* and *AS*. In my general conclusion we shall come to speak about the problem of the development of the *HA* and the various routes along it may have come into being. The present analysis of the *NA* theme may have contributed an extra element to the study of the *HA*, whether as a clue to the solution of a problem that may never be solved entirely or as a new complication. That element is that the *HA* as the product of a single redaction has become less probable, unless a better explanation for the striking inconsistencies of the *NA* theme and its accompanying text is provided.<sup>620</sup>

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<sup>620</sup> The idea that the *NA*-passages are mainly by one hand, and must be insertions, is not entirely new. It is interesting to revoke Lécivain's theory about the theme, though his conclusions were obstructed by the fact that he considered the names of the scriptores as genuine. Lécivain 1904 supposed that the *NA*-passages from *S* to *Cc* were composed by a 'second compilateur', namely *S* 10.5-6 (p.166), 16.3-4 (169), 19.2-3 (171), 20.1 (172) and *Cc* 8.3 (178), 8.9-10 (179) and that the *NA*-passages in *G* (260-1), *OM* (183) and *Dd.* were all by the bad author Capitolinus, who used the source of the *EKG*. So, Capitolinus intervened in the works of Aelius Spartianus, author of *G* and Aelius Lampridius, author of *Dd.*