

# *Culto Imperial: política y poder*

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Proyecto PRI06B286  
*Foros Romanos de Extremadura. Análisis y Difusión del Patrimonio Extremeño.*  
Consejería de Infraestructuras y Desarrollo Tecnológico de la Junta de Extremadura

Proyecto 3PR05B003  
*Lusitania Romana: Investigación para la difusión del pasado cultural del Occidente de la Península Ibérica.*  
Consejería de Infraestructuras y Desarrollo Tecnológico de la Junta de Extremadura

Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia  
Acción Complementaria HUM2005-25435-E/HIST  
Cofinanciación FEDER.



Culto Imperial: política y poder  
(Hispania Antigua, Serie Arqueológica, 1)

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Via Cassiodoro, 19 - 00193 Roma  
<http://www.lerma.it>

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**Atti del Congresso «Culto Imperial: Política y Poder»**

Nogales T. y González J. (Eds.)

In collana *Hispania Antigua*, collana diretta da Julián González, Universidad de Sevilla – Departamento de Filología Griega y Latina.

ISBN 88-8265-438-9

# Culto Imperial: política y poder

Trinidad Nogales  
Julián González  
*Editores*

Actas del Congreso Internacional  
Culto Imperial: política y poder  
Mérida  
Museo Nacional de Arte Romano  
18-20 de mayo, 2006



Al Prof. R. Étienne, en homenaje de la  
comunidad peninsular a su trayectoria  
científica, por su importante  
aportación al conocimiento  
del Culto Imperial  
en *Hispania*



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Listado de autores

THE CULT OF *MARS AVGVSTVS* AND ROMAN IMPERIAL POWER AT  
*AVGVSTA EMERITA* (LUSITANIA) IN THE THIRD CENTURY A.D.:  
A NEW VOTIVE DEDICATION \*

**Jonathan Edmondson**

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\* I would like to thank Prof. Dr. José María Álvarez Martínez, Director of the Museo Nacional de Arte Romano, for permission to publish this text. For discussion of it, I am grateful to José María Álvarez Martínez, José Luís de la Barrera, Trinidad Nogales Basarrate, Walter Trillmich, Helena Gimeno, Armin Stylow, Duncan Fishwick, Michael Crawford, Julián González, Patrick Le Roux, Werner Eck, James Rives, Christer Bruun and other members of the York-Toronto work in progress in Ancient History seminar. I am also grateful to Josefina Molina García (MNAR) for doing such an excellent job in cleaning the stone. I gratefully acknowledge the continued support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC/CRSH) for my research on Lusitania.



## INTRODUCTION

A small, now rather damaged, marble pedestal has formed part of the epigraphic collection of the Museo Nacional de Arte Romano, Mérida, since 1948. Its text is difficult to resolve completely, but enough survives of it to allow us to see that it was set up to support a votive offering to the god Mars Augustus by an otherwise unattested Roman governor of the province of Lusitania of equestrian rank. The occasion for the offering was to commemorate some refurbishment work that the governor had undertaken with regard to a *templum* in Emerita in fulfilment of a vow. As such, it makes a contribution to our understanding of the religious and civic life in Emerita in the mid- to later third century A.D. Furthermore, it is an important document for the administrative history of Roman Spain in the third century, but that is a topic that I shall treat in greater detail in a separate paper.

It is also of broader significance in that it attests a vow made by the Roman governor of the province of Lusitania to Mars Augustus in return for the divinity's assistance in ensuring the "safety of the times". The highest Roman official in the province was in this way invoking the strength of this god to help persuade Rome's Lusitanian subjects that the Roman state could guarantee security, an important claim to make in the militarily very unstable years of the mid- to later third century. Moreover, the god invoked was not just Mars pure and simple, but Mars Augustus; in other words, a divinity who drew some of his force from the perceived connection to the *domus Augusta*.

It has become traditional in studies of the so-called "imperial cult" in the Roman provinces to include some discussion of divinities given the epithet "Augustus" (or "Augusta"): Jupiter Augustus, Apollo Augustus, Mars Augustus, Mercurius Augustus, Venus Augusta, and so on.<sup>1</sup> While it is true that the addition of such an epithet certainly associated the divinity with the emperor and his family and sought the god's protection for the ruling Caesar, this does not mean that worship of these divinities should be interpreted as an act of "imperial cult" in the strictest sense.<sup>2</sup> "Imperial cult" involved the worship of one or more of the deified emperors and deified members of their family, the *divi* and *divae*, or sometimes the ruling emperor as well.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, the Roman provincial governor clearly thought that it was important to invoke an Augustan divinity who would be well-disposed towards the ruling emperor and towards ensuring the well-being and security of his subjects.

### I. THE PEDESTAL BLOCK [Figs. 1-3]

The dedication was inscribed on a small pedestal block [Fig. 1] of pinkish-white marble, probably from the quarries at Borba-Estremoz, 120 km west of Emerita and on the western fringes of its territory. The pedestal is broken across the bottom and its right side is badly damaged, especially at the top and bottom of the stone. It currently measures (23.1) cm high (maximum) by (29.5) cm wide (maximum) and 11.5 cm deep. As a result of the damage it has suffered, the right end of each line of the text is missing and

1 See ÉTIENNE 1958: 339-340; FISHWICK 1991: 446-454; LIERTZ 1998: 163-188; CLAUSS 2001: 280-289.

2 See the comments of GRADEL 2002: 104-105, discussing the temple of Fortuna Augusta at Pompeii.

3 A major difficulty with the term "imperial cult" is that it tends to unify under a single umbrella a plethora of different cults "sharing a common focus in the worship of the emperor, his family or predecessors, but operating quite differently according to a variety of different local circumstances": so BEARD, NORTH & PRICE 1998: 1.318; see also SCHEID 2001: 85, n. 1.



Fig. 1. Dedication to *Deus Mars Augustus*, *Emerita*. Mérida: MNAR. Photo: J. Edmondson.

the dedication may also have continued for one or more lines in the section lost at the bottom (for further discussion, see below Section II). The inscribed surface is also very worn in parts, which means that several letters are now very faint, and it has suffered quite serious pitting most of all in the centre of the block from line 4 down, obliterating all trace of the lettering in this section. Despite this damage, enough survives of the block to determine that the dedicatory inscription was framed within a double moulding.

The block entered the collection of the Museo Arqueológico in Mérida, now the Museo Nacional de Arte Romano (MNAR), on 15 November 1948, where it remains in storage (inv. no. 7501). It then formed part of a large collection of finds stored in the portico behind the Roman theatre that was transferred to the museum by authorization of the Patrimonio Artístico Nacional.<sup>4</sup> Since this portico was used in this era as a storage depot for finds made all over Mérida, it is impossible to determine where the small pedestal was originally discovered. However, given the content of its inscription, it was very likely set up in the urban centre of *Augusta Emerita* and, more particularly, in the sanctuary of the divinity to which it was dedicated: *Mars Augustus* (see further Section IV, below).

The top of the pedestal has a rectangular slot, 3 cm deep, cut into it [Fig. 2a], which measures 10 cm from left to right and 6 cm from front to back. This, it would appear, was designed to hold a small votive

<sup>4</sup> The museum's entry register notes that the whole group of finds "perhaps originated in excavations of D. Antonio Floriano" (i.e., in 1934-36) "or earlier" ("Procedente de la caseta del jardín de teatro romano y quizás de excavaciones de D. Antonio Floriano o anteriores"). See ÁLVAREZ SÁENZ DE BURUAGA 1948-49: 20-24, nos. 1-84. The inscribed base is perhaps recorded there on p. 22 as no. 26 ("basa fragmentada. Tiene en la parte plana restos de una inscripción").



Fig. 2a-b. Dedication to *Deus Mars Augustus*: (a) top; (b) rear side. Photos: MNAR

object that stood on a small rectangular base. Given the fact that the dedication was made to *Deo Marti Aug(usto)*, the pedestal probably supported a small bronze statuette or bust of Mars.<sup>5</sup> Other possible votive offerings include a *tropaeum*, some element of military uniform, for instance, a cuirass, or any other ex-voto with military overtones.<sup>6</sup> Another smaller slot (0.7 cm tall by 2.5 cm wide) comprising two square cavities (0.5 cm x 0.5 cm) was cut into the back of the block, 5.7 cm down from the top of the block. Traces of lead clamps are still visible inside these cavities [Fig. 2b]. The slot and the clamps, we may presume, were designed to help fix the votive object securely in place by means of a metal attachment. In addition, two small rectangular pieces of what appears to be cement were fixed to the marble down the left edge of the outer band of moulding: the upper one (fixed in place 2 cm from the top left corner of the block) measures 0.7 cm tall by 0.6 cm wide, the lower one (fixed 9.6 cm from the top left corner) measures 0.7 cm tall by 1.0 cm wide [see Fig. 1]. These may have served to attach some bronze appliqué element to the block. Such an appliqué would have covered the outer band of moulding and perhaps the pedestal's sides too. The right edge of the outer band of moulding was cut noticeably deeper than the bands closer to the inscribed surface. This would have helped to make the bronze appliqué fit more snugly into place.

Furthermore, the moulding that runs across the top edge of the front of the block was cut back deeper than the inner band of moulding immediately beneath it. Again this would suggest that an appliqué panel was also fixed on to the block across the upper moulding and, to give the pedestal a balanced appearance, it must have covered the (now lost) outer moulding down the right side. In addition, the left side and top of the pedestal were left slightly rough [Fig. 3], which would have helped to secure such a bronze appliqué plaque in place. As a result, the pedestal block, it would appear, supported a bronze statuette on a

<sup>5</sup> For examples from elsewhere in Lusitania and neighbouring regions, see PINTO 2002: 126-131, nos. 3-5, with Plates 3-10, measuring 21 cm, 14.3 cm and 7.2 cm high respectively. For a selection from elsewhere in the Roman Empire, see LIMC II.1, 1984: 516-522, s.v. Ares/Mars, nos. 25-136; OGGIANO-BITAR 1984: 90-91, nos. 168-173; FLEISCHER 1967: 52-55, nos. 40-46. For busts of Mars, see LIMC II.1: 522-524, nos. 140-171.

<sup>6</sup> For bronze votive *tropaea*, see KREILINGER 1996: 69-70 and (for example) 198, cat. no. 182 & Taf. 39, 14 cm high (from a private collection in Cherchel). For a statuette of a cuirass, KAUFMANN-HEINIMANN 1998: 79, no. 154, with photo (Augusta Raurica, 9.2 cm high). For an excellent discussion, with good illustrations, of bronze statuettes and their use in cult in Italy and western provinces, see KAUFMANN-HEINIMANN 1998: 181-318.

rectangular plinth, while its outer band of moulding was covered by a bronze revetment, which not only embellished the dedication, but also helped to secure the votive statuette or bust in place.<sup>7</sup> Examples of bronze appliqué plaques are known from around the Roman world, including a number from the Hispanic provinces.<sup>8</sup> At Emerita, for example, two undecorated bronze plaques came to light in excavations of the so-called “Temple of Diana” in one of the colony’s main forums; it has been plausibly suggested that they decorated a base or pedestal for a bronze statue, to which the bronze statuette of the Genius of the Senate, discovered nearby, was also affixed.<sup>9</sup> The rear side of the pedestal from Emerita was polished to a smooth finish [Fig. 2b]. This might suggest that the block stood on a plinth, so that the offering and the text would be more comfortably visible, rather than being fixed to a wall. For if it was intended to be fixed against a wall, why would the sculptor have taken the trouble to finish a surface that he knew was going to be hidden from view?



Fig. 3. Dedication to *Deus Mars Augustus*: left side and top. Photo: J. Edmondson.

The pedestal, as we have seen, is now badly damaged at the bottom and right side. As a result, it is difficult to be certain how much of it is now lost. The rectangular slot cut into the pedestal’s top provides some orientation about the block’s original width. The left edge of the slot was cut into the stone 10 cm from its left edge. The slot is 9.7 cm wide. On the assumption that the slot was centred, this would mean that the block extended another 10 cm to the right of the slot’s right edge. Thus the whole block was 29.7 cm wide, which is very close to being the equivalent of one Roman foot (= 29.6 cm). Furthermore, the surviving band of moulding helps to establish the width of the inscribed panel on the front of the pedestal. The two bands of moulding extend 4.2 cm from the left edge of the block. We would expect the moulding at the right edge to have been of exactly the same type and width, giving a total of 8.4 cm of mouldings. Thus, the inscribed field must have been 8.4 cm less than the total original width of the block, which we have just estimated measured 29.7 cm: that is, 21.3 cm wide. This will be important when it comes to restoring the text of the inscription (Section II).

Unfortunately, there is no means of deducing how much of the pedestal, and hence how much text, has been lost at the bottom. However, given the nature of the text and the content of what now survives, we are unlikely to have lost more than one or two lines at most (see below, Section II). The block must have had another band of moulding – likely of the same width (4.2 cm) – across its base, as occurs on three

<sup>7</sup> For bronze appliqué plaques in general, see KREILINGER 1996; for their use on pedestals and bases, *ibid.*, 33-34.

<sup>8</sup> Note the example from an altar from Ercavica (Castro de Santaver, Cañaveruelas, prov. Cuenca), with various sacred instruments and vessels, a flamen’s apex and bucranium: OSUNA RUÍZ 1976: 101, 103-105 & lám. 10-15; *Bronces romanos* 1990: 209-210, nos. 87-89; KREILINGER 1996: 36 and n. 168. For examples from Emporiae (Ampurias) and Baelo Claudia (Bononia, prov. Cádiz), see respectively *Bronces romanos* 1990: 208, no. 84 and 211, no. 90.

<sup>9</sup> See ÁLVAREZ MARTÍNEZ & NOGALES BASARRATE 2003: 266-268, cat. nos. 56-57, with fig. 56 (line-drawing) & lám. 84a-b; cf. 278-279, with fig. 60 (hypothetical reconstruction of their original placement on a statue-base); Genius of the Senate: *ibid.*, 254-257, cat. no. 53, with fig. 50 (line-drawing) and lám. 81a-e (photos).

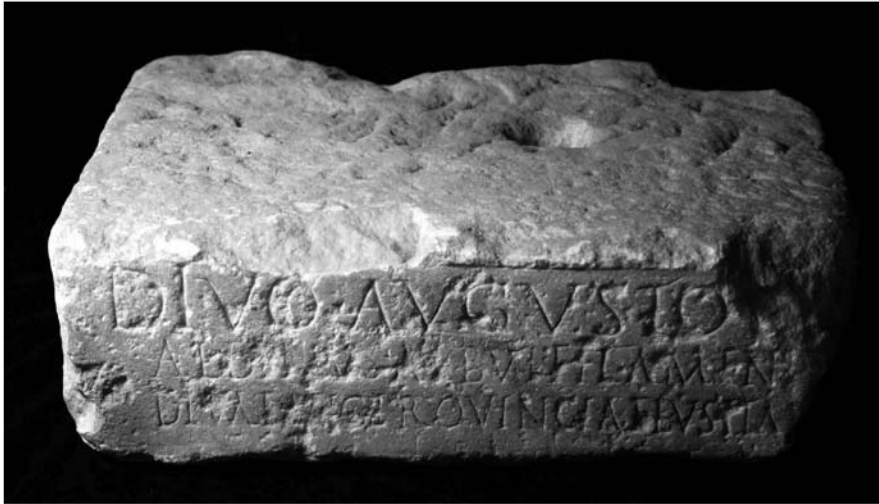


Fig. 4. Pedestal to support offerings made to *Divus Augustus* and *Diva Augusta*, Emerita. Mérida: MNAR. Photo: J. Edmondson

other small votive pedestals known from Emerita (see below). If there was just one more line of text, this would make the block about 29.3 cm tall; that is, its current height 23.1 cm plus 1.5 cm for the extra line of text plus 0.5 cm for the gap between the final line of text and the upper edge of the moulding, plus 4.2 cm for the moulding itself. If so, the block would be more or less square in format: 29.3 cm tall by 29.7 cm wide; that is, one square Roman foot in its surface area.

At least four broadly similar votive pedestal blocks are known from Emerita. All have a slot cut into their upper surfaces, to support the votive object being dedicated:

1. The marble pedestal [Fig. 4] dedicated by Albinus Albui f., *flamen* of the provincial cult of Divus Augustus and Diva Augusta, to honour the two *divi* probably during the reign of Claudius and patently after A.D. 42, the year of Livia's deification. The block has a circular hole cut into its top for the insertion of a votive offering (perhaps a bronze bust of Divus Augustus) and this was doubtless balanced by another hole in the missing section of the block for a bust of the recently deified Livia.<sup>10</sup>

2. In A.D. 77 the province of Lusitania through the agency of its governor, C. Arruntius Catellius Celer, and the provincial *flamen*, L. Iunius Latro, dedicated a gold bust of Titus weighing five pounds. The inscribed marble pedestal [Fig. 5a-b] that supported this bust also has a hole in its top for the insertion of the bust [Fig. 5b].<sup>11</sup>

3. An even smaller marble pedestal was dedicated to the G(enius) of the C(olonia) I(ulia) A(ugusta) E(merita) by C. Antistius C. lib. Iucundus, to support a palm (*palma*) weighing two ounces (*unciae*),

<sup>10</sup> AE 1997, 777b = HEP 7, 111 = CIIAE 21 & lám. XIX. For a full discussion, see EDMONDSON 1997: 91-105 & fig. 1 (line-drawing), Taf. 6b and 7a-d (photos), revising CIL II 473. It measures 12.5 cm high by 38.5 cm wide by 31.5 cm deep, but is now missing its right half; originally its width may well have extended to about 65 cm.

<sup>11</sup> CIL II 5264 = ILS 261 = ILER 1082 = AE 1982, 486 = CIIAE 24 & lám. XXI (photo), measuring 32 cm tall by 19 to 19.5 cm wide by 11 to 11.5 cm deep; see further FISHWICK 1981.



Fig. 5a-b. Pedestal to support a gold bust of Titus, dedicated by the province of Lusitania, Emerita: (a) front; (b) top. Madrid: MAN. Photos: MAN.

presumably of precious metal [Fig. 6]. The fact that the dedicator gives his full libertination, combined with the letter-forms, would suggest a date in the later first century A.D. or first half of the second century.<sup>12</sup>

4. A moulded pedestal [Fig. 7a-b] was also set up at Emerita to support a *palma* offered to Nemesis, described as *Domina cur(atric) animae* (“healing mistress of the soul”). Only its upper section now survives.<sup>13</sup> Again a rectangular slot, 6 cm wide by 3.2 cm deep, was cut into its top surface to hold the votive palm [Fig. 7b].

None of these four pedestals is exactly identical in form to the one dedicated to Mars Augustus. The one set up to honour Divus Augustus and Diva Augusta (no. 1) is substantially wider, since it had to hold two votive busts. The pedestal that supported the bust of Titus (no. 2) is narrower and may have been slightly taller. It also does not have a moulding down its sides. Nor does the pedestal that held the palm dedicated to Nemesis (no. 4), but its upper moulding was more elaborate than that used on other pedestals from Emerita. Of this group, the pedestal set up to honour the Genius of the Colony (no. 3) was rather smaller than the one dedicated to Deus Mars Augustus, but it is broadly analogous in overall form.

12 *CMBad* 762 = *ILER* 557, revised by GARCÍA IGLESIAS 1984: 145-148, no. A & lám. I (photo), measuring 16 cm tall by 14 cm wide by just 9 cm deep. See also ÁLVAREZ MARTÍNEZ 1971.

13 I read the text as follows: *Dominae cur(atrici) anima[e] / palma[m] [ex p(ondo)] ..III*, slightly revising GARCÍA IGLESIAS 1984: 151-152, no. C & lám. III (photo) = *ERAE* 596 = *AE* 1984, 486 (but with errors in its transcription). It measures (13) cm tall by 24 cm wide by 15 cm deep. For the same designation for a dedication found in her shrine in the amphitheatre at Italica, see CANTO 1984: 185 & Taf. IX = *AE* 1984, 505 = *CILA* II.2, no. 15\* = *HEp* 9, 511.



Fig. 6. Pedestal to support a *palma* offered to the G(enius) of the C(olonia) I(ulia) A(ugusta) E(merita), Emerita. Mérida: MNAR. Photo: J. Edmondson.

Such votive pedestals were common features of cult centres across Roman Spain. A marble pedestal block from the sanctuary of Endovellicus at São Miguel da Mota, Terena, Alandroal, on the fringes of the territory of Emerita, though larger, is broadly similar in form to the one set up at Emerita to Mars Augustus [Fig. 8].<sup>14</sup> It was set up by Iunia (A)eliana and her mother (H)elvia Ybas. Since the *gentilicium* Helvius is quite common at Emerita, but rare elsewhere in the province of Lusitania, it is tempting to take (H)elvia Ybas and her daughter as inhabitants of Emerita who had travelled to the sanctuary, 100 km west-south-west of their home town, to make an offering to Endovellicus.<sup>15</sup> If so, they may have commissioned the type of pedestal with which they were familiar from shrines in their home city, the provincial capital of Lusitania.<sup>16</sup>

## II. THE TEXT OF THE VOTIVE DEDICATION

The inscription on the pedestal is now very worn and pitted, especially in the centre of the block and towards its right edge [Fig. 9]. As a result, while the letters are generally clear in the whole of the first two lines and at the very left edge in each of the text's eight surviving lines, they have mostly disappeared in the centre of lines 3 to 8. Some letters can be made out in lines 1 to 5 towards what is now the right edge

<sup>14</sup> *CIL* II 136 = *ILER* 828 = *IRCP* 514; see also GARCIA 1991: 317, no. 95, with photo; C. FABIÃO in CARDIM RIBEIRO 2002: 381, no. 32, with photo. It measures 36 cm tall by 60 cm wide by 27 cm deep.

<sup>15</sup> For Helvii in Lusitania, see GRUPO MÉRIDA 2003 [2004]: 190-191; in the rest of Hispania, ABASCAL PALAZÓN 1994: 148-149. For some Helvii from Emerita, note *CIL* II 557-560; *AE* 1989, 396; *AE* 1994, 859d; *AE* 1965, 298 (emigré Emeritenses at the Rio Tinto mines). For the sanctuary, see GUERRA, SCHATTNER, FABIÃO & ALMEIDA 2003 and 2005.

<sup>16</sup> For other votive pedestals from outside Lusitania, note *CIL* II 4071 = *RIT* 23 & pl. XIII,1 (Tarraco); *AE* 1983, 520 = *CILA* II.2, no. 342 & fig. 179 (photo) (Italica); *CIL* II 5523 = *II<sup>2</sup>* 7, 221 (with photo) = *ILS* 5079; *CIL* *II<sup>2</sup>* 7, 228 (Corduba); *EE* VIII 82 = *ILER* 568 = *ERBC* 36, with photo (fig. 21) (Nertobriga; modern Fregenal de la Sierra, prov. Badajoz, 110 km south of Emerita).



Fig. 7a-b. Pedestal to support a *palma* offered to Nemesis, Emerita: (a) front; (b) top. Mérida: MNAR. Photos: J. Edmondson.

of the stone, but varying amounts of text are lost at the right edge of each line as the stone is broken here. How many lines (if any) have been lost below line 8 is unclear. The text was inscribed in librarial script comprising small neat letters, which measure 1.6 cm in height throughout, with the exception of the two smaller letters at the right end of line 5, which measure 0.6 cm. The letters in line 1, and to a certain degree also those in line 2, are broader and markedly more widely spaced out than those in subsequent lines. Thus the M of MARTI in line 1 is 2.3 cm wide and the first M of MAXIMIN[VS] in line 2 has a width of 2.2 cm, whereas the Ms in lines 5 and 6 are only 1.7 cm wide. The interpuncts are triangular.

The following letters are still legible on the stone:

DEO • MARTI • A [- c. 2-3 -]  
 IVL • MAXIMIN V [- c. 2-3 -]  
 V • P • PROC • AVG • N • [- c. 2 -]  
 A • V • P • P [- c. 2-3 -] VOTO • AC [- ]  
 5 INCOLVM [-] TA TEMP [- c. 1-2 -]  
 TEMPL [- c. 3-4 -] + [- 3-4 -] + + [- c. 2 -]  
 IN++ [- 2-3 -] + [- - - c. 6-8 - - ]  
 EIVS C+ [- - - - c. 7-9 - - - - ]  
 ? [- - - - - - - - - - ]

Lines 1 to 3 can be restored with confidence as follows:

*Deo • Marti • A[ug(usto)]*  
*Iul(ius) • Maximin[us]*  
*v(ir) • p(erfectissimus) • proc(urator) • Aug(usti) • n(ostri) • (vacat)*

The only element of doubt here surrounds the end of line 3. Since the abbreviated title with which line 4 starts follows on perfectly from *proc(urator) Aug(usti) n(ostri)* in line 3, the stonecutter must have left an unusually large gap after the interpunct at the right edge of the third line. This *vacat* helps to keep separate the two main elements of Maximinus' title: the first part, *proc(urator) Aug(usti) n(ostri)*, in line 3, the remainder in line 4.

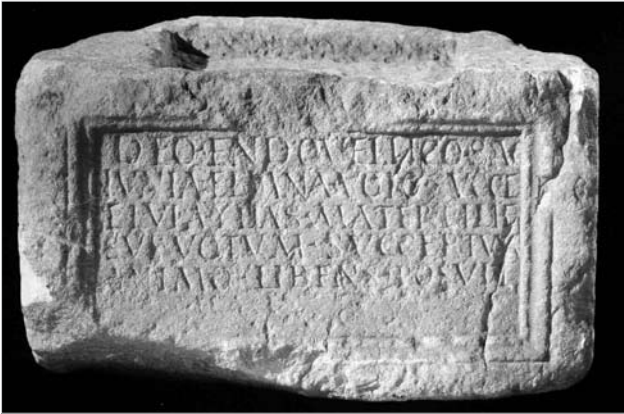


Fig. 8. Pedestal for a statue set up in honour of *Endovellicus*, S. Miguel da Mota, Terena. Photo: after Cardim Ribeiro 2002, p. 381, no. 32.

The first three letters of the second part of this title are quite clearly legible at the start of line 4: *a(gens) v(ice) p(raesidis)*: Iul(ius) Maximinus was an equestrian procurator who was “acting in place of the governor (*praeses*)”. The fourth letter is damaged, but the upright vertical survives as well as part of the curved bowl of a P: *a(gens) v(ice) p(raesidis) p(rovincia) [.....]*. We would expect the acting governor’s title to be *a(gens) v(ice) p(raesidis) p(rovincia) L(usitaniae)*, as occurs in the case of the equestrian governor G. Sulpicius [?Ruf]us,

who was styled *v(ir) p(erfectissimus)* and *p(raeses) p(rovincia) L(usitaniae)* in a dedication that he set up to honour Diocletian, Maximian, Constantine or perhaps even Constantius II sometime in the period from the 290s to 361.<sup>17</sup> However, when another equestrian governor, Aemilius Aemilianus, made a dedication to Jupiter at Emerita sometime in the later 270s or perhaps after 283, he was designated by the fuller title of *p(raeses) p(rovincia) U(lterioris) L(usitaniae)*.<sup>18</sup> As a result, an alternative restoration would be *a(gens) v(ice) p(raesidis) p(rovincia) U(lterioris) L(usitaniae)*. However, as we shall see, this causes problems of space for the phrases that come next in the inscription.

Immediately after the governor’s name and titles the text went on to explain why the dedication was being made. However, the damage to the stone makes it difficult to be absolutely certain about the text here. After a gap of 3.5 cm in the centre of line 4, the word *VOTO* is clearly legible, even though the first *O* and the *T* are somewhat worn, followed by an *A* and then a *C* (or perhaps a *G* or an *O* or even a *Q*) before the text breaks off at the right edge of the line. As a result, the best restoration of lines 4-5 would appear to be:

*a(gens) • v(ice) • p(raesidis) • p(rovincia) [•L(usitaniae)• ex •] voto • ac [• p(ro)]  
incolum[i]ta(te) temp[or(um)]*

This restoration prefers the commoner and simpler designation for the province – *p(rovincia) L(usitania)* – rather than *p(rovincia) U(lterior) L(usitania)*, since the former allows sufficient space for the restoration *[ex] voto*, the standard phrase that would indicate that the governor’s dedication was being made in fulfilment of a vow he had previously made to the god. The spacing is quite tight for this restoration, especially if there was an interpunct between *ex* and *voto*, as we would expect. As a result, the *X* may

17 *CIL* II 481 = *CMBad* 776 = *ILER* 1225 = *ERAE* 88 = *CHIAE* 60. The identification of the emperor is controversial: Diocletian, Maximian, Constantine or Constantius II would all fit: see, most recently, SAQUETE CHAMIZO 2005: esp. 287-288, taking issue with the arguments of RAMÍREZ SÁDABA at *CHIAE* 60 in favour of either Diocletian or Maximian.

18 SAQUETE CHAMIZO, MOSQUERA MÜLLER & MÁRQUEZ PÉREZ 1991-92 = *AE* 1992, 957 = *HEp* 5, 81: *Deo / Iovi / Aemilius Aemilianus / v(ir) p(erfectissimus) p(raeses) p(rovincia) U(lterioris) L(usitaniae) pro sua ac suorum / incolumitate / posuit*. The dating assumes this man is the same Aemilius Aemilianus attested as equestrian *praeses* of the province of Arabia in 282/3 (*AE* 1973, 550, Bostra). SAQUETE ET AL. (1991-92) assume that he held office in Lusitania after his governorship in Arabia, but it might more likely have taken place prior to his posting to Arabia, which included command of a legion: see LE ROUX 2006: 378-379, also preferring the reading *p(raeses) p(rovincia) v(otum) l(ibens)*. For the term *provincia Ulterior Lusitania*, cf. *CIL* VI 18190 (Rome: T. Flavius Rufus ex Hispania Ulteriore Lusitania).

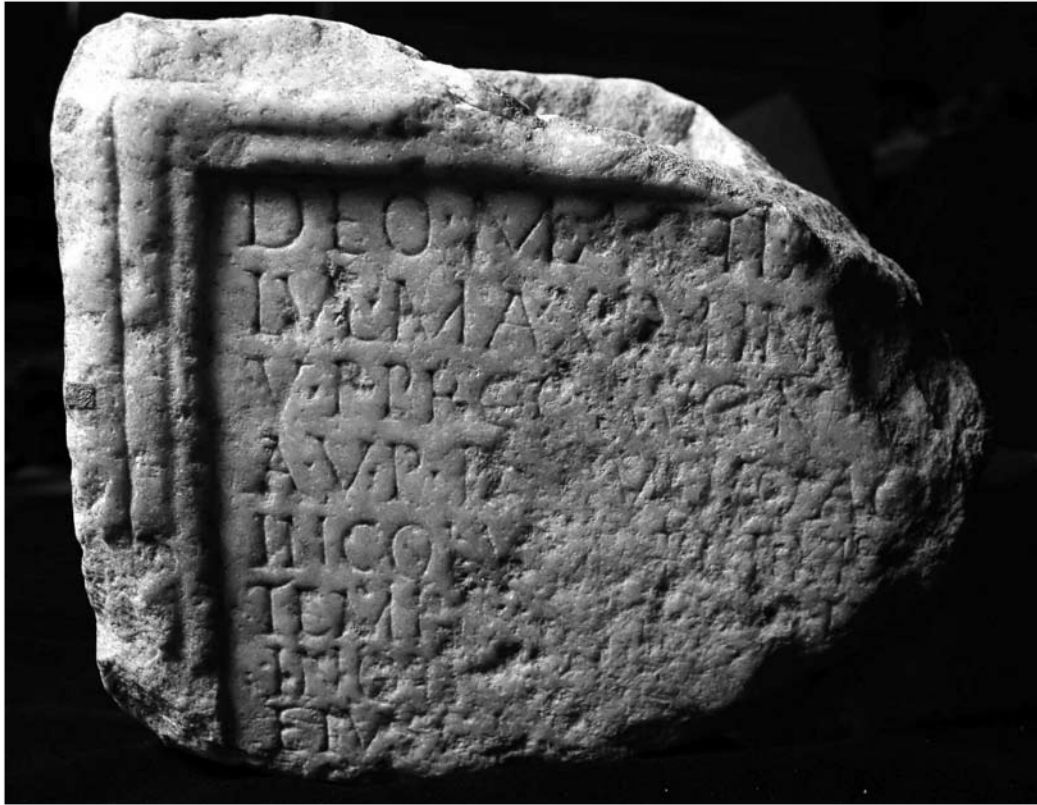


Fig. 9. Dedication to *Deus Mars Augustus*, Emerita: detail of inscription. Photo: J. Edmondson.

well have been inscribed at a reduced scale, as clearly occurs in line 5 with the smaller E and P in the word *temp(orum)*. If the fuller title of the province, *p(rovincia) [U(lterior) L(usitania)]*, had been used in Maximinus' title, there would have been insufficient space for the preposition *ex* before *voto*. Although a number of cases can be found where *voto* appears in votive inscriptions without a preposition, on balance *ex voto* is a much more likely reading.<sup>19</sup>

At the right edge of line 4 there is just space for an interpunct followed by a P to allow the phrase *p(ro) incolumita(te) temp[or(um)]*. While it was not common to abbreviate the preposition *pro* as *p(ro)*, a parallel can be found in precisely the same phrase *p(ro) i(ncolumitate) Aug(usti)* in a dedication set up to Mars Caisivus (?) at Aventicum (Avenches) in Germania Superior.<sup>20</sup> Another possibility is that the preposition was abbreviated to PR(o), with the R reduced in scale and inscribed above the line, as occurs in the following line with the E and P of TEMP[or(um)]. However, there is very little space at the end of line 4, which makes the first suggestion more plausible. In the same phrase the word *incolumitate* is usually written out in full, as occurs in the dedication made at Emerita by Aemilius Aemilianus, but it is occasionally found in an abbreviated form.<sup>21</sup> The closest parallel occurs in the phrase *[p]ro salute et*

19 For example, AE 1956, 119 (Utica): *Q. Salinius Sabinus et aram voto posuit*; AE 1930, 134 (Arausio): *Dit(em) Patrem voto Dula posuit*; AE 1917-18, 20 (Thuburbo Maius): *Dianae Aug(ustae) sacrum pro salute Imp(eratoris) Caes(aris) Traiani Hadriani Augusti L(ucius) Romanus P(ubli) f(ilius) Arn(ensi) tribu) Gallus voto posuit idemq(ue) dedicavit*; ILS 3304 (Lacus Verbanus, now Lake Maggiore): *Volkano et Erquili (sic) C. Cassialcus Martialis voto*; ILS 3747a (Pola): *Nemesi Aug(ustae) s(acrum) C(aius) Iulius Chrysogonus voto fecit*.

20 CIL XIII 11475 = AE 1996, 1121: *Mart(i) Caisiv(o??) / Pomp(tina) Optatus / p(ro) i(ncolumitate) Aug(usti) ex stip(endio) .....*

21 Aemilius Aemilianus' dedication: AE 1992, 957 = *HEp* 5, 81, lines 4-5 (quoted in n. 18, above). For abbreviations, note *pro salute et incolum(itate)* (CIL VI 2104 = 32388 = SCHEID 1998: no. 100b, lines 30-31, Arval Acta of 218); *pro salute et incolumit(ate)* (CIL V 5258 = ILS 3283, Comum); *pro municip(um) incolumitat(e)* (CIL V 7784, Albingaunum in Liguria; cf. AE 1953, 14, Aquincum, Pannonia); *pro sal(ute) et incol(umitate)* (AE 1940, 220, Qalat as Salihyah, Mesopotamia).

*incolum(i)ta(te)* in a votive offering made by a *primus pilus* of the Legio I Minervia Gordiana in the mid-third century “for the well-being and security” of Gordian III and his wife Sabinia Tranquillina, i.e., in a very similar type of dedication to the one from Emerita here under discussion.<sup>22</sup> The stonecutter may not have deliberately abbreviated the word *incolumitate* as *incolumita(te)*, but simply omitted to inscribe the last two letters of the word, distracted by the fact that the next word begins with exactly the same two letters, TE. A number of parallels, some dating to as early as the first century A.D., can be found for the combination of the phrases *ex voto* (or *ex voto suscepto*) and *pro incolumitate*, often followed by the name of an emperor in the genitive case.<sup>23</sup>

Although to my knowledge there are no exact parallels for the expression *p(ro) incolumita(te) temp[or(um)]*, its sense is clear and fits well into the political context of the mid- to later third century. The acting governor of Lusitania was making a dedication to Mars Augustus to ensure “the security of the times”. A number of cognate sentiments were expressed on many vows made elsewhere in the Roman Empire during the troubled third century. So at the sanctuary of Sol Aeternus and Luna at Alto da Vigia, near Colares, in the territory of Olisipo (Lisbon), just north of Cabo da Rocha, an altar was set up by a governor of Lusitania to ensure not only the well-being of Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Geta (whose name was later erased) and Julia Domna, but also the “eternity of the Empire” (*pro aeternitate imperi(i)*).<sup>24</sup> Similarly at the camp of the Legio VII Gemina at León the consular governor of the (short-lived) new province of Hispania Nova Citerior Antoniniana made a dedication during the reign of Caracalla to Iuno Regina *pro salute [a]c im[perii] diuturnitate [imp(eratoris) M(arci) Aurelli (sic) Antonin[i] Pii Fel(icis) Aug(usti) et Iulia[e] Pia[e] Fel(icis) Aug(ustae) matri[s] Antonini Aug(usti) ca[s]trorum ac patriae*,<sup>25</sup> while at their camp at Lambaesis in Numidia some trumpeters (*tubicines*) of the Legio III Augusta made a vow *[pr]o felicitat(e) et incolumitat[e] / [sa]eculi domin(or)um nn[[n(ostrorum)]] Augg[[g(ustorum)]] / [L(uci) Se]ptimi Severi Pii Pertin(acis) Aug(usti) / [et] M(arci) Aurel(i) Anton(ini) Aug(usti) / Par(thici) Bri(tannici) Ger(manici) max(im)i Augg(ustorum) / [et] Iuliae Aug(ustae) matr(is) Aug(usti) n(ostri) ca[st]rorumque*.<sup>26</sup>

Furthermore, coins issued during the third century frequently sought to persuade the inhabitants of the Roman Empire that they were living in prosperous and secure times and that such prosperity would last for ever. Macrinus (emperor from April 217 to June/July 218) minted coins proclaiming the “felicity of the times” (*felicitas temporum*) and the “security of the times” (*securitas temporum*).<sup>27</sup> Gallienus during his sole rule from 260 to 268 issued coins with the legend *securitas temporum*, while Gallienus – as joint-

22 CIL XIII 7996 (Bonna, Germania Inferior).

23 cf. CIL VI 91 = ILS 153 (Rome): *ex voto suscepto pro incolumitate Ti(beri) Caesaris divi Aug(usti) f(ili) Aug(usti)*; AE 2001, 1918 (Antioch in Pisidia): *ex voto quod suscepit...pro incolumitate eius [sc. Claudius] et victoria Britannica*; CIL XIV 30 = ILS 392 (Portus): *ex voto...pro salute Imp(eratoris) M(arci) Aurelii Commodi Antonini Aug(usti) Pii Felicis*; cf. ILS 2103 (Rome, dated to A.D. 208): *pro salute dd(ominorum) nn(ostrorum) Augg(ustorum) ..... ex voto*. In such vows the phrase *pro salute* is often found as an alternative to, or in combination with, *pro incolumitate*.

24 CIL II 259 (and p. 693): *Soli aeterno / et Lunae / pro aeternitate im[per]i et salute Imp(eratoris) [C]ae[s](>[aris]) / L(uci) Septimi Severi Aug(usti) Pii F<el>(icis) / Imp(eratoris) Caes(aris) M(arci) Aurelii Antonini / Aug(usti) Pii [[et P(ubli) Septimi Getae nob(illissimi)]] / Caes(aris) et [Iu]liae Aug(ustae) matris [ca]s[trorum] / D(ecimus) Iun[ius - - -] Coelianus / v(ir) [c]larissimus legatu[s] Augustorum / cu[ram] ag(entibus) - - -] Vale[r]i[o] Q[ui]a[drato] / Q(uintus) Iulius Satur[ninus et] / Q(uintus) Val[erius] Antonin[us - - -]*. See further ALFÖLDY 1969: 147; GARCIA 1991: 437, no. 431; CARDIM RIBEIRO 2002a; LE ROUX 2006: 374.

25 CIL II 2661 = ILS 1147 = ALFÖLDY 1969: 49, dating it to the period 214-217.

26 AE 1906, 10 = AE 1907, 183-184 = AE 1983, 977.

27 RIC IV.2, Macrinus, nos. 57-63, 118, 172-178 (*felicitas temporum*); nos. 90-95, 201-207 (*securitas temporum*).

emperor with Valerian between 253 and 260– and Tacitus during his brief reign from 275 to 276 both advertised the “joyfulness of the times” (*laetitia temporum*).<sup>28</sup> Probus, in power from 276 to 282, also professed the “felicity of the times” (*felicitas temporum* or *felicia tempora*), the “security of the age” (*securitas saeculi*), “everlasting security” (*securitas perpetua*) and the supposed fact that the age had been restored (*restitutio saeculi*).<sup>29</sup> The legend *temporum felicitas* also appeared on larger medallions of Gordian III, Tacitus and Probus, as did *securitas saeculi* on the medallions of Probus.<sup>30</sup> The numismatic evidence, therefore, provides good support for reading the phrase *pro incolumitate temporum* in the dedication to Mars Augustus.

As an alternative, it might be possible to reconstruct the text of lines 4-5 as *a(gens) v(ice) p(raesidis) p(rovinciae) [L(usitaniae) pr(o)] voto ac / incolumita(te) temp[or(um)]*. This would remove the difficulty of reading an abbreviated *p(ro)* at the end of line 4, where there is only about 1.1 cm of space left on the inscribed panel in which to carve it. While the phrase *pro voto* is found in some votive dedications, including a number from the Iberian peninsula, the combination of the two separate ideas *pro voto* and *pro incolumitate* into a single phrase to my knowledge lacks any parallel.<sup>31</sup> So, on balance, the reading *a(gens) v(ice) p(raeside) p(rovinciae) [L(usitaniae) ex] voto ac [p(ro)] / incolumita(te) temp[or(um)]* appears to be preferable.

The final section of the text from line 6 onwards outlined precisely what the acting governor did to fulfil his vow to Mars Augustus. The text becomes very difficult to decipher here, and it may well have continued for more than the three surviving lines on the part of the stone that is now lost. On the other hand, there can be little doubt about the first word of line 6, which seems very likely to be *templ[um]* or *templ[i]*. Iul(ius) Maximinus either constructed or, more likely, did something to embellish or restore a temple, or some part of a temple, in Emerita. Only a few traces of further letters survive. In line 6 following *TEMPL* the lower half of an upright stroke appears 5.5 cm to the right of the L of *TEMPL*. At the far right of the line and 6 cm to the right of the previous trace of a letter just before the main surface breaks off the top third of another vertical stroke crowned with a curling serif or even perhaps with a curling cross-bar, which could suggest a T. The very top left corner of the next letter is just visible before the stone breaks off; it could be a B, D, E, F, H, I, K, L, P or R.

Line 7 begins with the letters *IN*, after which the slightest trace of an interpunct may just be legible, but the pitting to the stone’s surface makes it difficult to be certain about this. The next letter is clearly circular and must be an O or a Q and then after a short gap a good proportion of an upright hasta. It is tempting to read *IN QVI[B(us)]*, with the V a smaller letter raised above the main line, as patently occurs

28 *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 513c (*securitas temporum*); *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 384; *RIC* V.1, Tacitus no. 90 (*laetitia temporum*); cf. *RIC* V.1, Tacitus, no. 6-7, 18, 140 (*felicitas temporum*). 63 (*temporum felicitas*). For Gallienus’ coin types, see DE BLOIS 1976: *passim*, esp. 120-134. Similar themes appear also on the coins of Aurelian: see GÖBL 1993, esp. 138-150, a list of legends on all coin-issues of his reign.

29 All of these appear on the coinage of Probus, for instance, who ruled from 276 to 282: see *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 9, 24, 51-52, 73-77, 102-109, 117, 129, 539, 598 (*felicitas temporum* or *temporum felicitas*), no. 262 (*felicia tempora*), nos. 593-596, 762-763, 828 (*securitas saeculi*), no. 522 (*securitas perpetua*), no. 253, 310, 400-405 (*restitutio saeculi*).

30 TOYNBEE 1944: 163-164.

31 For *pro voto*, note *AE* 1983, 558 (Minhotães, near Bracara); *AE* 1978, 432 (Hontangas, Hispania Citerior: *Herculi pro voto*); *AE* 1975, 422e = 1992, 702 (Tergeste): *pro voto suo*.

in TEMP[or(um)] at the right edge of line 5. The final surviving line (line 8) clearly starts with the word EIVS, which is followed by what appears to be a C or a G and then the upper half of an vertical hasta, perhaps an I or an L.

It is difficult to suggest an entirely satisfying restoration of this section of the text, since so little now survives. But what is not in doubt is the kind of text with which we are dealing; it is a type of dedication for which there are many parallels from across the Roman Empire, especially from the later second and third centuries A.D. In these an official such as a Roman provincial governor, local magistrate or Roman army officer made a dedication to a divinity in fulfilment of a vow to ensure the well-being of the reigning emperor and sometimes also that of other members of the *domus Caesaris* or of the senate or other Roman institutions; at the same time he often carried out some repair or embellishment work on the divinity's sanctuary as the *quid pro quo*.<sup>32</sup> So, for instance, at Brigetio in Pannonia, a *custos armorum* of the Legio I Adiutrix Severiana made a vow to Jupiter Optimus Maximus to ensure the well-being of the emperor Severus Alexander and at the same time set about an extensive restoration of a neighbouring temple, we may presume, of Jupiter.<sup>33</sup> Similarly at Thicilila in Africa Proconsularis in A.D. 208 the *civitas Thiciliensis* set up a dedication to Mercurius Augustus “in return for the well-being, security and victories of the emperors Septimius Severus, Caracalla and Geta” (though Geta's name was later erased from the dedication) and at the same time did something to a temple that had collapsed due to old age.<sup>34</sup> At Porolissum in Dacia a local III vir and two decurions of the *municipium* made a dedication to Jupiter Optimus Maximus Dolichenus to ensure the well-being and security of emperor Gordian III and an auxiliary cohort, the cohors III Campestris, while at the same time constructing out of their own funds a temple with shops.<sup>35</sup> Alternatively, a Roman official could make a similar vow but to ensure the safety of his own family (*pro sua ac suorum incolumitate*), as Aemilius Aemilianus, *praeses* of Lusitania, did at Emerita in the 270s or 280s;<sup>36</sup> or such a vow could be made by a private individual or family group, as at Burgstall in Noricum, where a married couple made a dedication to the local god Latobius *pro incolumitate filior(um) suor(um)*; once they had undertaken the vow, they then restored the local dockyard (*navale*) that had allegedly collapsed through longtime neglect.<sup>37</sup>

The appearance of the word *templ[um]* or *templ[i]* at the start of line 6 suggests that the vow Iul(ius) Maximinus made was of this same type. Precisely what he did to the temple, however, is unclear. Based on the surviving traces of letters on the stone following TEMPL in line 6, something along the following lines might have once been inscribed on the stone:

*templ[i • por]t[icus • res]t[uit]*  
*in • q[u]i[b(us) • sig]n(a) [• dei • cum • imag(inibus)]*  
*eius [•] cl[ipeisq(ue) • dedicav(it)]*

32 For general discussion of such texts, see REYNOLDS 1962 and 1965; ECK 1993; THOMAS & WITSCHER 1992.

33 CIL III 10984 = ILS 5417a.

34 AE 2001, 2077 (dated by the imperial titles to A.D. 208).

35 AE 2001, 1707.

36 AE 1992, 957 = HEp 5, 81 (quoted in n. 18, above); cf. CIL II 2634 = ILS 2299 = ILAs 12 (Asturica).

37 AE 1929, 35 = ILLPRON 47.

Parallels can be found for the various elements of this very tentative reconstruction, but given the huge variety of terms found in inscriptions of this sort that record refurbishments to buildings, many other possible reconstructions are equally plausible.<sup>38</sup>

So, in sum, the text may be reconstructed as follows (with lines 6-8 restored simply *exempli gratia*):

Deo • Marti • A[ug(usto)•]  
 Iul(ius) • Maximinu[s •]  
 v(ir) • p(erfectissimus) • proc(urator) • Aug(usti) • n(ostri) • (vacat)  
 a(gens) • v(ice) • p(raesidis) • p(rovinciae) [•L(usitaniae)• ex] voto • ac [• p(ro)]  
 5 incolum[i]ta(te) temp[or(um)]  
 templ[i • por]t[icu]s • res[ti]t[ui]t[ur]  
 in • q[ui]b(us) • sig[na] [• dei • cum • imag(inibus)]  
 eius [•] cl[ipeis]q(ue) • dedicav(it)]

**Translation:** To the God Mars Aug(ustus). Iul(ius) Maximinus, *vir perfectissimus*, procurator of our Aug(ustus), acting in place of the governor of the province of Lusitania, in fulfilment of a vow and in return for the safety of the times [restored] the [porticoes] of the temple [in which he dedicated statues of the god along with images of him and shields .....(or similar)].

### III. THE ROMAN GOVERNOR AND THE DATE OF HIS DEDICATION

To establish the period in which the dedication was set up, we need to consider the identity, rank and administrative role of the man responsible for it, Iul(ius) Maximinus. He was evidently of Roman equestrian rank: he was a *procurator Aug(usti) n(ostri)* and was styled *v(ir) p(erfectissimus)*. Titles of social rank such as *vir egregius*, *vir perfectissimus* and *vir eminentissimus* started to appear in inscriptions regarding equestrians in the later second century A.D. and were in some ways analogous to the title *vir clarissimus* already bestowed on senators. Equestrians who held procuratorships were given the title *v(ir) e(gregius)*.<sup>39</sup> The earliest case so far on record of its use by a procurator of Lusitania is that of C. Vallius Maximianus, financial procurator of the province in the early 170s.<sup>40</sup> However, in the third century reference to the procurator's salary was sometimes added to differentiate further among *virii egregii*; hence we find the title *vir egregius ducenarius* (or variations thereon) being granted to provincial procurators with an annual salary of 200,000 sesterces.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, in the second half of the third century procurators of this rank, especially those who had been asked to serve as provincial governors (*praesides*), were granted the still more dignified title of *v(ir) p(erfectissimus)*, previously

38 For the dedication of a statue (*signum*) to Mars Augustus from Sines on the west coast of Lusitania, see *AE* 1996, 838 = *FE* 230, with photos. For an *aedicula cum imaginib(us)* at a shrine of Silvanus near Rome, see *CIL* VI 927 = *ILS* 236 (reign of Nero). For *imagines* and *clipei*, cf. *ILS* 5451 (Ostia): ....*clupeum argent(eum) cum imagine aurea d(ono) d(edit)*, 5452 (Rome): *clupea cum imaginibus*. For a dedication *pro salute Augustorum* together with repairs to a club-house (*schola*) *cum statu*s *et imaginibus domus divinae item diis conservatorib(us) eorum*, see *ILS* 2445 (Lambaesis).

39 HIRSCHFELD 1901; HIRSCHFELD 1905: 451-457; PFLAUM 1970: 177-185; ALFÖLDY 1981: esp. 190-194 (with earlier literature).

40 *CIL* II 2015 = *II*<sup>2</sup>/5, 783 = *ILS* 1354a (Singili(a) Barba); cf. *CIL* II 1120 = *ILS* 1354 (Italica), on whom see PFLAUM 1960-61: II, 585-590, no. 221.

41 PFLAUM 1970: 178.

reserved for prefects of the *Annona* and of the *Vigiles*, as well as for the heads of the Palatine bureaux.<sup>42</sup> This had occasionally occurred during the earlier third century, but it only became common from the 260s onwards.<sup>43</sup> Iul(ius) Maximinus' status as a *vir perfectissimus* would, in all likelihood, place his dedication to Mars Augustus in the second half of the third century.

The fact that the procurator Maximinus was “acting in place of the governor of the province of Lusitania” – *a(gens) v(ice) p(raesidis) p(rovinciae) L(usitaniae)* – could simply mean that the regularly appointed senatorial *legatus Aug(usti) pr(o) pr(aetore) pr(ovinciae) Lusitaniae* had died while in office and the emperor made the pragmatic decision to promote temporarily the equestrian provincial procurator, who was already on the spot and familiar with the issues then facing the Roman administrators of Lusitania.<sup>44</sup> However, the process of appointing procurators as acting governors had become quite common from the Severan period onwards.<sup>45</sup> Such officials appear in a number of third-century constitutions in the *Codex Justinianus*, for instance, which would confirm their importance as provincial administrators in this period.<sup>46</sup> The number is simply too high to be an accident. It would suggest that emperors increasingly came to favour such equestrian officials, preferring to appoint them to serve temporarily in place of senatorial governors rather than send out a new senatorial governor. This is not to say that senators were at this point excluded from governorships. Far from it. But a trend towards using governors of equestrian rank seems to have been gaining momentum.<sup>47</sup> This is the context in which we need to place the new acting governor of Lusitania, Iul(ius) Maximinus. But can we pinpoint the date of his governorship more precisely?

Since he had such a common name, prosopography is of limited help.<sup>48</sup> The only other two homonymous equestrian officials, to my knowledge, are M. Iulius Sanctus Maximinus, who rose to be a procurator of the emperor and *iuridicus* at Alexandria under Domitian and Trajan, and C. Iulius Maximinus, *v(ir) e(gregius)*, who served as *praeses pro legato* of Mauretania Tingitana during the reign of Severus Alexander.<sup>49</sup> Since the Iul(ius) Maximinus now attested at Emerita was styled *v(ir) p(erfectissimus)*, he cannot be the same man as the *iuridicus* of Alexandria, whose career spanned the reigns of Domitian

42 PFLAUM 1970: 177, with the list at PFLAUM 1960-61: II, 624, n. 10. Note the procurator of Sardinia early in Aurelian's reign, Septimius Nigrinus, who is described as *v(ir) e(gregius)* in *EE* VIII 775 and *v(ir) p(erfectissimus)* in *EE* VIII 796; see THOMASSON 1984: 11, no. 39; WATSON 1999: 154. Aurelius Ursinus was styled *vir egregius* when *curator* of Italia in 276, but *vir perfectissimus* by the time he had become *praeses* of the province of Lusitania in the 280s: see SAQUETE CHAMIZO 2001, discussing *CIL* II 1115 (Italia) and 5140 (Ossonoba). In general on these developments, see EICH 2005.

43 Earlier cases: a *v(ir) p(erfectissimus)* as procurator in Mauritania Caesariensis in 215: *AE* 1929, 136 = 1955, 56 = THOMASSON 1984: 413, no. 32; a *v(ir) p(erfectissimus)* as *praeses* of the province of Pontus in 236-238: *CIL* III 308, with THOMASSON 1984: 251-252, no. 61.

44 This had occurred, for example, in Achaëa as in A.D. 6 (Dio 55.27.6) and Asia in A.D. 88 (*CIL* V 875 = *ILS* 1374, Aquileia: *vice defuncti proconsulis rexit*). For more examples, see PEACHIN 1996: 229-236, Appendix 4; RÉMY 1976: 466-470, Table 3.

45 In general see PFLAUM 1950: 134-139; PEACHIN 1996: 154-158.

46 *CJ* 9.47.2 (26 June 212), 3.26.3 (23 August 215), 9.20.4 (3 December 239), 3.3.1 (1 February 242), as noted by PEACHIN 1996: 156 and n. 6.

47 See further PETERSEN 1955; CHRISTOL 1999.

48 For other Iulii Maximini, note, for instance, *CIL* VI 3197 (p. 3384: an *equus singularis*), XII 1416 (Vasio, Gallia Narbonensis), XIII 7350 (Nida, Germania Superior); *ILAlg.* 4464 (Argoub, Numidia); *CIL* III 10984 = *ILS* 5417a (Brigetio, Pannonia Superior; reign of Severus Alexander: a *c(ustos) a(rmorum)* of the Legio I Adiutrix Severiana); *CIL* III 1127 = *IDR* III 5, 427 (Apulum, Dacia: a senator who was *leg. Augg. pro pr(aetore)* of Dacia between 207 and 209; cf. *IDR* III 3, 213 = *AE* 1982, 833, revising *AE* 1971, 385 (Rapoltn Mare), in which the same governor appears as *pr(a)es(es) [Daciar(um) III]*); cf. THOMASSON 1984: 156, no. 50).

49 Procurator and *iuridicus Alexandriae*: *AE* 1993, 1561 (Sagalassos, Lycia/Pamphylia); *praeses pro legato* of Mauretania Tingitana: *AE* 1989, 911, revising and superseding *ILMaroc* no. 41 = *AE* 1946, 37 and 68.

and Trajan, well before such titles were granted to equestrians. It is theoretically possible that he might be the same man as the *v(ir) e(gregius)* who served as *praeses pro legato* of Mauretania Tingitana, on the assumption that he was upgraded to the status of *vir perfectissimus* on taking up his post in Lusitania in the late 230s or early 240s. But this would be unusually, but not impossibly, early in the third-century for a provincial procurator and acting *praeses* to have been designated *perfectissimus*. In sum, prosopography does not provide much assistance.

As a result, we have to fall back on general patterns of appointment of provincial governors in the mid- to later third century. Methodologically there is a problem here. Pflaum, for instance, has been criticized for constructing too neat and regular a structure for equestrian careers based on what is after all very scattered, uneven and incomplete evidence.<sup>50</sup> Individual cases are used inductively to create patterns, and then scholars use these patterns to interpret further individual examples. So there is a patent danger of circularity of argument. However, the new inscription from Emerita does confirm general patterns known from elsewhere and, more importantly, it fills a gap in our evidence for the evolution of the Roman administration of Lusitania in the second half of the third century A.D.

A senatorial *legatus* [*?Aug(usti)*] *pro praetore* was still governing Lusitania under Gallienus, when P. Clodius Laetus Macrinus, *v(ir) c(larissimus)*, set up a statue to this emperor in the colonial forum at Emerita most likely in the year 261.<sup>51</sup> But a crucial change took place in the appointment of provincial governors throughout the Empire soon after the start of Gallienus' sole rule, when, perhaps in 262, he allegedly started to prevent senators from serving in the Roman army and hence holding military commands.<sup>52</sup> De Blois argued that this led to the "gradual replacement of senators as governors both of imperial and senatorial provinces".<sup>53</sup> While the change was gradual in the provinces governed by senators of consular rank (both proconsuls in the public provinces and *legati Augusti pro praetore* in the imperial provinces) and in some cases senators returned to serve as governors after an equestrian had held office, the reforms were much more radical in those provinces formerly administered by governors of praetorian rank; here senators appear to have been irreversibly replaced by equestrians.<sup>54</sup> At a moment of great military, economic and political uncertainty, Gallienus wanted men of military and fiscal experience and talent in positions of provincial governance. We have seen that there had already been a tendency on the part of emperors from Septimius Severus onwards to appoint equestrian officials as temporary governors of the provinces in which they were already working. Gallienus now made this a permanent feature of the administration of the provinces previously governed by senators of praetorian rank. Here we consistently find equestrians both serving as procurators and "acting in the place of the governor" (*agentes vice praesidis*). This can be observed, for example, in the neighbouring province of

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50 See MILLAR 1963; BRUNT 1983: 68-74. For a methodologically acute appreciation of the advantages and problems of prosopography, see ECK 2002.

51 RAMÍREZ SÁDABA, VELÁZQUEZ JIMÉNEZ & GIJÓN GABRIEL 1993 [1995] = *AE* 1993, 914 = *HEp* 5, 87 = *CIIAE* 57 with lám. XLIII (photo).

52 For the change, note AUR. VICTOR 33.33-34: *et patres quidem praeter commune Romani malum orbis stimulabat proprii ordinis contumelia, quia primus ipse metu socordiae suae, ne imperium ad optimos nobilium transferretur, senatum militia vetuit et adire exercitum*. In general, see PFLAUM 1976; DE BLOIS 1976: 47-55; CHRISTOL 1982, 1999; more briefly, LO CASCIO 2005: 159 (arguing for gradual and non-unidirectional change).

53 DE BLOIS 1976: 47.

54 See EICH 2005; ECK in preparation (I am most grateful to Professor Eck for letting me read a version of this paper in advance of its publication.)

Baetica: M. Aur(elius) Alexander, *proc(urator) Augg(ustorum) nn(ostrorum), v(ir) e(gregius), agens vice praesidis*, is attested at Corduba joining the provincial *flamen* of Baetica in dedicating a statue in honour of two Augusti, probably Valerian and Gallienus and hence in the period 253-260, before the widespread switch to equestrians, and later in the third century too: for example, Magnius Donatus, [*procurat*]or *Aug(usti) n(ostri), [agens vice] praesidis [in provincia B]aetica, vir [perfect(issimus)]*, attested at Astigi (Écija), possibly during the reign of Probus (276-282).<sup>55</sup> It became such a normal practice to combine the two roles that these equestrians eventually came to omit reference to their procuratorship in their official titulature, as occurs in the case of another equestrian acting governor of Baetica: Aurelius Iulius, *v(ir) p(erfectissimus), a(gens) v(ice) p(raesidis)*, mentioned in a dedication that the community of Italica made in 276 to the short-lived emperor Florian.<sup>56</sup> Later still, equestrians would be sent out not as “acting governors” (*agentes vice praesidis*), but as governors (*praesides*) tout court.

The earliest equestrian *praeses* (pure and simple) of Lusitania on record is Aemilius Aemilianus, *v(ir) p(erfectissimus)*. In 282-283 this man is attested serving as *praeses* of Arabia, and the first editors of the dedication he made at Emerita argued that he was appointed *praeses* in Lusitania after his service in Arabia and so under Diocletian (284-305) and Maximian (286-305), or just possibly during the brief reign of Carinus and Numerianus (283-284).<sup>57</sup> Although the fact that he made a dedication to Jupiter Augustus makes it attractive to link him with the regime of Diocletian, who adopted the epithet “Iovius”, it could be that his governorship of Lusitania preceded, rather than followed, his service as *praeses* of Arabia,<sup>58</sup> especially since the latter involved command of a legion and was on the front-line in the conflicts with the resurgent Persians. If so, Aemilius Aemilianus might have served in Lusitania during the later 270s, probably during the reign of Probus (276-282). Another *v(ir) p(erfectissimus)*, Aur(elius) Ursinus, is attested holding office as *pr(aeses) provinc(iae) Lusitaniae*, probably also during the so-called “First Tetrarchy” at some point between 293 and 305.<sup>59</sup>

One further element in the text provides some orientation as to the date of Maximinus’ governorship and, hence, his dedication to Mars Augustus. He must have administered the province of Lusitania when there was just a single Augustus in power, since his title describes him as *procurator Aug(usti) n(ostri)* and not *procurator Augg(ustorum) nn(ostrorum)*.<sup>60</sup> Maximinus’ administrative career in Lusitania must, therefore, predate the creation of the tetrarchy in 286, when Maximian was promoted to Augustus to join Diocletian as joint-ruler, and it cannot have occurred during the joint-reigns of Carus and Carinus in 283 and of Carinus and Numerianus in 283-284. It could, therefore, date to the sole rule of Gallienus (260-268), Claudius Gothicus (268-270), Quintillus (270), Aurelian (270-275), Tacitus (275-276), Florianus

55 M. Aur. Alexander: *CIL* II<sup>2</sup>/7, 259, with comments of A.U. Stylow *ad loc.*; Magnius Donatus: *CIL* II<sup>2</sup>/5, 1167 = *CILA* II.3, no. 694. There has been debate whether the latter’s honorific title should be restored *viro [perfect(issimo)]* (as *CIL*) or *viro [egregio]*, as CANTO (1977: 425-428, no. 13 & lám. 41c = *AE* 1978, 415, reiterated at *HEp* 7, 802b). The new dedication from Emerita adds further support to the reading *viro [perfect(issimo)]* contra ALFÖLDY 1995: 41, n. 27.

56 *CIL* II 1115 = *ILS* 593, with SAQUETE CHAMIZO 2001: esp. 477-484. For the increasing omission of the title “procurator”, see PEACHIN 1996: 156.

57 *AE* 1992, 957 = *HEp* 5, 81; for discussion, see SAQUETE CHAMIZO, MOSQUERA MÜLLER & MÁRQUEZ PÉREZ 1991-92. For his previous appointment as *praeses* of Arabia, cf. *AE* 1973, 550 (Bostra).

58 A possibility raised by LE ROUX 2006: 379.

59 *CIL* II 5140 = *IRCP* 5 (with photo), with BARNES 1982: 167; SAQUETE CHAMIZO 2001.

60 In contrast to M. Aurelius Alexander, *proc(urator) Augg. nn., agens vice praesidis (sc. provinciae Baeticae)*, who held office in Baetica probably during the joint-reign of Valerian and Gallienus (253-260): *CIL* II<sup>2</sup>/7, 259, with comments *ad loc.*

(276), Probus (276-282), Carus (282-283) or the very start of Diocletian's reign before the creation of the tetrarchy (i.e., between Diocletian's proclamation as Augustus on 20 November 284 and Maximian's on 1 April 286).<sup>61</sup>

It appears, therefore, that Iul(ius) Maximinus served as governor of Lusitania in the period between 261/2 and the reign of Diocletian or, perhaps better, the reign of Probus; i.e., at some point between the time when the last senatorial *leg(atus) Aug(usti) pr(o) pr(aetore)* of the province of Lusitania currently on record is attested in office and the period in which the first equestrian *praeses* was appointed. One possible context for Maximinus' governorship of Lusitania would be immediately following that of the last senatorial governor, P. Clodius Laetus Macrinus. The fact that he was a *v(ir) p(erfectissimus)* rather than just a *v(ir) e(gregius)* and bore the title of *agens vice praesidis* rather than *praeses* outright might have helped to make the radical change that the appointment of an equestrian represented more palatable.<sup>62</sup> Wherever we place Iul(ius) Maximinus chronologically in the 260s or 270s (or perhaps even in the early 280s), his importance is that he is the first attested case of an equestrian procurator governing Lusitania *agens vice praesidis*.<sup>63</sup>

#### IV. THE CULT OF *DEUS MARS AUGUSTUS* AND THE TEMPLE OF MARS AT EMERITA

It was to the god Mars Augustus, *Deo Marti Aug(usto)*, that the acting governor of Lusitania, Iul(ius) Maximinus, made this dedication in fulfilment of his vow to guarantee the safety of the times (*p(ro) incolumita(te) temp(orum)*). As far as I am aware, this is the only dedication that survives from the Iberian peninsula that was offered explicitly *Deo Marti Aug(usto)*. The god was invoked in this precise form, however, in several other western provinces: in Gaul and Britain, for instance. Of these, two or three occurred in contexts with a clear connection to the imperial cult. At Lattara (Lattes) in Gallia Narbonensis the local craftsmen and boatmen (*fabr(i) et utric(larii) Lattar(enses)*) made a joint-dedication to Deus Mars Augustus and the Genius of the College of the *VI viri Augustales*, while in a dedication found at the Altar of Rome and Augustus just outside Lugdunum (Lyon), the imperial cult centre of the province of Gallia Lugdunensis, *Augusto Deo Marti* seems a very plausible restoration in a dedication that also invoked two other *dei Augusti*: Augusta Dea Vesta and Augustus Deus Volkanus. Another offering was made *Deo Marti Augusto* at Lugdunum by a *secunda rudis*, perhaps in thanks for the god's support in a gladiatorial event that had taken place at the amphitheatre which formed such a focal point in the rituals at the imperial cult sanctuary of the Three Gauls.<sup>64</sup>

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61 For the complex chronology of this period, see KIENAST 1996: 218-277; BARNES 1982: 3-4; for the equally complex imperial titulature, see PEACHIN 1990.

62 For the political advantages of the title *agens vice praesidis* in the period soon after the introduction of Gallienus' change in policy, see ECK in preparation. I shall discuss the inscription's importance for the history of Roman administration of the Hispanic provinces in a forthcoming paper.

63 For equestrians serving as *agens vice praesidis* in neighbouring Baetica, note *CIL* II<sup>2</sup>/7, 259 (Corduba, probably to be dated 253-260), *CIL* II<sup>2</sup>/5, 1167 (Astigi, c. 276-282) and *CIL* II 1115 = *ILS* 593 (Italica, dated to 276). The earliest attested equestrian *praesides* of Hispania Tarraconensis are Postumius Lupercus (*CIL* II 4104 = *RIT* 92, dated to 288 or 289) and Iulius Valens (*RIT* 91, dated 286-293); see BARNES 1982: 166-167. A senatorial *praeses provinciae Hispaniae Citerioris legatus Augg(ustorum) pr(o) pr(aetore)* of consular rank was still in office in 283: *CIL* II 4102 (= *ILS* 599) and 4103 = *RIT* 89-90.

64 Lattara: *AE* 1965, 164 = *AE* 1966, 247. Altar of Roma and Augustus, Lugdunum: *CIL* XIII 1676. Dedication by *secunda rudis*: *CIL* XIII 1749 = *EAOR* V 59. For other dedications, note *CIL* XII 1566 = *ILS* 4682a (Lucus Augusti, Gallia Narbonensis); *CIL* XII 2653 (Alba Helviorum, Gallia Narbonensis); *RIB* 1900 (Camboglanna on Hadrian's Wall). For the cult centre of the three Gauls, see FISHWICK 2004: 105-127.

A number of other votive dedications made at Emerita included the term “Deus” or “Dea” in their invocation of the divinity. This occurred in particular in those offered to Ataecina Turobrigensis, a local goddess assimilated to Proserpina,<sup>65</sup> and to Mithras, Deus Invictus.<sup>66</sup> In the later third century Jupiter was invoked as Deus Iupiter on a pedestal erected by the Roman provincial governor of Lusitania in an act that was closely analogous to the one carried out to honour Deus Mars Augustus.<sup>67</sup> More significant for understanding the nature of the cultic act, however, is the fact that the god Mars was given the epithet “Augustus”. At Emerita the only other divinity on record with such a designation was Jupiter, invoked as *Iupiter Aug(ustus)* on the base of a statue of the god set up in the later first century A.D. in honour of M. Arrius Reburri, an immigrant from the *civitas* of the Lancienses Transcudani, located in the area between Guarda and Sabugal in northern Lusitania.<sup>68</sup> (Whether Concordia Augusti, the object of a dedication in Emerita during the reign of Tiberius, was equivalent to Concordia Augusta is a matter of some dispute, and need not detain us here.<sup>69</sup>) The epithets Augustus or Augusta were attributed to gods of the Roman pantheon from the Augustan period onwards, but then came to be extended to eastern gods and local divinities too across the Latin-speaking provinces of the Roman Empire.<sup>70</sup> In Roman Hispania they seem to have been applied in particular to those gods associated with the imperial house: Mars, Venus, Apollo and Mercury.<sup>71</sup> Two, or possibly three, other dedications to Mars Augustus have survived from elsewhere in Lusitania, while the other two Hispanic provinces have provided a greater sample from a wide geographical range.<sup>72</sup> One of the dedications from Hispania Tarraconensis was in fact set up by a Lusitanian, G. Sevius Lupus, an architect from Aeminium (Coimbra), alongside his proudest creation, the lighthouse at Brigantium (La Coruña) in Gallaecia.<sup>73</sup>

Several of the votive offerings made to these “august” divinities were carried out in contexts that were clearly related to imperial cult. So at the so-called “Traianeum”, an imperial cult shrine at Italica in Baetica, dedications were set up to Apollo Augustus and Victoria Augusta, the former by a local *II*

65 Dea Ataecina Turibrigensis Proserpina: *CIL* II 462 = *ILS* 4515; cf. *AE* 1997, 804a. She was also invoked as Dea Sancta Ataecina Turibrigensis Proserpina (*CIL* II 461), Dea Ataecina Turobriga Sancta (*EE* IX 42 = *CMBad* 758), Dea Sancta Turibrigensis (*EE* IX 43 = *ILER* 733), Dea Sancta Proserpina (on an as yet unpublished altar, discovered in 2004 at a suburban villa) or just as Dea Sancta (*AE* 1983, 486 = *HEp* 2, 34 = *HEp* 6, 135).

66 *CMBad* 765 = *HAE* 668 = 2694 = *CIMRM* no. 794; *CMBad* 766 = *HAE* 686 = *CIMRM* no. 795 = *ILER* 284; *CMBad* 767 = *HAE* 2692 = *CIMRM* no. 796 = *ILER* 280; *CMBad* 1088 = *HAE* 1636=2690 = *ILER* 277. Note also Dea Invicta Caelestis Nemesis: *HAE* 1499 = *AE* 1961, 48 = *ILER* 400 = *HEp* 6, 127.

67 *AE* 1992, 957 = *HEp* 5, 81; for its text, see above n. 18. Note also the divinity invoked as Divus Sigerius Stilliferus: *CMBad* 768 = *AE* 1955, 234 = *ILER* 6004. For a dedication set up to, among others, a goddess invoked as Dea[?e.....], see *STYLOW* in press: no. 5.

68 *CIL* II 5261, as revised by *STYLOW* 1987: 116-117, Appendix no. 3 & plates 24a-b (photos) = *AE* 1987, 484 = *HEp* 2, 36: *[[Iovi Aug(usto)]] / [[ sacrum ]] / in honorem / M(arci) Arri Reburri / Lanc(iensis) Transc(udani) / filii optimi / M(arcus) Arrius Laurus et / Paccia Flaccilla / posuerunt*; see recently *SAQUETE CHAMIZO* 2005: 284-286.

69 *CIL* II 465 = *CIAE* 52 = *STYLOW* in press: no. B; *SAQUETE CHAMIZO* 2005: 281. For its equivalence, see *FISHWICK* 1991: 446-447; for serious doubts, *GRADEL* 2002: 103-106.

70 So *FISHWICK* 1991: 446-454, esp. 446; for the process in the German provinces and Gallia Belgica, see *LIERTZ* 1998: 163-188, esp. 166-167 for Mars Augustus; for Aquitania, note *VILLARET* 1999. Brief treatment in *CLAUSS* 2001: 280-289, 527-532 (a selective list of divinities found with the epithet *Augustus/a*).

71 *ÉTIENNE* 1958: 339-340.

72 See the list in *ÉTIENNE* 1958: 336, nos. 28-40. To these we should add from Lusitania the votive pedestal discovered in a reused context at Sines in the *conventus Pacensis* (*FE* 230, with photos = *AE* 1996, 838, dated to the second half of the third century: see *FE* 275 & *HEp* 9, 762) and the octagonal pillar set up to Mars Augustus at Conimbriga (*Fouilles de Conimbriga*, II, no. 14, with photos). A votive inscription from the *municipium* at modern Bobadela (Oliveira do Hospital, distr. Coimbra) has also been restored to attest a dedication [*Marti*] *Aug(usto)*: *GARCIA* 1991: 497-498, no. 558 = *HEp* 4, 1054, but caution needs to be exercised before adding this to the list. For a recent discussion of dedications to Mars Augustus in Hispania, see *LE ROUX* 2006a: 89, 91.

73 *CIL* II 2559 = *ILS* 7728 = *CIRG I. A Provincia de A Coruña*, no. 2, with photo, on which see further *LE ROUX* 1990.

*vir* and *augur perpetuus*, the latter by a *flaminica* and *sacerdos* of the colony, who at the same time dedicated her *flaminica*'s crown at the shrine.<sup>74</sup> Elsewhere a number of such dedications were initiated by priests associated with the imperial cult. Thus it was an *Augustalis* who set up the dedication to Mars Augustus that is now built into the walls of the castle at Sines, while *VI viri Augustales* were responsible for the offerings to Mars Augustus at Ipagrum (Aguilar de la Frontera, prov. Córdoba) and at Conobaria (Cabezas de San Juan, prov. Sevilla) in Baetica.<sup>75</sup> At Singili(a) Barba (Cerro del Castellón, Antequera, prov. Granada) it was a *magister* of the *Lares Aug(usti)*, whose worship was linked to the imperial cult, who dedicated a statue to Mars Augustus.<sup>76</sup> This is not to say that such dedications should be seen as elements of emperor worship in its full sense. That term should be reserved for cult acts paid to one or more of the deified emperors (*divi*) or deified female members of the imperial house (*divae*) or, occasionally, to living emperors. However, attaching the epithet Augustus or Augusta to a god or goddess, as Fishwick has argued, stamped that divinity “as profoundly associated with the emperor”. It helped to appropriate some of the god’s powers to enhance the emperor’s authority and to protect him and his family, but it was still a dedication to the god Mars.<sup>77</sup>

Furthermore, during the second and third centuries A.D. many of the dedications set up across the western provinces to divinities invoked as Augustus or Augusta were explicitly made to safeguard the well-being of the living Roman emperor and/or members of the *domus Augusta*.<sup>78</sup> A good example involving Mars Augustus comes from Sarmizegetusa, where the chief priest of the three Dacian provinces dedicated an altar for the well-being (*pro salute*) of the emperor Gordian at the provincial imperial cult centre just outside the Roman colony in the period between mid-238 and early 244.<sup>79</sup> Since these vows were not the equivalent of those paid directly to a *divus* or a *diva*, they should not be taken as evidence for the deification of the ruling princeps. Nevertheless, they do suggest that a strong bond between the emperor and the god was being assumed and that an “Augustan” divinity would be particularly well disposed towards the ruling Augustus and his family and would, more broadly, foster the well-being and eternity of Rome’s imperial power.

Increasingly from the later second century onwards it was Roman provincial governors, procurators, army commanders, officers and even lower-ranking soldiers who tended to make such dedications.<sup>80</sup> They often accompanied, as here at Emerita, refurbishment projects to major shrines in provincial

74 Apollo Augustus: *AE* 1983, 520 = BLANCO FREJEIRO 1988: 109-110 & plates 101-103 = *CILA* II,2, no. 342 & fig. 179 (photo); Victoria Augusta: *AE* 1982, 521 = *AE* 1983, 521 = BLANCO FREJEIRO 1988: 110-113 & plate 104 = *CILA* II,2, no. 358 & fig. 195 (photo).

75 For Sines, see above, n. 72. Ipagrum: *CIL* II 1515 = *II*<sup>2</sup>/5, 582. Conobaria: *CIL* II 1301: L. Catinius L. lib. Martialis *ob honorem IIIII vir(atus)*; (for the identification of Cabezas de San Juan as Conobaria, see BELTRÁN FORTES 1999, and note the discovery nearby of the *ius iurandum pro salute Augusti et domus Augustae*: *AE* 1988, 723 = *HEp* 2, 623 = *CILA* II, 3, no. 990 with photo).

76 *CIL* II 2013 = *II*<sup>2</sup>/5, 773. Whether the pontifex who set up a statue to Mars Augustus at Isturgi (*CIL* II 2121 = *II*<sup>2</sup>/7, 56) had a connection to local imperial cult is less clear. For the cult of the *Lares Aug(usti)*, see in general CLAUSS 2001: 336-339; in Hispania, ÉTIENNE 1958: 275-276, 282. Note also the *sacrarium Larum et imaginum [Aug(ustorum)?]* in the *ima cavea* of the theatre at Emerita: TRILLMICH 1989-90 = *AE* 1990, 515 = *HEp* 4, 167 (A.D. 130). On dedications to Mars in Baetica in general, see RODRÍGUEZ CORTÉS 1991: 76-81.

77 FISHWICK 1991: 446-448. The same has been convincingly argued for dedications made in the city of Rome: PANCIERA 2003. See also the comments of GRADEL 2002: 104-105, discussing the temple of Fortuna Augusta at Pompeii.

78 See ÉTIENNE 1958: 344; FISHWICK 1991: 446-454, esp. 449; FISHWICK 2004: 352-360; for the process in Africa, see SMADJA 1985.

79 *Inscriptiones Daciae Romanae* III,2, no. 266, on which see FISHWICK 2004: 291-292 and plate 151 (line-drawing).

80 See further ALFÖLDY 1989; ECK 1993; LE ROUX 2006. For another dedication set up in Emerita in the second half of the third century in the vicinity of the temple of the provincial imperial cult, possibly by a member of the Roman provincial administration, see STYLOW in press: no. 5 (with discussion).

centres. These representatives of the central ruling power demonstrated their piety in paying the vows that they had made to these “august” divinities, in the hope of winning their further support to ensure the well-being of the ruling emperor and the stability of his regime. It is no coincidence that the greatest volume of such dedications comes from the troubled third century, when the Roman state was seriously threatened by external enemies and by internal political strife. In the vow paid to the god Mars Augustus at Emerita, we are witnessing just one of the many public professions of piety made by Roman officials throughout the Empire in this difficult period of unrest.

Since the dedication was offered to Deus Mars Augustus, it is likely that the provincial governor sponsored some construction or refurbishment work on the temple of Mars at Emerita. As Fishwick has shown, divinities such as Minerva Augusta at Tarraco and Jupiter Pantheus Augustus at Nescania in Baetica had their own respective sanctuaries and the dedications set up to them were not made at shrines devoted to the imperial cult.<sup>81</sup> On the other hand, the dedications made to Apollo Augustus and Victoria Augusta at the imperial cult sanctuary in Italica (the so-called “Traianeum”) show that the offering to Deus Mars Augustus at Emerita could have been set up, for instance, in the supposed provincial imperial cult centre centred on the large temple discovered in the calle Holguín.<sup>82</sup> However, as with the dedications to Minerva Augusta from Tarraco and Jupiter Pantheus Augustus from Nescania, the presence of the word *templ[um]* or *templ[i]* in the new dedication to Deus Mars Augustus from Emerita would strongly suggest that it was set up in a shrine of Mars.

A temple of Mars evidently existed in Emerita. Its dedicatory inscription still survives, along with a series of architectural elements, built into the so-called “Hornito de Santa Eulalia”, a small outdoor shrine constructed in 1612 in front of the saint’s main church in Mérida [Fig. 10]. The dedicatory inscription, originally composed of large bronze letters (which are now lost, though the text is clear thanks to the deep channels cut into the marble frieze to hold its bronze letters and the clamps to fix them into place), reveals that the temple was funded by Vettilla, wife of Paculus.<sup>83</sup> She is very likely Domitia Patruini f. Vettilla, wife of L. Roscius Paculus, a Roman senator and suffect consul perhaps in A.D. 136, who was honoured by the *cultores* of the *domus divina* in what was probably her home-town of Vercellae (Vercelli) in Cisalpine Gaul.<sup>84</sup> If this is correct, this would date the construction of the temple of Mars to the late Hadrianic or early Antonine period. However, it is hard to believe that a Roman colony founded in 25 B.C. for the veterans of the legions V Alaudae and X Gemina did not have a temple of Mars for the first 175 years of its civic life.<sup>85</sup> As a result, it is possible that Domitia Vettilla sponsored an

81 FISHWICK 1991: 449, commenting on *CIL* II 4085 = *RIT* 39 (Tarraco: repairs to an exedra *cum fronte templi Minervae Aug(ustae) vetustate corrupto*) and *CIL* II 2008 = *IP*<sup>2</sup>/5, 840 (Nescania: dedication of a statue of the divinity *cum aede et tetrastylō* on 1 July 153).

82 For the dedications to Apollo Augustus and Victoria Augusta from Italica, see above, n. 74; for the provincial imperial cult centre in Emerita, see MATEOS CRUZ 2001: 196-198 and 2004; MATEOS CRUZ & PALMA GARCÍA 2004: 45-51; FISHWICK 2004: 44-59; SAQUETE CHAMIZO 2005; MATEOS CRUZ *ET AL.* in press.

83 *CIL* II 468: *Marti sacrum / Vettilla Paculi (sc. uxor)*. For the architectural elements and inscription, see LÉON ALONSO 1970, dating the reliefs to the mid- to later Antonine period; TRILLMICH in TRILLMICH *ET AL.* 1993: 294-295, with fig. 130 and plates 64a-b, 65, preferring a Hadrianic date. For the construction of the “hornito” in 1612, see ÁLVAREZ MARTÍNEZ 2004: 19-20.

84 *CIL* V 6657 = *ILS* 6741a. For discussion of the senator (perhaps born in Emerita) see CABALLOS RUFINO 1990: 290-293, no. 163. For the links between the families, RODÀ 1996.

85 For another dedication to Mars from Emerita, (30) cm high by 25 cm wide by 13-16 cm thick, note *HEp* 1, 108 = ÁLVAREZ MARTÍNEZ, DE LA BARRERA ANTÓN & VELÁZQUEZ JIMÉNEZ 1986: 22-24, no. 6 & plate 6 (photo): *Marti / L(ucius) Cocceius / Vi..... / .... / ...* From its style of lettering, it would appear to date to the second century A.D.



Fig. 10. Remains of the temple of Mars built into the so-called “Hornito” of Sta. Eulalia, Mérida. Photo: J. Edmondson.

extension to the temple or perhaps a new portico for the temple precinct. Only a detailed architectural study of the surviving architrave blocks and the dedicatory inscription will allow further progress on this question.<sup>86</sup>

Attempts to locate the site of the temple of Mars within the urban topography of Emerita continue to prove frustrating. Moreno de Vargas situated it in the area of the Plaza de Otero, near the Guadiana river.<sup>87</sup> To pursue the question further, Álvarez Martínez scoured the municipal archives of Mérida to trace the history of the various elements built into the shrine of Santa Eulalia back to the moment when they were purchased for its construction. The man who sold them, Gabriel de Morales, owned land near the Alcazaba, and this raised the possibility that the temple of Mars might have been located in this area. However, it is rather a peripheral zone of the city for a temple for such an important deity as Mars and furthermore, as Álvarez notes, Morales owned several properties in and around Mérida in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century and so the location of the elements from the temple of Mars at the moment of their purchase does not necessarily provide any clue to the temple’s location in the Roman period.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>86</sup> A point emphasized long ago by LEÓN ALONSO (1970: 197).

<sup>87</sup> See the comments of J. Álvarez Sáenz de Buruaga in the discussion following Hauschild’s paper at the conference held to celebrate the bimillennium of Emerita: HAUSCHILD 1976: 110.

<sup>88</sup> ÁLVAREZ MARTÍNEZ 1980: 249 and 2004: 19.

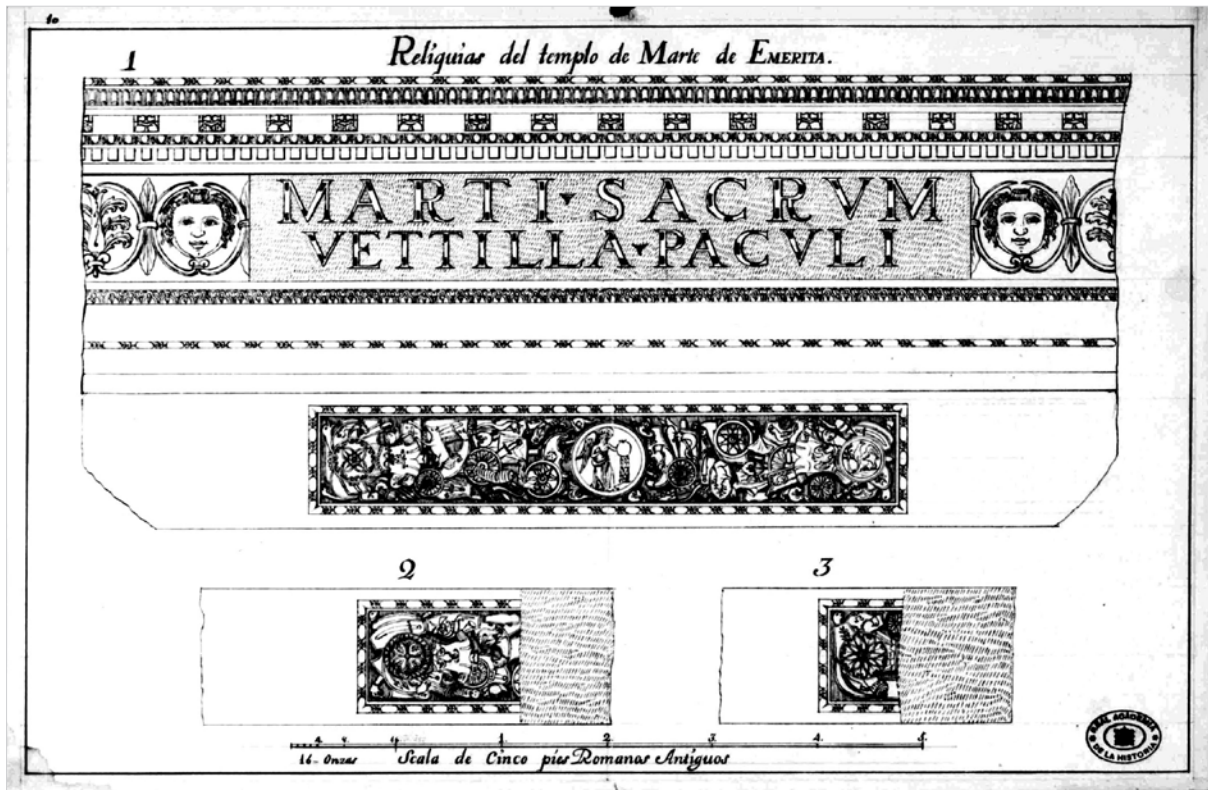


Fig. 11. Drawings of E. Rodríguez (1752-53) of the dedicatory inscription and reliefs from the remains of the temple of Mars, Mérida. Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia.

One potentially valuable witness has yet to enter the discussion. Luis José Zacarías Velázquez, the Marqués of Valdeflores, visited Mérida in 1752-53 as part of the mission entrusted to him by the Real Academia de la Historia to collect information about antiquities from across the whole of Spain. He was accompanied on his trip to Extremadura by Esteban Rodríguez of the Academia de las Artes, who *inter alia* executed very careful drawings of the reliefs from the temple of Mars [see, for example, Fig. 11].<sup>89</sup> Rodríguez's drawings and Velázquez's account of the antiquities he encountered during this trip survive only in manuscript form in the Real Academia de la Historia (RAH 9/4118-1). (In 1766 the Marqués was accused of taking part in protests against the government and after a long drawn-out trial was condemned and imprisoned in the castle at Alicante, with the result that his ambitious work, already comprising thirty volumes, was never published.) Valdeflores gives the following account of the temple of Mars and its reliefs:<sup>90</sup>

“A temple of Mars once stood in the Plaza de Santiago, from where the marbles were taken, which today are to be found in the so-called “Horno” (literally, the “oven”) of Sta. Eulalia. They

89 On the Marqués de Valdeflores in general, see ÁLVAREZ MARTÍ-AGUILAR 1996; CEBRIÁN FERNÁNDEZ, SALAMANQUÉS PÉREZ & SÁNCHEZ MEDINA 2005; more briefly EDMONDSON in EDMONDSON, NOGALES BASARRATE and TRILLMICH 2001: 109-110; [www2.uah.es/imagines\\_cilii/Anticuarios/Textos/velazquez.htm](http://www2.uah.es/imagines_cilii/Anticuarios/Textos/velazquez.htm).

90 RAH MS 9/4118-1, f. 29: “Un templo de Marte hubo antiguamente en la Plaza de Santiago, de donde se sacaron los mármoles (lam. XVIII, XIX y XX), que hoy están en el que llaman Hornito de Santa Eulalia. Estos formaban parte del antiguo pórtico del templo, según se deduce por su misma factura. Los que han quedado son cuatro fragmentos completos de arquitrabe, friso, y cornisa; los fragmentos de otros dos; y otras tantas columnas con sus capiteles de orden corintio”. I am grateful to Helena Gimeno and Virginia Salamanqués for their assistance in locating this MS.

comprise part of the ancient portico of the temple, as can be deduced from their working. What remains are four entire sections of architrave, frieze and cornice; pieces of another two; and various columns with their capitals of the Corinthian order.”

He then goes on to describe the dedicatory inscription to Mars in some detail.<sup>91</sup>

“The first marble (Plate XVIII, no. 1) contains this inscription on its frieze:

MARTI • SACRVM  
VETTILLA • PACVLI

and from this it is known that Vettilla (*sic*), wife of Paculus, was the person who erected this temple to Mars. The letters of the first line measure 7 fingers high, and those of the second line 6: and here some measure ½ a finger in depth. Within these same letters are further cavities another ½ finger deep, and they served to fix clamps in them to hold the metal from which the letters were made. It appears that not only the letters, but also the whole space that the inscription occupies was covered with another metal sheet; because the surface of the rectangle over which the letters extend is not smooth and polished, as is most of the frieze, but rather is rough and unworked; from this it can be inferred that it could have been covered with a sheet of metal, in which the letters stood out. This inscription leads to the conclusion that the frieze on which it was sculpted was the main one of the facade of the portico of the temple. The decorative elements on the frieze comprise floral discs alternating with heads, apparently of a woman, facing to the front, with hair hanging down, and above two wings, from which it can be understood that they represent Victory.”

The Plaza de Santiago, which Velázquez believed was the site of the temple of Mars, was the former name for the Plaza de la Constitución in which Mérida’s Parador Nacional de Turismo (once the Convento de Santiago) is now located. In the Roman period this area lay just outside and to the east of the so-called “provincial forum”. This was where the pedestal set up to Concordia Augusti was discovered in 1646 before it was moved to form the base of the commemorative obelisk to Santa Eulalia, first planned in 1633, but not completed until 1652. Furthermore, in 1758 dedications to Tiberius and Domitian also came to light in the Plaza de Santiago; and it may have been in this area too that the base of a statue of Jupiter Augustus set up to honour the memory of an immigrant from the *civitas* of the Lancienses Transcudani was discovered.<sup>92</sup> If these findspots are accurately reported and reflect

91 f. 29 - 29 v: “El primer mármol (lam. XVIII, nu. 1) tiene esta inscripción sobre el friso. / MARTI • SACRVM / VETTILLA • PACVLI / y por ella se sabe, que Vettilla, mujer de Paculo, fue quien erigió a Marte este templo. Las letras de la primera línea tienen 7 dedos de altura, y las de la segunda 6: y tanto unas como otras, medio dedo de profundidad, y servían para introducir en ellas las grapas que sujetaban el metal en las que las letras estaban embutidas. Parece que no sólo las letras, sino también todo el espacio que ocupa la inscripción, estaba cubierto con otra plancha de metal; porque la superficie del cuadrilongo en que las letras se extienden, no es lisa, y bruñida, como el resto del friso, sino rugosa, y sin labrar; de lo que se deduce que podría estar cubierta con alguna lámina de metal, en la que sobresalieran las letras. Esta inscripción da a entender que el friso en que esta esculpida era el principal de la fachada del pórtico del templo. Los adornos del friso son ciertos florones interpolados con unas cabezas, al parecer de mujer, colocadas de frente, con el pelo suelto, y en lo alto dos alas; de lo que se puede deducir, que representen la Victoria”.

92 Pedestal to Concordia Augusti: *CIL* II 465 = *CHIAE* 52 = STYLOW in press: no. B. Dedication to Tiberius: *EE* VIII 22 = *CHIAE* 16 = STYLOW in press: no. A; to Domitian: *CIL* II 477 = *CHIAE* 25 = STYLOW in press: no. C; see recently SAQUETE CHAMIZO 2005: 278-284. For the obelisk of Sta. Eulalia, see DE LA BARRERA ANTÓN 1992; SÁNCHEZ y SÁNCHEZ 2000. For the statue-base set up for Jupiter Augustus, see above n. 68.

where the monuments were originally set up, they would suggest that this was the location of one or more important public buildings and public spaces, where dedications to deified members of the imperial house, honours to living emperors and offerings to divinities such as *Concordia Augusti*, *Jupiter Augustus* and *Mars Augustus* were set up over the years. If the Marqués de Valdeflores is correct, this may be where we should locate the temple of Mars, which according to this new dedication to Mars Augustus was embellished or repaired by the provincial governor of Lusitania in the mid- to later third century. If so, the temple of Mars was just adjacent to the main temple of the provincial imperial cult (now partially revealed in the calle Holguín). However, it is possible that Valdeflores may have simply been misinformed about the origin of the elements from the temple of Mars, which had been built into the small shrine of Santa Eulalia for more than 140 years when he visited Mérida in 1752-53.

Another possible location for the temple of Mars in the same region of the city has been suggested. Among the many drawings that Alexandre de Laborde executed of the Roman remains of Mérida, one (dating to 1813) includes the plan of a public building apparently located in the area of the Cerro de Calvario.<sup>93</sup> Its identification has long engaged scholars of Emeritan topography. Hauschild pointed out some similarities in plan between it and the temple of Mars Ultor in Rome, but suggested that it might be a basilica.<sup>94</sup> Others have supported its identification as a Capitolium, whereas Álvarez Martínez has argued that it was a basilica, though with some hesitations. Fishwick has recently proposed, if tentatively, that it might have been the meeting place (*curia*) of the provincial council of Lusitania.<sup>95</sup>

Archaeological excavations in the calle Calvario in 2002 have now, it is thought, located part of the building shown in Laborde's drawing, but more needs to be discovered of this structure before complete certainty is possible. This building was constructed at some point during the third century A.D. within the city walls to the east of the *kardo maximus* in the second urban block to the north of the so-called provincial forum. The project involved significant urban remodelling, since this part of Emerita had previously been occupied with private houses. The new public edifice was clearly impressive, raised up above the level of the surrounding buildings and only accessible from the *kardo maximus* by means of a stairway.<sup>96</sup> Could this building, possibly the one drawn by Laborde, be the temple of Mars, its ground-plan modelled in part on that of the temple of Mars Ultor in Rome? Its third-century construction date fits approximately with that of the dedication *deo Marti Aug(usto)*, which, as we have seen, was set up in all likelihood in the mid- to later third century. But this association cannot be correct, unless there were two temples of Mars in Emerita, since the materials and dedicatory inscription from the temple of Mars now built into the shrine of Santa Eulalia date, as we have seen, to the late Hadrianic or early Antonine period. They cannot, therefore, come from the third-century building that has recently been identified in the calle Calvario.

So while a temple of Mars located in the vicinity of the main imperial cult centre of the province of Lusitania is an attractive hypothesis, especially if this was where the dedication to the god Mars Augustus was set up, it is not yet possible to posit such a location with much confidence. Nevertheless, the new dedication certainly proves that public building works were still being undertaken in the city

93 Reproduced conveniently as MATEOS CRUZ & PALMA GARCÍA 2004: 51, fig. 24. On Laborde, see CABALLERO RODRÍGUEZ 2004.

94 HAUSCHILD 1976: 109-110, but see the comments of MATEOS CRUZ & PALMA GARCÍA 2004: 50-51.

95 Capitolium: see the sceptical comments of BENDALA GALÁN 1989-90: 21-22; ÁLVAREZ MARTÍNEZ 1982: 60-63; FISHWICK 2004: 48-51.

96 AYERBE VÉLEZ 2005.

in the second half of the third century and that the Roman provincial governor was now playing a key role in them.

## CONCLUSION

Iul(ius) Maximinus must now join the growing list of Roman officials who played an active role in the civic life of Augusta Emerita in the second half of the third century. Like the senator P. Clodius Laetus Macrinus before him and the equestrian Aemilius Aemilianus after him (and .....Calpurnianus too, if he is to be identified as another equestrian provincial *praeses*, as has been plausibly suggested),<sup>97</sup> Maximinus by means of his public acts in Emerita ensured that the citizens of the colony were reminded of the importance of showing their devotion to the ruling Augustus. Whereas P. Clodius Laetus Macrinus and .....Calpurnianus were responsible, it would appear, for erecting statues of the emperor currently in power in the colonial forum, Iul(ius) Maximinus and Aemilius Aemilianus made dedications to major Roman divinities in discharging earlier vows they had made. Aemilianus sought the protection of Jupiter for the salvation of his own family in what may have been a private dedication, whereas Maximinus made a public vow to the god Mars Augustus, seeking to ensure the “security of the times” (the *incolumitas temp(orum)*) and hence the continued well-being of the inhabitants of the Roman Empire. His dedication also illustrates what had become by the mid-third century a common feature of Roman public religion in the provinces. High-ranking Roman officials, whether provincial governors or senior officers in the Roman army, increasingly intervened to repair religious buildings in disrepair and, not least, played a leadership role in acts of worship of the deified members of the imperial house. Governors had always had a duty to ensure that the rites of the religious calendar of their province were duly maintained.<sup>98</sup> But they came to play an even more prominent role as the third century progressed, taking over some of responsibilities that had previously been undertaken by the local elite.

At a time of general military uncertainty, what more suitable god for the Roman governor of Lusitania to invoke than Mars; and not just Mars in a simple form, but Deus Mars Augustus. His potency as a divinity was accentuated by the addition of the emphatic “Deus”, the close link between the traditional Roman pantheon and the Roman emperor highlighted by the addition of the epithet “Augustus”. The most high-ranking representative of the Roman state in the province of Lusitania, Iul(ius) Maximinus, publicly thanked this powerful divinity for his support in trying to ensure security and peace in troubled times. The governor’s piety was doubtless underlined by the rituals that accompanied the discharging of his vow in the public spaces of the colony. It would be helpful for reconstructing this sequence of ritual events if we could pinpoint the location of the sanctuary of Mars at Emerita. It is tempting to follow the Marqués de Valdeflores in situating it in the Plaza de Santiago, now the Plaza de la Constitución, on the fringes of the most important imperial cult shrine in Emerita, where the province of Lusitania carried out its devotions to the deified members of the *domus Augusta*. But it is not clear on what grounds the Marqués made his identification. Nevertheless, by sponsoring repairs to this important divinity’s temple in the urban heart of the major seat of Roman power in Lusitania, Iul(ius) Maximinus demonstrated to

97 SAQUETE CHAMIZO & MÁRQUEZ PÉREZ 1997 = *HEp* 7, 115 = *AE* 2003, 874 = *CIIAE* 59 & lám. XLV (photo).

98 See further ECK 1993; MAYER 1993.

the citizens of the colony and to the inhabitants of the province the importance of remaining loyal to the legitimate authority, the Roman emperor, and of conserving the goodwill of the gods. In the mid- to later third century A.D. the support of powerful gods such as Deus Mars Augustus was surely seen as essential to Rome's imperial mission. The fact that it was the Roman provincial governor, rather than members of the local elite, who took the lead in repairing and hence embellishing a major temple in the Roman colony marked an important change of emphasis. From the mid-third century onwards Roman provincial governors and later *vicarii* of the Diocesis of the Hispaniae came to play an increasing role in maintaining the urban fabric and ensuring the vitality of the religious and civic life of the colony of Augusta Emerita.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> For the refurbishment of the theatre, see *CIIAE* 62, adding a new fragment to the three already known and published in *CMBad* 715 = *AE* 1935, 4 = *ILER* 2057; for repairs to the circus, *CMBad* 743 = *ILER* 2056, revised by CHASTAGNOL 1976 = *AE* 1975, 472 = *CIIAE* 63. For the dedication set up to Gratian by Octavius Clarus, *vicarius Hispaniarum*, in the period between 367 and 383, see HIDALGO MARTÍN & MÉNDEZ GRANDE 2005.

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