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The Crisis of Empire, A.D. 193–337

Edited by Alan K. Bowman, Peter Garnsey and Averil Cameron

Excerpt

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CHAPTER 1

THE SEVERAN DYNASTY

BRIAN CAMPBELL

I. THE BACKGROUND AND ACCESSION OF SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS

After Commodus had been strangled on the evening of 31 December 192, the main instigators of the deed, Aemilius Laetus the praetorian prefect and Eclectus the chamberlain, immediately approached Pertinax. This was a wise choice. Pertinax held the eminent positions of consul II and prefect of the city, and a long career that had included the frequent command of soldiers and the governorship of four consular provinces had earned him a distinguished reputation. He sent a friend to check that Commodus was dead, and probably was genuinely unaware of any plan to kill the emperors.¹ Despite some reservations among senators about Pertinax's origins as the son of an ex-slave, there was general approbation, especially since, in contrast to Commodus, Pertinax attempted to play down the autocratic and dynastic aspects of his position. Styling himself 'princeps senatus', he refused to name his wife Augusta or his son Caesar. In Pertinax's view the purple was not his to bestow on others. He was affable and approachable; his integrity and benevolence in the conduct of his imperial duties contributed to an atmosphere free from terror, where freedom of speech could flourish. Informers were punished; the death penalty for treason was not invoked; public affairs were efficiently managed in the interests of the state. Pertinax also had positive ideas for reorganizing the empire's administration. All land, including imperial estates, which was not under cultivation in Italy and the provinces, was to be given over to private individuals to work, with security of tenure and a ten-year tax exemption. New customs tariffs introduced by Commodus were withdrawn. Moreover, the emperor would not inscribe his name on imperial property, presumably wishing to convey the idea that it belonged to the Roman state, while his coinage proclaimed the setting free of the citizens.² Despite these good intentions, Pertinax

¹ The main literary sources are Cassius Dio, Herodian (translation and commentary by Whittaker, *Herodian* vols. 1–2), and *SHA*. Specific references have been given only in order to emphasize particular points or to record direct quotations. Pertinax – *PIR*² H 73; Birley, *The African Emperor* 63–7 and 87–95, who believes that Pertinax was involved in the conspiracy.

² Dio, LXXIII.5.1–5; Herod. II.4; *SHA, Pert.* 6.6–7.11; *BMC* v p. 1, no. 3.

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faced serious problems. The treasury was virtually empty, and he had to sell Commodus' possessions to raise cash for donatives to plebs and soldiers. The praetorians, and to a lesser extent the imperial freedmen, had to be placated and disciplined after the licence accorded them by Commodus. In Dio's opinion Pertinax lacked political judgement. 'He did not realize despite his extensive experience in public affairs that it is impossible to reorganize everything simultaneously, and especially that to stabilize the political set-up requires both time and skill.'³ On 28 March 193 Pertinax was murdered by some of his bodyguard. It is likely that this was a spontaneous move by the disgruntled soldiers, who had tried on at least two previous occasions to replace him, and bitterly resented his fraudulent claim to have given them as much as Marcus Aurelius. Pertinax was the first emperor therefore to be overthrown by purely military discontent because he could not satisfy the expectations of his troops; this was a dangerous legacy for his successor. Furthermore, he had helped to highlight again the senatorial perception of what made a 'good emperor'. The achievements of Pertinax's successors need to be measured against this range of senatorial expectation.

In the aftermath of Pertinax's murder, two men came forward to contend for the purple, Ti. Flavius Sulpicianus, prefect of the city and father-in-law of the dead emperor, and M. Didius Iulianus.⁴ Sulpicianus was already in the praetorian camp, having been sent there by Pertinax to quell unrest. When Julianus arrived outside, the infamous 'auction' of the empire took place. For this the soldiers were partly to blame, but also the two senators who were prepared to exploit the vacuum and bid for the praetorians' support. Perhaps because they feared reprisals from Sulpicianus, the guardsmen accepted Julianus' offer of 25,000 *sesterces*. The sum was not excessively large, but the manner in which it was extorted set a further bad precedent for open bribery of the soldiers. Julianus was by no means a nonentity; he had governed several provinces, held a suffect consulship in 175, and had been proconsul of Africa. He conspicuously tried to flatter the senate and win approval, even sparing Sulpicianus. But the emperor was unconvincing and the senators remained unimpressed. Julianus was doomed by the manner of his accession and his obvious reliance on the now discredited praetorians, who had surrounded the senate house for its first meeting. The situation was exacerbated by some of the plebs who abused Julianus, and then in what was apparently an organized political demonstration occupied the Circus for a night and the following day, demanding that Pescennius Niger, the governor of Syria, should assist them. It is possible that Niger did receive some intimation of the disorderly situation in Rome before he was proclaimed emperor, probably towards the end of April 193.⁵ However, L. Septimius Severus the governor of Pannonia Superior needed no such

³ LXXIII.10.3.⁴ *PIR*² F 373; *PIR*² D 77.⁵ Herod. II.7.6; 8.5.

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encouragement. He was proclaimed emperor by his troops on 9 April before he can have heard much about the new regime in Rome. It is not necessary to explain his speed in terms of a plot, since during Pertinax's three months' rule Severus had doubtless received news of the emperor's difficulties. A wise and ambitious man would have weighed up his chances and taken some preliminary soundings of opinion on what to do if there was further chaos in Rome. His march on Italy was launched in the first instance with the Danubian troops, supported by the legions of the Rhine. Before leaving Pannonia Severus perhaps heard of the proclamation of Niger in the east, and shrewdly removed his only other possible rival, D. Clodius Albinus, governor of Britain, who came from Hadrumetum in Africa, by declaring him Caesar.⁶

Severus was born in Lepcis Magna in Africa in 145. Lepcis had been a Roman colony since 110, and although the family of the Septimii was of Punic extraction, it is likely that it had enjoyed Roman citizenship at least from the time of Vespasian. It was also rich and well connected: two cousins of Severus' father had been consul – P. Septimius Aper and C. Septimius Severus, who had also been proconsul of Africa in 174.⁷ Severus himself was a typical product of the municipal aristocracy: well-versed in Graeco-Roman culture, and interested in the study of philosophy and law, he had assimilated the Roman upper-class ethos. Dio says that he desired more education than he received, and in consequence was a man of few words but many ideas. In any event, there is no reason to think that his actions were the product of an alien, un-Roman mind or that he had any African bias. Moreover, Severus' traditional and unspectacular career, begun in the 160s, should have imbued him with the usual Roman conceptions of office holding. During his career he did not hold a military tribunate, commanded the IV Scythian legion in Syria in time of peace, and governed no province containing legionary troops until appointed in 191 to Pannonia Superior. He was therefore hardly an experienced military leader or a charismatic soldiers' man. So, his policies should not necessarily be seen as the hostile reaction of a tough soldier to bureaucracy and political niceties. It was as a fairly average senator, perhaps not very well known, that Severus set out on his march to Rome. Julianus first reacted by declaring him a public enemy, and tried to fortify the city using the praetorians and sailors from the fleet at Misenum. But there was little chance that the guard could resist an army, and Julianus lost any remaining credibility by asking the senate

⁶ The gold and silver coinage of Severus (*BMC* v p. 21, nos. 7–25) shows that initially he was supported by at least fifteen of the sixteen legions in Raetia, Noricum, Dacia, the Pannonian, Moesian and German provinces. The legion *x Gemina* stationed at Vienna is missing from the coin series, but appears as 'loyal, faithful, Severan' on an inscription (*AE* 1913.56). Clodius Albinus – Dio, *LXXIV*.15.1; Herod. *II*.15.3; *ILS* 414–15.

⁷ Birley, *Septimius Severus* 213–20; Barnes (1967).

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to vote a share in the imperial power to Severus. The emperor had run out of options and when the praetorians responded favourably to a letter from Severus demanding the surrender of the murderers of Pertinax, the senate was emboldened to sentence Julianus to death, confer power on Severus, and deify Pertinax, probably on 1 June 193. Before entering Rome in early June, Severus oversaw the execution of the murderers of Pertinax and then disbanded the entire guard, replacing it with soldiers from his own legions. Outside the gates of the city Severus changed into civilian dress and led his troops in glittering armour to the temple of Jupiter where he offered sacrifice. Dio recalled a happy, festive occasion. But many spectators were also anxious and fearful on this day.⁸ In the subsequent meeting of the senate, the emperor made an initially good impression by taking an oath not to execute senators, and by promising the end of confiscations without trial and reliance on informers. It was good policy for Severus the military usurper to claim justification in the avenging of Pertinax. He had taken Pertinax into his nomenclature before leaving Pannonia; now this was officially voted by the senate and a grand funeral for the deified emperor was organized. This was all Severus could do to conciliate the upper classes in a stay in Rome of less than a month. The plebs was kept happy by shows and a cash distribution, while the troops received a donative of 1,000 *sesterces* after an embarrassing and frightening confrontation with their emperor.

II. CIVIL AND FOREIGN WARS

Severus set out for the east along the Via Flaminia while one of his commanders, Ti. Claudius Candidus, went on ahead in command of the Pannonian legions. Meanwhile, Pescennius Niger had occupied Byzantium and entrusted the defence of the southern shore of the Sea of Marmara to Asellius Aemilianus. In the autumn of 193 Candidus defeated Aemilianus near Cyzicus and executed him. Niger, besieged in Byzantium by Marius Maximus, was forced to withdraw to Nicaea, which remained loyal to his cause. But his defeat in a battle to the west of the city and his subsequent withdrawal to Antioch undermined his chances of organizing further resistance. Asia fell into Severus' hands, and by 13 February 194 Egypt was supporting him. Niger attempted to defend the approaches to Syria at the Cilician gates, but in the spring of 194 he was decisively defeated at Issus by C. Anullinus, another of Severus' trusted commanders. Niger was soon captured and executed. His head was sent as a grim warning to Byzantium, which still held out against Severus. The victory was also marked by Severus' fourth salutation as *imperator*, and a series of reprisals against individuals

⁸ Dio, LXXIV.1.3–5; cf. Herod. II.14.1; *SHA, Sev.* 7.1–3.

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and cities that had supported Niger, although at this stage no senator was executed. In order to break up the large concentration of troops exploited by Niger, the province of Syria was divided into two, Coele (northern Syria) with two legions under a consular governor, and Phoenice (southern Syria), with one under the command of a legionary legate of praetorian rank.⁹ Leaving Byzantium still under siege Severus turned his attention towards Rome's eastern neighbours. The pretext was the support given to Niger by the Osrhoeni under king Abgarus, the Adiabeni, and the Scenite Arabs, and their attack on Nisibis, which was apparently held to be in the orbit of Roman influence. But Dio's explanation of the campaign – 'a desire for glory' – is likely to be right. Casualties had been heavy in the civil war, and Severus, who had not been present at any of the battles, had won little distinction. He needed a foreign war, especially one that involved little risk of large-scale conflict. In the spring of 195, rejecting all overtures of peace, the emperor invaded Mesopotamia and marched straight to Nisibis, where he divided his army into three groups and despatched them to do as much damage as possible to the enemy; in a subsequent operation Abiabene may have been attacked. Three imperial salutations (V, VI, VII) belong to these campaigns, and Severus assumed the titles *Parthicus Adiabenicus* and *Parthicus Arabicus*, though *Parthicus* was later dropped. He presumably wished to avoid an open breach with the Parthians since they had not been directly involved in the campaigns because of a rebellion in Persis and Media. Other celebrations of the campaigns were muted, though it seems that a new province of Osrhoene was established in 195 excluding the city territory of Edessa, which was left under the control of Abgarus.¹⁰ Severus' intention will have been to enhance Rome's standing among the eastern states without offending the Parthians, and to improve his own reputation in Rome. During the campaigns in Mesopotamia the emperor heard word of the fall of Byzantium after a siege of two and a half years and excitedly blurted out the news to the troops. He knew that this marked his final triumph over the forces of Niger and he vindictively punished the city by depriving it of its land and rights, by destroying the walls, and by executing the magistrates and the soldiers who had defended it. At the same time his mind was on the creation of a stable dynasty. First, he announced himself to be the son of Marcus Aurelius. This remarkable move was a direct attempt to associate Severus with the revered memory of Marcus, who had been very popular with the senate. Then his elder son Bassianus took the names M. Aurelius Antoninus ('Caracalla'), and possibly also the formal position

⁹ *AE* 1930.141. These milestones show the existence of Phoenice, while Severus is *Imperator* IV (194). He did not receive his fifth salutation until the campaigns in 195.

¹⁰ The date of C. Julius Pacatianus' procuratorship of Osrhoene is much disputed; see *PIR*² A 8; Pflaum, *Carrières* no. 229 (pp. 605–10); Whittaker, *Herodian* 1: 282–3. But Wagner (1983) 103–12 has argued convincingly that the province was established in 195.

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of Caesar.¹¹ Severus' second wife was Julia Domna, daughter of the priest of Baal at Emesa, who was a descendent of the old ruling dynasty there, and she bore him two sons, Bassianus, born on 4 April 188, and Geta, born on 7 March 189. Clodius Albinus, nominated Caesar in 193, obviously could expect little but a quick death from the new regime, and made his own bid for supreme power by proclaiming himself Augustus.

On his way back to the west Severus briefly visited Rome, perhaps in late autumn 196. The news was not good since Albinus had invaded Gaul, captured Lugdunum, and defeated the governor of Germania Inferior, Virius Lupus, a Severan partisan. However, at the battle of Lugdunum on 19 February 197 the Severan forces won a decisive victory, although casualties were enormous. Lugdunum was looted and burnt and Albinus was captured and beheaded. Severus treated his body with indignity to set an example. There followed widespread confiscations and reprisals against senators and prominent provincials who had supported Albinus. By 9 June Severus was back in Rome to confront the supporters of Albinus in the senate. Out of 64 brought to trial, 29 were executed. The emperor was at his most intimidating, decrying the morals of many senators and praising Commodus, whose deification he ordered. However, the situation in the east required Severus' personal presence. After 195 northern Mesopotamia was regarded informally at least to be within the Roman sphere of influence, with a Roman garrison in Nisibis. The invasion of Parthia in 197 should be seen as a limited war in an attempt to re-establish their prestige. The Parthian king Vologaeses, beset with rebellion and family dissension (one brother accompanied the Romans), withdrew before the arrival of Severus, who marched straight to Nisibis, which Julius Laetus had successfully defended. A punitive expedition then sailed down the Euphrates in the autumn of 197, and after occupying Seleuceia and Babylon, captured Ctesiphon, the Parthian capital; there was little resistance and the city was plundered with huge loss of life and a vast haul of prisoners. Severus was able to announce the conquest of Parthia on 28 January 198, the centenary of Trajan's accession. But he did not pursue Vologaeses. On his return march he attacked the city of Hatra between the Tigris and the Euphrates. During the siege Severus executed a tribune of the praetorians for criticizing the war, and also his commander Julius Laetus, who seemed too popular with the troops.¹² The siege was resumed, but the emperor's indecision lost the one chance of storming the city and the campaign petered out in recrimination and near mutiny.

The main result of the war was the creation of a new province of Mesopotamia, garrisoned by two legions under the command of an equestrian prefect. Osrhoene apparently remained a province, under a Roman

¹¹ See Whittaker, *Herodian* 1: 286–7.¹² The identity of Laetus: Birley, *Septimius Severus* 345–6.

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procurator though Abgarus continued to rule Edessa. Severus boasted that the new province served as a protection for Syria. Yet in Dio's view it was expensive, unproductive and even dangerous, in that it brought the Romans into contact with new peoples. It is unlikely that Severus had formulated long-term strategic plans in 195 to create a new province. He seized an opportunity that arose with the weakness of Parthia. The conquest of Mesopotamia served his personal interests more than those of Rome, in that as *Parthicus Maximus* and *Propagator Imperii*, he was a military leader who had enhanced the honour and glory of Rome, not merely a victor in squalid civil wars that cost thousands of Roman lives. The military success was consummated with new dynastic arrangements. Caracalla, who had already received the title of 'emperor designate' (*imperator destinatus*), was proclaimed joint Augustus, shortly after the capture of Ctesiphon, on 28 January 198, while the younger son Geta was proclaimed Caesar.¹³ When the annexation of Mesopotamia had been completed in the summer of 199, Severus proceeded through Palestine and Syria to Egypt, where he effected a reorganization of local government by giving a council to Alexandria and to each of the *metropoleis*. This was not however designed to bring Egypt into line with municipal local government elsewhere, but was another device for finding people to perform the expensive local magistracies that kept the *metropoleis* running financially. The emperor made the long return journey through Asia Minor and Thrace, founding Forum Pizus as a centre of trade in the area, and arrived in Rome in 202.¹⁴ In the same year a great celebration was organized to mark ten years of Severus' rule, his victories, and the marriage of Caracalla to Plautilla, the daughter of Plautianus, his praetorian prefect. There were lavish games and a cash distribution to the plebs and praetorians on an unparalleled scale of generosity in which Severus took great pride. The triumphal arch subsequently erected in the forum affirmed his achievements – the rescue of the state and the extension of the power of Rome. In 202, at the peak of his career, the emperor set out for a visit to his native province, where the district of Numidia had recently been constituted as a separate province under the command of the legate of the III Augusta. Many communities benefited from Severus' generosity, especially Lepcis Magna.

The secular games and further distributions to the plebs, which took place in 204, were followed by a period in the capital when Severus could devote himself to affairs of state. But in 208 the emperor departed for Britain on a campaign that was to be his last. The province had been neglected

¹³ Severus as military leader: *ILS* 425 'because of his restoration of the state and the extension of the power of the Roman people'; *RIC* iv.1 p. 108 nos. 142–4; Caracalla as emperor designate and his proclamation as Augustus: *SHA, Sev.* 16.3–5; *BMC* v p. 52 no. 193; *CIL* xiii.1754. See in general, Reynolds, *Aphrodisias* 124–9.

¹⁴ *IGBulg* iii.1690.

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during the civil wars, and Albinus had withdrawn the greater part of the garrison in order to fight Severus. Herodian indeed claims that Severus divided Britain into two provinces in 197. That would make sense in the light of his earlier division of Syria to break up a large concentration of troops. But inscriptional evidence showing two provinces in Britain does not appear until after Severus' death, and there are other signs that Britain still consisted of one territorial province during his reign. The division should probably be ascribed to the period *c.* 211–20, but no certainty is possible.¹⁵ In any event, the work of restoration went on throughout the reign, with the object of protecting the security of the province by dealing with those tribes who threatened Hadrian's wall, especially the Caledonians, who dwelt in the highlands, and the Maeatae, who lived north of the Forth. Alfenus Senecio, a very senior figure, having already governed Syria, was active *c.* 205–7, but eventually decided to request the emperor's personal presence. Severus was glad of the opportunity because, according to Dio, he was worried about the behaviour of his sons and the idleness of the legions, and wanted more military glory for himself. But Dio's hostility to wars of aggrandizement may have affected his judgement here. For the history of the campaign the literary sources are very meagre and the archaeological evidence inconclusive. It is possible that Severus had no definite policy at the outset, but wavered between a desire to conquer and occupy northern Scotland and a willingness to settle for a series of punitive expeditions to establish Roman influence and prestige beyond the Forth. The emperor perhaps realized that the conquest of the Highlands was not worth the trouble of dealing with the difficult terrain and the enemy's guerrilla tactics. There were apparently two campaigns; the first, in 208–9, involved substantial preparations and an advance across the Forth and then up the east coast of Scotland to within twelve miles of the Moray Firth. Evidence suggests a simultaneous advance from the west coast just north of Hadrian's wall. Once across the Forth, this force moved eastwards and joined the rest of the army or advanced parallel with it. An advance base was begun at Carpow on the Tay, and Severus was able to conclude a favourable treaty with the Caledonians and Maeatae in 209. Late in the same year the emperor and his sons took the title *Britannicus* and Geta was raised to the rank of Augustus. But the peace did not last and a further campaign was launched in 210 probably by the same kind of route.¹⁶ Caracalla seems to have taken charge since Severus was too ill. On 4 February 211 Severus died at York, aged sixty-six. Caracalla concluded peace with the Caledonian peoples and withdrew from their territory. The Romans were content to hold the line of Hadrian's wall after these displays of their military power.

¹⁵ Graham (1966); cf. Mann and Jarrett (1967).

¹⁶ Birley, *The African Emperor* 170–87; Frere, *Britannia* 154–66; Salway (1981) 221–30.

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SEVERUS, THE ARMY AND THE SENATE

9

Caracalla and his brother Geta, who had been left behind in the southern part of the province to deal with administrative affairs, immediately returned to Rome.

III. SEVERUS, THE ARMY AND THE SENATE

The character of Septimius Severus' regime was inevitably influenced by the bloodshed, confiscations and terror associated with civil war, and by his dependence on the army. Superficially, he must have seemed like a military adventurer whose chances of establishing stable government were slight, especially since the troops who burst into the senate house in 193 demanding a donative must have thought that Severus was at their mercy. Moreover, senators were little reassured by the disbandment of the disloyal praetorians and the formation of a new guard. Yet the evidence hardly bears out senatorial fears of extravagant treatment of the troops. Frightening as the episode in the senate was, the demand of the legionaries for 10,000 *sesterces* on the precedent of Octavian was not excessive by previous standards. Indeed Severus handed over only 1,000 *sesterces* per man, presumably as a down payment. In addition to donatives, the booty from the sack of Ctesiphon and Lugdunum may have helped to satisfy the expectations of the soldiers. He did substantially increase military pay, but this, although undoubtedly helping to cement the loyalty of the army, was long overdue. In general, he made a soldier's life more pleasant by removing the ban on marriages and by allowing junior officers to form clubs. Inscriptions prove his popularity among the troops.¹⁷ But all this falls far short of a corruption of discipline. What is more, the legal privileges of the troops built up by previous emperors remained largely unaltered. Admittedly, two mutinies are recorded during the reign, but both were the result of particular incidents and did not lead to more substantial outbreaks. Moreover, the Severan army fought two civil wars, two difficult campaigns in the east, and a costly war in Britain while remaining a powerful effective force, loyal to the dynasty at the accession of Caracalla and Geta, and even after the murder of Geta.

Severus himself became a worthy commander-in-chief. He recruited three new legions (I, II, III Parthica) in Italy, perhaps for the war against Albinus. Two (I and III) eventually became the garrison of the new province of Mesopotamia, while the other was stationed in Italy at Albanum. He waged war assiduously and extended the territory of Rome, accumulating outstanding military honours. He shared the toils of his fellow soldiers

¹⁷ *ILS* 2438; 2445–6; note *ILS* 446 – *conditor Romanae disciplinae*. Pay – Brunt (1950); Speidel (1992); Alston (1994); marriage of soldiers – Campbell (1978), esp. 159–66; Campbell, *ERA* 193–5, 409–10; military *collegia* – *Diz. Ep.* II.1, 367–69. *Collegia* of junior officers had existed from Hadrian's time but many more are found under Septimius Severus. Ordinary soldiers were prohibited from associating in this way – *D* XLVII.22.1.pr.

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and clearly emphasized the military role of the emperor. But many emperors before Severus, either willingly or through circumstance, had devoted much attention to military affairs. What did make Severus different was his reliance on the army for support in civil war, and that was both unavoidable once he decided to march on Rome, and also obvious to contemporaries. However, the close association between emperor and troops did not necessarily mean that the traditional framework and conventions of the principate were disrupted. Severus was not a ‘military emperor’ and showed no particular preference for soldiers, even at the minor levels of administration. The office of equestrian procurator, where military service was often an integral part of a man’s early career, could provide an avenue for ex-centurions and tribunes of the praetorians to seek promotion to the emperor’s service. These men competed with those who had held the traditional equestrian military posts. In the Severan era, of the equestrian procurators known to have military experience, about 57 per cent still had held one or more posts in the traditional equestrian militia. The proportion of ex-centurions and tribunes of the guard promoted to procuratorial posts remained roughly similar to that in the second century. In addition, some procurators continued to have no previous military experience in their career. There is therefore no sign that Severus preferred soldiers or deliberately tried to militarize the lower grades of the administration. By ending the exclusively Italian recruitment of the praetorians, Severus theoretically made it possible for any legionary to proceed through the tribunate and centurionates of the guard to equestrian status and posts in the emperor’s service. But this was a natural and gradual consequence of Severus’ need to reward the legionaries who had first supported him, rather than a deliberate policy of democratizing the army.¹⁸

Even after the reign of Commodus and the subsequent chaos, senators still had an idea of what a ‘good’ emperor should do. ‘He made certain promises to us like those made by good emperors in the past, that he would put no senator to death’. Dio sarcastically observes that the senator who organized the subsequent decree was executed by Severus. Initially at least, many senators were fearful of the new emperor and not impressed by his adoption of the name Pertinax, and subsequently of the Antonine nomenclature. They resented the crowd of soldiers in Rome, the vast expenses incurred, and especially his open reliance on the army. The tense atmosphere that sometimes prevailed in the senate is graphically illustrated by Dio’s story of the examination of a charge of treason against Apronianus, proconsul of Asia, during which an incriminating reference to a bald-headed senator was made. Dio, like many other senators instinctively felt his head

¹⁸ Pflaum (1950) 179–82, 186–90; Campbell, *ERA* 408–9; the democratization of the army – Parker (1958) 82.