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Style and structure of the Historia Augusta

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Chapter 8   Conclusion

8.1   Style and Structure of the *HA*

In the introduction to this study, we sketched the problems concerning the *HA* and the research since Dessau proposed that the *HA* was written by one author at the end of the fourth century AD. This viewpoint has never been challenged convincingly ever since, and has provided the point of departure for our investigation into style and structure of the *HA*. In addition, Syme's description of the author as a 'rogue scholar' or 'a frivolous impostor' helps us to understand the author's working method and the aim of his writing: at times he consciously seeks to delude the reader. Nevertheless, he made use of valuable source material about the imperial history of the second and third centuries AD. This means that historical as well as philological approaches may be applied to the *HA*.

        In this study, it has been tried to cover several aspects of the heterogeneous nature of the *HA*. By taking style and structure as our point of departure, it has been possible to study many different elements within one framework. Moreover, comparing the many authorial comments which bear on style and structure with the actual form and content of the work has enabled the description of some of the recurring techniques in the composition of the work. Style was defined after Cuddon 1999, 872) as 'the characteristic manner of expression […], how a particular writer says things', while structure is 'the sum of relationships of the parts to each other; thus the whole' (Cuddon 1999, 871). The difference between the two is a matter of level (style bearing on ways of expression, structure on how the narration is assembled) and in the relationships of the parts to one another, which, in these definitions, only concern structure.

        In this study, structure has often been used to denote transitions from parts based on one source-text to parts based on another source-text. The chapter on the *Nomen Antoninorum* is an example of structural analysis of the text, on whose basis conclusions could be drawn about the origin of this particular theme and the developmental history of the text of the *HA*. In the introduction, distinction was made between sources and models, both being source-texts that provided the author with material for his narration. Sources were defined as those texts which provided the author with historical information about the described era while models are the texts which do not pertain to historical fact but which provided the author with formulas, expressions and ideas to embellish his narration. A third source of material for the narration is the author's own *inventio*.

        Apart from shifts between models, sources and fictitious elements, use has been made of another important principle in the description of structure, which was borrowed from the field of Narrative Discourse as developed by Genette. The notions of time of the Story (TS), Time of the Narrative (TN) and Narrative Space (NS) were used to create a framework to study the *HA*'s structure, though Genette does not use the term 'structure' as such. In order to map the relationships between TN and TS on a macro-level, the definition of both terms was expanded by relating them to NS and historical time respectively. TN, measured in words, and TS, measured in temporal unities, can be analysed on the level of a book and of a series of books with fruiful results (see § 8.3-4).

That structure is an important aspect, in the sense of the relation between the different parts also within a book, may appear from the following example. In chapter 4, we studied the transitions from preface to biographical narration. These parts can be clearly distinguished in terms of temporal distribution. The same holds for transitions from historical narration to documents. The differences in temporal distribution enable us to distinguish different parts and the transitions between them, as well as the relations between the parts in terms of differences and contrasts. Two other examples may be taken from chapter 5 and chapter 6. The *NA* theme, which functions as an elaboration of the historical narration in which TS is absent (thus causing constant transitions to other 'parts'), shows a wide internal coherence, in that there are many internal repetitions and variations within the parts, while there are only minor relationships with the direct narrative context. With regard to documents, as analysed in chapter 6, matters are the other way round: while in every single case there are clear transitions from one part to another (in temporal distribution, but also in speech mode), the continuity in narrative content, as determined by correspondence of historiographical material, is as good as complete. The documents appear to repeat much of what was said in the narration, be it in another speech mode and literary form.

Apart from the aforementioned uses of the term 'structure', namely the relationships between the parts determined by different source-texts and by switches in temporal distribution, the conventional use of the term, denoting the division of the narrative material over the books, has been faithfully applied. In chapter four, it was demonstrated how the author as a biographer took the life, or rather the reign, of an emperor, tyrant or co-emperor as point of departure for his biographical account. This structure was often commented upon by the author himself through programmatic remarks which especially occur in the prefaces. The notion of 'paratext', taken from Genette's theory, has been used to analyse these particular parts in the structure of the *HA*. For further conclusions about this kind of 'structure', see below, § 8.4.

8.2   Sources and Models

Structure (in the sense of the distribution of the material over the books) has met with quite some attention in the investigative history of the *HA.*. This is hardly surprising, as its structure is so irregular that it invites closer inspection, in the hope of finding clues about the author's use of sources. In the introduction, it has been sketched how the discussion about structure from Mommsen to Chastagnol developed: while Mommsen, followed by Lécrivain, made a distinction between *Hauptviten* and *Nebenviten* (later indicated as Primary and Secondary Lives), while he also included *OM* and *Dd*. into the so-called 'Diocletianische Reihe', and recognised the different nature of the Earlier Lives as compared to the Intermediary and Later ones. Syme drew attention to the new beginning in the preface of *OM*, which marks the transition from *H* to *G* from the Intermediary Lives. Chastagnol 1994 described the *status quo* in the introduction to his edition of 1994, which serves as point of departure of our observations.

To the source texts used by the author in constructing his narrative, Cornelius Nepos has been added as an important model for the design of the series of biographies. Other models are Cicero, Sallust, Livy, Vergil, Suetonius, Juvenal, while sources of historical nature from the third century are: Marius Maximus, Herodian, Cassius Dio (to a

lesser extent), Dexippus, and from the fourth century: Aurelius Victor, Eutropius, their common ancestor Enmann's *KG*, and the *Epitome de Caesaribus*. There is a big gap between the sources and models that the author actually used and those that are mentioned in the *HA*: the narration is embellished with a large quantity of bogus sources (especially Iunius and Aelius Cordus, who fill the gap after the author took his leave of Marius Maximus). The bogus authors are part of an even larger number of bogus names, six of whom are the *Scriptores Historiae Augustae* who grace the collection with their names. These fictional elements are characteristic of the construction of the *HA*: apart from the use of different sources and models, there are also the fictitious elements, all of which elements have left their mark on every level of the structure of the *HA*.

In chapters three, four and five, we have encountered several borrowings from Nepos, Eutropius and Aurelius Victor, the former used as a model in paratextual parts, the latter two as sources. A detailed analysis of the way in which the author borrowed words and clauses and rephrased them for his own use adds to our understanding of the author's stylistic principles. Therefore, we will sketch how the author proceeded in the combining of texts of different origin on a sentence level, taking our examples from the texts analysed in the chapters mentioned below. Only in the example taken from Suetonius (§ 8.2.4) new material is used in order to illustrate our point of view.

8.2.1   Shifts Between Source Texts

The first example is meant to illustrate how the author shifts from one source text to another, even if no interruptions in the narrative flow may be discerned in the text. *V* 1.3: *Igitur Lucius Ceionius Aelius Commodus Verus <u>Antoninus</u>, qui ex Hadriani voluntate Aelius appellatus est, ex Antonini coniunctione Verus <u>et Antoninus</u>, **neque inter bonos neque inter malos principes ponitur***. The sentence is taken from the introduction to the life of Lucius Verus. In this phrase, there are several connections with other parts of the *HA*. The main component is the historical information which is also present in the Primary Lives of *H* 24.1, *AP* 4.5 and *MA* 5.1 and thus based on the main biographical source. The additions *Antoninus* and *et Antoninus*, underlined in the quotation, are the author's own additions, based on a fourth century tradition which assigns the *nomen Antoninorum* to Verus. The total is presented in the form of the *boni malique imperatores* theme, which plays a role throughout the *HA*, especially in SL, IL and LL. The sentence thus contains two transitions to parts based on 1) another historiographical tradition and 2) the author's literary *inventio*.

A second example shows how these three aspects of invention are intertwined in the narration, *OM* 4.6: *venatorem primo, post etiam tabellionem fuisse, deinceps advocatum fuisse fisci. ex quo officio ad amplissima quaeque pervenit. dein cum esset praefectus praetorii collega ablegato, Antoninum Caracallum imperatorem suum interemit tanta factione, ut ab eo non videretur occisus.* It may be supposed that the successive steps in Macrinus' career (*venator*, *tabellio*) are fictitious, reported on the authority of *plerique*.[748] The function of *advocatus fisci* seems to be an imitation from *S* 2.4.[749] The formula *ex quo…pervenit* is taken from Suetonius *Vesp.* 16.2 (see below, §

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[748] Turcan 1993, 125.

[749] on its turn taken from Aurelius Victor 20.30-1 or Eutropius 8.18.2, thus Syme 1971, 81

8.2.3). The next sentence repeats what was said in *Cc*. 6.6-7 (see § 6.4). Thus, in these lines we find a succession of pure fiction, an imitation of *S*, an imitation of Suetonius and a repetition from *Cc*. The whole can be considered a construction made out of several processes of *inventio* of historiographical material.[750] The structure is determined by various shifts between fiction, sources and models.

8.2.2 Nepos

In § 3.6, we encountered the following borrowings from Nepos in the dedications: Nepos *Att*. 18.2: *Sic familiarum originem subtexuit, ut ex eo clarorum virorum propagines possimus cognoscere* was changed into: *Proposui enim, Diocletiane Auguste, omnes (…) in litteras mittere, ut omnes purpuratos, Auguste, cognosceres* (*AC* 3.3). Thus, *ut …possimus cognoscere* has become *ut…cognosceres* with loss of the modal verb *posse*. This same principle is seen in Nepos *Epam*. 4.6: *plurima quidem proferre possumus, sed modus adhibendus est, quoniam uno hoc volumine vitam excellentium virorum complurium concludere constituimus,…* which is changed to *Max*. 1.1: *adhibui moderationem, qua in unum volumen duos Maximinos, patrem filiumque, congererem*: *concludere constituimus* is simplified and changed into *congererem*. The recurrence of the verb *concludere* in *Q* 1.3 proves that the changed element is still reused, but on another place: *atque contra Trebellius Pollio ea fuit diligentia, ea cura in edendis bonis malisque principibus, ut etima triginta tyrannos uno breviter libro concluderet.…* The same occurs in the example encountered in § 3.2.2: Nepos, *Cato* 3.2: *tamen tantum progressum fecit, ut non facile reperiri possit …* becomes *qui non multum profecit. Nam et pauca repperit*, in which *reperiri possit* is abbreviated to *repperit*.

In these modifications, it appears that the author of the *HA* normally chooses a simplified form in comparison with his model: *possimus cognoscere → cognosceres*; *concludere constituimus → congererem / concluderet*; *reperiri possit → repperit*. This principle corresponds with other changes, such as *modus adhibendus est→ adhibui moderationem*; *progressum fecit → profecit*; *cupiditatem notitiae clarorum virorum → cupidum veterum imperatorum* (the last example taken from Nepos *Att*. 18.4 and *OM* 15.4). Taking into consideration that the number of examples is small, we may tentatively conclude that the author simplifies expressions when borrowing from a model. This indicates that the author may have known the sentences by heart, but not exactly *verbatim*. He comes up with variations on passages that he has read once, and uses them as a basis for his own simplified formulas.

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[750] Macrinus' function of *advocatus fisci* is an interesting case. Although the 'material' is derived from *S* 2.4 and in the end from Aurelius Victor 20.30-1 or eventually Eutropius 8.18.2 (Syme 1971, 81 calls the author's report 'total inadvertance, or rather wilful perversion'), the historiographical evidence, originally applicable to Septimius Severus (and dubious in itself already), becomes fiction by the transposition to another context, namely Macrinus' career. This shows how slippery the borderlines between historiographical evidence and fiction can be.

8.2.3 Suetonius

A parallel with Suetonius may elucidate the author's way of borrowing from models. In Suetonius' Life of Vespasian (16.2), it is told that the newly appointed emperor is generous in promotion of procuratores: *creditur etiam procuratorum rapacissimum quemque ad ampliora officia ex industria solitus promovere.* In *OM* 2.1 it was stated that Macrinus *privatas curabat*; in *OM* 7.1 he is *procurator privatae*, and is immediately admitted to the senatorial class.[751] In *OM* 4.6, it is told that *ex quo officio ad amplissima quaeque pervenit*. Nothing is known, historically, about Macrinus' position as a *procurator*, but given the close imitation of Suetonius in *OM* 4.6, we may assume that the immediate promotion of the *procurator* to the senatorial class is borrowed from that same place in Suetonius.

There are three principles in rewriting Suetonius that play a role here. First, there is an exaggeration in the verbal echo (*ad ampliora → ad amplissima*), while *officia* is detached from its adjective *ampliora* and recurs as *ex quo officio*. Then, *quemque* recurs in *quaeque* purely for the sound of the words. The acc. masc. singular returns as acc. neutr. plural. The clauses are split and regrouped:

Suetonius:	(*rapacissimum*) *quemque*	***ad ampliora*** OFFICIA	*ex industria*
HA:	*ex quo* OFFICIO	***ad amplissima***	quaeque

The words are maintained (*quemque*, *ampliora*, *officia*) but the forms changed (*quaeque*, *amplissima*, *officio*); the prepositions are shifted (*ex industria*, *ex quo officio*), while at the same time keeping others in their place (*ad ampliora*, *ad amplissima*). The echo indicates, again, that the author had a phrase of Suetonius in mind, which he uses and slightly alters.

8.2.4 Eutropius

There are numerous other examples of the same technique. Let us reconsider again the borrowing from Eutropius 8.9.2 in *MA* 7.6 (see § 5.2.1):

Eutropius 8.9.2
Tuncque primum Romana res publica duobus aequo iure imperium administrantibus paruit, cum usque ad eum singulos semper habuisset Augustos.

MA 7.6
Atque ex eo pariter coeperunt rem publicam regere. Tuncque primum Romanum imperium duos Augustos habere coepit, cum imperium sibi relictum cum alio participasset.

A change of casus (res publica, rem publicam and, though in the same outward appearance, *imperium* and *imperium*), and regrouping (*Romana* (A) *res publica* (B) and

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[751] *OM* 7.1: *Opilium Macrinum ... primum in patricios allegit, novum hominem et qui paulo ante procurator privatae fuisset*; *OM* 7.4: *denique statim Macrino et proconsulare imperium et potestatem tribuniciam detulerunt.*

imperium (C) in Eutropius recurs as rem publicam (B) and Romanum (A) imperium (C) in HA, which results in a formula (the majuscule denoting the substantive, the minuscule the attribute): aB, C → B, aC. The example from Suetonius shows a similar change: quemque (A) ad ampliora (B) officia (C) → ex quo officio (C) ad amplissima (B) quaeque (A), so: A, bC → C, bA. If we try to harmonize the two formulas, the following formula is applicable to the principle of 'regrouping':

$$(Ab)C \rightarrow A(Cb)$$

in which the minuscule 'b' denotes the adjective dependent on a Head ('A'), that later joins the clause of another Head ('C').[752] The order of the elements can differ: so (Ab)C → A(Cb) is not essentially different from (Ab)C → (Cb)A, or (bC)A, or other variants.

8.2.5 Aurelius Victor

In the borrowing from Aur. Vict. 20.30 (*Illatumque Marci sepulcro, quem adeo percoluerat, ut eius gratia Commodum inter divos referre iusserit, fratrem appellans, Bassianoque Antonini vocabulum addiderit…*) in S 19.3 (Inlatus sepulchro Marci Antonini, quem ex omnibus imperatoribus *tantum coluit, ut et Commodum in divos referret et Antonini nomen omnibus deinceps quasi Augusti adscribendum putaret* (see § 5.2.2), *ut…referre iusserit* was simplified to *ut … referret*, conforming the principle as described above, § 8.2.2. In another case, the opposite occurs: *addiderit* becomes *adscribendum putaret*. The author had to adapt Victor's statement to his own purposes: in the case of the *HA*, a future plan is expressed (*adscribendum putaret*), while Aurelius mentions a bare fact (*addiderit*). For the rest, the marked choice of words by Aurelius Victor is normalized by the author of the *HA*: *percoluerat → coluit*; *adeo → tantum*; *inter → in*; *vocabulum → nomen*.

The examples show how the author proceeds in adapting his source-texts. The procedures, which may be augmented by the rewriting of parts of *Cc.* in *G* as described in § 5.4, may reveal a more general practice in the use of source-texts, which invites further research. The *HA* provides valuable material for the analysis of borrowings in late antique historiography.

8.3   The Literary Design

In chapter 3, formal aspects of the narrative have been studied from many different angles. We have caught the author in the act of criticizing his fellow biographers, Cordus in particular, for their zeal in pursuing minor details in emperors' lives, while the author himself is a prominent representative of this reprehensible practice. This is why his programmatic remarks regarding biography can be read as a kind of *anticipatio.*

A discontinuity between programmatic remarks and actual content is also seen in the description of the content of the *HA*, or the categories of *principes* indicated by the author. Sometimes, *principes* denotes all kinds of rulers (*Augusti*, *Caesares*, pretenders),

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[752] For the term 'Head', see Pinkster 1990, 73.

sometimes only the *Augusti*, and in other places the pretenders are meant. Not always are all the categories mentioned, but the author varies his statements according to the context in which they occur.

Discrepancies occur in statements about the beginning and the end of the *HA*: in *Ael.*, the author suggests that his narration begins with Julius Caesar, while in *Hel.* he promises to continue as far as Constantine's reign, while in actual fact the transmitted text of the *HA* treats the emperors from Hadrian up to Diocletian. So, the author deliberately transcends the borders of the narrative in his programmatic remarks, for which Tacitus may have served as the example.

The author's statements about the style of the *HA* cannot be understood without keeping its ending in mind: he states that the (allegedly) reigning emperors have to be described in the lofty style which corresponds with historiographic practice. A difference with other authors, however, is the fact that he actually applies this lofty style in the lives of Claudius, Probus and Tacitus, whereas he states that he only provides the bare facts.

It can be easily understood that the *HA*, at least the earlier books, is dedicated to Diocletian, as his reign is the ending point of the series. The dedications are formulated with words borrowed from Nepos. From *Hel* onwards, the author addresses dedications to several persons (including Constantine). Combined with the use of several 'noms de plume' as pseudonyms, the variety of dedications suggest that the *HA* was written over a considerable period of time by several authors.

With regard to temporal aspects of the narrative, we have concluded that there is a conspicuous break in narrative speed between *G* and *OM*: a slowing-down occurs after the Earlier Lives, which corresponds with the historiographical practice to describe more recent times more elaborately, cf. e.g. Ammianus Marcellinus from *RG* 14 onwards. Tacitus in his introduction to his *Annales* does the same for the republican period. On the other hand, there is a perfect balance between IL and LL when it comes to the relation TN : TS.

Temporal analysis can shed a new light on the phenomenon of the *lacuna*: the evenness of NS in IL and LL may indicate a deliberate programme. More important may be the author's ideological aims for the *HA*: the narrative continues at a moment when the Roman empire was in a deep crisis, which underlines the bad government of the emperor Gallienus. The deliberateness of the lacuna can also be related to the 'lost beginning': the author may wish to make believe that there has been an accidental loss, while in fact he presents a truncated work to posterity, suggesting that he has described all the emperors from Julius Caesar onwards. The inclusion of a preface and the lives of Nerva and Trajan would undermine the author's claim that he took such an early beginning point for his narration.

Thus, we have examined many formal aspects of the narration, from outward appearance to types of text, content and style, while indicating models for these structures and examining what the author himself says about these aspects. With regard to this last aspect: discontinuity between authorial comment and actual practice is a characteristic trait in the literary design of the *HA*.

8.4 Structures in Individual Books

The point of departure of this chapter has been the observation that programmatic passages, especially prefaces, cause breaks in the structure of the books. There is a difference in temporal distribution between prefaces and the biographical narration, the former not containing TS, while the latter does. We have seen that prefaces are unequally distributed over the books of the *HA*: in PL, only *V* is equipped with a preface, while in SL three lives have a preface (*Ael.*, *PN* and *G*), and all books in IL (except for *AS* and *MB*) and all in LL (except for *Val.* and *Gall.*). The prefaces steadily grow in length. Often, the author marks the transition from preface to narration by an explicit statement (§ 4.1).

The biographical narration starts in general with a name in the dative or genitive in PL. In SL, the biographical narration begin with the subject's name in the nominative (*AC*, *ClA*, *PN* and *G*), except for the unclear beginning of *Ael.* In IL, however, the ablativus absolutus (denoting the death of the previous emperor) is the normal beginning of the narrative, while the emperor described is denoted in the nominative. In LL, the sequence '*ablativus absolutus* – emperor (in nominative) – *origo*' fades away, while the author increasingly seeks to vary the fixed structures. He embellishes his narration with discussions about place of birth (*A*, *Car.*) or, alternatively, seeks to postpone (in *Cl.* and *Tac.*) the essential information (§ 4.2).

The distribution of the content of the *HA*'s narrative is designed artfully: in the Earlier Lives, the lives of rulers from different categories (emperors, heirs and pretenders) are treated in separate books, a procedure which is continued in the first half of IL. This structure changes from *Max.* onwards, with the combination of father and son Maximinus, and continues in *Gd.* and *MB*. In LL, this phenomenon manifests itself in exaggerated form, combined with a structure taken from EL, namely the treatment of tyrants in separate books: combined emperors (*Val.*, *Gall.*, *Car.*) and combined tyrants (*T*, *Q*), as well as separate emperors (*Cl.*, *A*, *Tac.*, *Pr.*).

This chapter ends with a discussion of time in a narratological framework with regard to the series (which poses special problems in narratology), at the hand of an analysis of temporal distribution in PL. In historiography, as has been pointed out in the Introduction (§ 1.3.4), TN is more than an aspect of the story, since TS in historiography is strongly related to historical time. In biography, the lives of the emperors dictate the distribution of the *materia*, their births, accessions and deaths, thus providing and marking fixed moments in the narrative. If we compare the duration of the periods spanned by these three temporal markers (viz. those from birth to accession and from accession to death), it turns out that TN is inversely proportional to TS: while, on average, 18 per cent of TN is devoted to 78 per cent of TS in earlier careers, in the emperor's reigns 82 per cent is devoted to 22 per cent of TS. We introduced the term 'Biographical Factor' to denote the relation between the attention paid to earlier careers and to reigns. In the case of PL, attention paid to the reigns is 16 times higher than the attention paid to earlier careers.

This leads to the conclusion that the emphasis in serial biographies of emperors, at least in PL, is not so much on their lives, but rather on their reigns. This observation may be obvious, but is more important than it might seem at first glance, as the correspondences with historiography as a type of text may now be determined

objectively. In biography, the *materia* is distributed over the books in correspondence with the lives of the emperors but, in practice, there is only a slight difference with historiographers, such as Herodian, who structure their *materia* κατὰ χρόνους καὶ δυναστείας.

8.5   The *NA* Theme

After this repetition of the highlights, we will elaborate on the further consequences of the conclusion drawn at the end of chapter 5. The first occurrences of the name of Antoninus as a title is in *Ael*.5.12-3, *AP* 4.5 and 6.10 and *MA* 7.6, while the *nomen Antoninorum* as a literary theme begins to play a role from *S* 10 onwards. We have to distinguish between the Antonine name based on historical evidence, for example the bestowal of the name to Caracalla, and the historically erroneous attributions of the name to Verus and Geta, who never bore the name of Antoninus. After *S* and *Cc*., the name occurs as an expanding literary theme presented in dreams, oracles, letters, *contiones*, *orationes*, *acclamationes*, *omina*, poems, historical narrations, programmatic statements, prefaces, epilogues and dedications. The *nomen Antoninorum* is a rhetorical exercise which functions as a method to hide the author's lack of information about some of the emperors (Geta, Macrinus and his son Diadumenian), or, from a formal point of view, to link the series of PL (together with *G*) to those of IL.

The passages which contain the *NA* theme are sharply distinguished from the historical narrative, which is based on a basic biographical source in PL, or on other sources, such as Herodian in *OM* 8-10, or the Epitome in *Hel*.17 (or their common source), or fictitious passages in IL. In these and other instances, the omission of the theme would lead to a better narrative flow of the narration and cause a better understanding of some knotty problems. It also appears that the much discussed acclamations in *AS* 7-12 are additions to a text of a different nature, which may easily be observed by the fact that Alexander's answer in *AS* 8.1 is a reaction to the senate's words in *AS* 6.3-5, which indicates that the *NA* passage in *AS* 7 must be considered an addition. This also suggests that the *NA* passages in *AS* 7.2-12.1 are additions. When these passages are omitted, the length of the acclamations in *AS* 6 and 8 is comparable to those in *AS* 56.2-10, which passage contains Alexander's words and the senate's reaction to it. In *Gd*., the passages mainly function as expansions of the historical narration: often, variations on the name of Antoninus appear as an addition to an enumeration of other items (such as the emperor's literary works (*Gd*. 3.3 and 7.8), or the question of names (*Gd*. 9.3-4; 17.1-5).

The *NA* theme appears in many variations distributed over the successive books, such as Septimius Severus' and Macrinus' reasons to call their sons Antoninus, the name as *cognomen* or *praenomen*, the popularity of the name, the number of Antonini and the pollution of the name. The growing praise of the name does not run parallel to the increasing vilification of the bearers of the name (especially Commodus and Elagabalus), which process ends in the refusal of the name by Alexander Severus, after which it regains strength, paradoxically, in Gordian's biography. It is striking, that in the biography of Commodus the theme is absent, while in Elagabalus' biography it only plays a minor role, whereas in the biographies of Geta (who was never called Antoninus

historically) and Macrinus (who only called his son Antoninus) the theme is omnipresent. This shows that the author did not really need an historical base to elaborate the theme, and that the literary function of the theme has to be sought elsewhere.

The measurement of the relative NS of the 54 *NA* fragments comes to 10 per cent of the total of the books in which the passages occur (which is the part running from S to *Gd.* minus *Max.*). There are clear incongruencies between the *NA* passages and the historical narration. This fact leads to the supposition that the passages in *G*, *OM* and *Dd.* (containing the largest *NA* parts in a relative sense) which do not pertain to the *NA* theme are based on other sources than the historiographical narration. The basic source must have contained a book in which the lives of Caracalla and Geta were combined. There are clues in the text of *OM* and *Dd.*, such as Dd.8.1-3 (see § 5.4.2), which indicate that the lives of Macrinus and his son Diadumenian were also treated in one book, probably in an earlier stage of composition of the *HA*. There are, however, no signs that the lives were based on one identifiable source (apart from, e.g., Herodian), but the basic parts of *OM* and *Dd.* were probably invented by the author. This may explain the frequent occurrence of documents in *Dd.*, and to a lesser extent in *OM* (analysed in § 6.4).

Our conclusion that the parts of *OM* and *Dd.* not pertaining to the *NA* theme were part of a single book at an earlier stage raises questions about the relation of the two to other books. It looks as if a process of different redactions must have taken place between the first series of lives of reigning emperors, which Syme styled the 'Nine Lives' (*H*, *AP*, *MA*, V, *C*, *P*, *DI*, *S*, *Cc.*)[753] and the final adding of the *NA*-theme (which in its turn was never interrupted by fragments based on other sources), including the resulting separation of *Cc.* and *G*, and *OM* and *Dd.* One of the questions was whether *Dd.* was a continuation of the secondary lives, or whether the secondary lives were composed after *OM* and *Dd.* fell apart, *Dd.* being the catalyst? This last option is less probable, as *G* must have existed already as a separate life before the *NA* theme was added (see the analysis of the structure of the preface in § 5.4), so the phenomenon of secondary lives, which do not contain *NA* passages, already existed before *Dd.* came into being. As the author originally had no intention to write a separate biography on Diadumenian, the combined *OM+Dd.* must have been the continuation of the series of emperors from Hadrian to Caracalla, beginning with *Occiso ergo Antonino Bassiano Opilius Macrinus ... imperium arripuit* (*OM* 2.1) in the plain style of an abbreviator. After the Nine Lives had been extended with secondary lives (*Ael.*, *AC*, *PN*, *ClA*, *G*), accompanied by documents, prefaces, dedications and programmatic remarks, the *NA* theme was introduced only after the adding of the preface, as becomes clear from the preface to *G*:.[754] In order to create a new secondary life of *Dd.*, the *NA* theme was blown up to huge proportions, and *Dd.* was born out of the 'idée-mère' of that biography.

The key question is how we should imagine the way in which these additions were made. That the *HA* is full of loosely attached fragments can be easily noticed. A lot of material from biographical, historiographical texts or works of a different nature were at the author's disposal, apart from his taste for fiction. Given these characteristics, there are two different answers to the question how the *HA* attained its final form: either the *HA* grew in successive stages as the author added new material to an existing text, or the

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[753] Syme 1971, 52 and 73.
[754] That the prefaces were written before the adding of the *NA*-theme also becomes clear from *Dd.* 6.1, in which elements of the preface to *OM* recur.

author used and combined several sources distorting and expanding these with fictional elements. The hypothesis that is maintained throughout this study, and which has not been rejected by the evidence, is that the *HA* is the work of a single author, using a number of heterogeneous sources and his own inventions, adding and correcting his text as he went on.[755] Neither of the options provides the sole solution to the development of the *HA*, but the analysis of the *NA* theme does suggest that these parts were added at a later stage of redaction. The incongruencies between historical narration and the *NA* passages indicate that the latter were added to an already existing text, which the author did not always take the trouble to revise.

8.6   Narrative Space

After having studied two kinds of recurring passages, viz. the prefaces and the *NA* theme, another typical aspect has been inspected: the documents. The inventory of Lécrivain 1904 was taken as point of departure, in which acclamations, letters, and official documents (such as abstracts from the *acta urbis* and *acta senatus*) were encountered. The category of letters to and from the emperors turned out to be the largest category of all. The documents can all be considered fictitious, even if the author suggests that they are all based on written evidence, like the documents inserted in Suetonius. We have investigated how the author applied all kinds of variations in the insertion of his documents (marked by words such as *indo*, *insero*, *intexo*, *interpono*, etc., or an elliptic construction (*haec*, *talia*, *exemplum*, *capita*, etc.). In few cases, the source of the document, fictitious or not, is explicitly mentioned, in other cases the author just quotes the document. Sometimes, he mentions a document which he has at his disposal, or which has been lost in the course of history, and which he does not quote. Documents in IS are practically absent in the *HA*. The documents are mostly quoted to support the historical narration. Often, the purpose of the insertion of the document is explicitly mentioned in the introduction, or mentioned afterwards.

The documents, the *NA* theme and the prefaces (treated in chapters five and four respectively) have in common that they all are meant to support and embellish the historical narration. They also have in common that they cause considerable breaks in the relation of TN and TS, which may be described as retardation. In themes and prefaces, TS is absent, while in documents TS and TN are equal. Therefore, the three kinds of passages are major landmarks in the structure of the *HA*, occupying 3 per cent (prefaces and the *NA* theme) and 13 per cent (documents) of NS in the *HA*. The development of the structure of the *HA* from *H* to *Car*., on the added understanding that the dispersed Secondary Lives were considered a unity in the analysis, was expressed in NS of the passages in the individual lives. The following table, which draws on the information as provided in figure 6.2, shows the distribution of the *NA* theme, prefaces and documents over PL, SL, IL and LL; the shade of the cells corresponds with the number words as shown in the legend:

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[755] As proposed by Paschoud 1996, xxxv-xxvi. This could either have been done by rewriting the texts with insertion of the glosses and side-productions, or eventually by dictating, as the author himself states in *T* 33.8: *...non scribo sed dicto, et dicto cum ea festinatione, quam (...) sic perurgueo, ut respirandi non habeam facultatem*, which was the usual procedure in the author's time (as Schlumberger 1976b defends).

PL						**SL**				
Book	*NA*	*doc.*	*Pref.*	Σ		**Book**	*NA*	*doc.*	*pref.*	Σ
H, AP, MA						Ael.				
V						AC				
C						PN				
P, DI						ClA				
S						G				
Cc.									Σ	2 595
			Σ	563		**LL**				
IL						Val.				
OM						Gall.				
Dd.						T				
Hel.						Cl.				
AS						A				
Max.						Tac.				
Gd.						Pr.				
MB						Q				
			Σ	7319		Car.				
									Σ	10 149

shade	NS (wds)	shade	NS (wds)	shade	NS (wds)		
	> 2000		1000-1500		250-500		<100
	1500-2000		500-1000		100-250		

Figure 10.1*: NS of the* NA *theme, documents and prefaces in the individual books and in PL, SL, IL and LL (based on absolute numbers).*

The table is based on countings of absolute numbers of words. The relative NS of the investigated passages in PL, SL, IL and LL, however, is 2, 25, 21 and 30 per cent respectively. This shows that PL is different from the other lives when it comes to the inclusion of these passages, which can be explained by the author's use of a different source in the first Nine Lives of reigning emperors. Two other striking results are the fact that documents and the *NA* theme exclude one another in EL and that the *NA* theme does not occur in the Secondary Lives of usurpers, *AC*, *PN* and *ClA*.

The last part of chapter six was devoted to a close analysis of a document, Macrinus' letter to the senate in *OM* 6. It appeared that there is a correspondance between the historical narration and the content of the letter, in other words, that elements of the historical narration served as *materia* for the composition of the letter. The materia was taken from the Primary Lives such as *H* (for Caracalla's desired triumph) and *Cc.* (for Caracalla's murder) and corresponds with the documents in Diadumenian's biography (e.g. the acclamations). The letter's perspective, namely Macrinus' view of his becoming emperor, caused elements from the historical narration to be reused in another function, namely to show Macrinus' perfidity.

8.7　　　　　　An Authentic Document (*H* 25.9)

In chapter 7, an attempt has been made to authenticate *A* by tracing the poem to the poetical fashion of the century in which it was supposedly written, the first half of the second century AD. Such authors as Martial, Apuleius and Septimius Serenus show that the work of Hadrian fits the taste of the time. All of these poets tend to fall back upon the poetry of the later republican era, in which poets such as Laevius and Catullus modelled their poetry on Hellenistic examples. The form of the epigrams and the use of diminutives are two features common to the poetry of the eras in question.

If one is prepared to take one further step, it could even be concluded that Hadrian's *Animula* is directly modelled on Catullus' second *Carmen*, in its chosen structure (with traits deriving from archaic poetry), theme (farewell to a small creature that is deceased or is about to die) and tone. As in Cat.*c*.2, the diminutives in *A* vary in tone from tender to dramatic. Whereas in v.1 *animula*, *vagula* and *blandula* show the poet's tender and loving attitude towards his soul, in *v*.4 the adjectives *pallidula*, *rigida* and *nudula*, on the contrary, have a dramatic tone, corresponding with the semantics of the words describing the condition of the deceased soul in the underworld.

Another conclusion concerns the much debated fourth verse: following Holzhausen and Fündling, I regard the attribution to *Animula* or *loca* as ambiguous: grammatically, they seem to be linked with *loca*, but their meaning points to an animate object (especially *nudula*). This is especially the case when *rigida* is read as *frigida*, resulting in a notable combination with *nudus*, which has connotations with *pallidulus* as an attribute for a being on the brink of death.

Two new proposals have been made. In the first place, the possibility of a poetical reading of *ioci* has been proposed: when this word is understood as 'light verse' or 'trifles' in a literary sense, the result is one of finding the author Hadrian to comment on his own poetry, which is a characteristic shared with many epigrams by Catullus and his follower Martial. The other notion introduced in this study is that the fifth verse is not necessarily the last one. It is even probable, especially in view of another epigram by Hadrian (*Borysthenes Alanus*), that the transmitted verses are only the first part of a longer poem.

The origin of these 'imperial poems' lies in *H* 25.9-10, where the famous *animula vagula blandula* is quoted. Contrary to the poems in, e.g., *PN* and *OM*, this concerns an authentic document. The example of an 'imperial poem' is provided by this first specimen by Hadrian, which ends as follows: *tales autem nec multo meliores fecit et Graecos*. This could well be true: producing epigrams in Greek and Latin was a common literary activity that flourished in the second century AD,[756] based on an Hellenistic tradition from the first century AD. The emperor's polemics with contemporary poets are attested in *H* 16.3-4, the poetic correspondence between Hadrian and Florus. This kind of verse may have served as model for the mock-polemic verses in *PN*, *OM* and later biographies. The chapter ends with the suggestion that Marius Maximus may have served as a source for the verses of *A*.

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[756] See for many examples G. Nisbet 2003; Cazzaniga mentions as authors in the tradition of *Spottgedichte* Fronto and Numenius (1972, 138)

8.8   Further Research

Our investigation of style and structure of the *Historia Augusta* has produced, apart from a good deal of detailed observations, new ways of applying narratological analysis to historiographical texts. Above all, Narrative Space and the relation between Time of the Narrative and Time of the Story may invite further study. I hope to have demonstrated that a quantitative approach may be useful to investigate certain phenomena in the *HA*, such as the differences and the relations between its component parts from word-level to the level of the whole collection. The transitions between the parts may be researched in further detail, with due attention to linguistic characteristics. For example, the distribution of certain words with a high frequency or stylistic phenomena may be inventoried and the distribution over the books of the *HA* in order to find out whether there are striking differences between the books or the parts. The differences between the Primary Lives on one hand and the Secondary, Intermediary and Later Lives on the other have been shown to be beyond doubt, which may lead to a closer exploration of the question in what sense these parts exactly differ. We may, after all, suppose that the Primary Lives remain very close to an original source, possibly from the third century (as Dessau supposed).[757] Closer analysis may lead to further understanding of the author's own additions to that text. Shifts between basic source and insertions may be found by tallying repetitions and the use of certain linguistic means to links the additions to their basic source (such as particles, pronomina relativa or anaphoric pronomina, type: *de hoc eodem*).

The method of comparing differences between the four parts may be applied in further detail by comparing the individual books or passages within the parts. After all, as we concluded (at the hand of the *NA* theme), the differences in style not only occur between the books, but also within them. It is worthwhile investigating stylistic and linguistic differences between related parts with their context. Therefore, a full inventory of all the themes encountered in the *HA* will be helpful. A closer investigation of the theme of the *boni malique imperatores*, treated in § 3.10, for example, may lead to a better understanding of the author's ideas behind the composition of the *HA* as a whole and its ideological background. I refrain, as I have done throughout this study, from relating this background to the historical situation in which the author wrote his biographies. At the same time, I hope to have shown that study of the literary art of the *HA* can be undertaken entirely independently from the vexed question of authorship and historical situation.

Several correspondences between the Primary Lives and the obviously different Intermediary Lives have been inspected. For example, the contrast of Macrinus' words to the senate in *OM* 6 (in DD) and Hadrian's words in *H* 6.1-2, or the *vates caelestis* in *P* 8 and *OM* 3 (see note 209). Other examples are the construction of the names of the fictitious *Annius Severus* and *Fabia Orestilla* in *Gd*. 6.4 and 17.4, based on several historical persons in *MA* and *V* (see note 599). The life of Marcus, in which it is said that he honoured his teachers with golden statues in a *lararium* (*MA* 3.5) may be equally the basis for Alexander Severus' *lararium* with venerated gods and Romans (*AS* 31.4-5). In

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[757] Dessau 1892, 601: 'Zu dem Besten, was sich in unseren Biographien findet, gehört der Abriss des Vorlebens einiger Kaiser des 2. Jahrhunderts n. Chr. Und diese Abschnitte sind, wie sich Leicht beweisen lasst, unverändert übernommen einem Autor, der vor der Mitte des 3. Jahrhunderts geschrieben hat'.

these cases, the Primary Lives may have served as a source text for the composition of the narration in the Intermediary Lives. On a much larger scale, the same occurs in the Secondary Lives, where whole passages were copied from the Primary Lives (see the example of *G* in relation with *Cc*. treated in § 5.4.1 and the classical case of *AC* in relation with *MA* treated by Klebs and Mommsen). A full inventory of all such correspondences will show the relationships between the different parts.[758]

Apart from these suggestions for further research into the *HA*, the method used to measure NS provides a point of departure for further research in biography (especially Suetonius) and historiography. Comparison of the results with books outside the *HA* is certainly important to determine whether the *HA* is as unique in its design as often has been thought. Furthermore, comparison with other biographers such as Diogenes Laertius and Plutarch may lead to a better insight in classical biography. Studies about biography have flourished in the past decade, but the *HA* is often treated as a work *sui generis*, which it is indeed when the enormous problems it confronts us with are viewed. Still, the author must have had at his disposal such a wealth of treasures that classical literature produced in all its eras, that the text of the *HA* needs ever more and closer study, especially in its relation to other literary works.

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[758] Other examples are the murder of Caracalla in *Cc*. 8 and 10 and in *OM* 4, though here, the passages in *Cc*. may be additions to the text, instead of the other way round:, viz. the imitation of *Cc*. in *OM*.

Bibliography

Abbreviations

AAWM   *Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Mainz*
AAT   *Atti Academici Torino*
AHB   *The Ancient History Bulletin*
AJPh   *American Journal of Philology*
AL   *Anthologia Latina*
AN   *Ancient Narrative*
AnTard   *Antiquité Tardive*
ANRW   *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt*
AS   *Ancient Society*
BHAC   *Bonner Historia Augusta Colloquium*
CIL   *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*
CLE   *Carmina Latina Epigraphica*
CM   *Classica et Mediaevalia*
CPh   *Classical Philology*
CQ   *Classical Quarterly*
CR   *Classical Review*
GCN   *Groningen Colloquium on the Novel*
GR   *Greece & Rome*
HAC   *Historiae Augustae Colloquium*
JCPh   *Jahrbuch für classische Philologie*
JJP   *Journal of Juristic Papyrology*
JRS   *Journal of Roman Studies*
JThS   *Journal of Theological Studies*
LF   *Listy Filologiché*
MEFR   *Mélanges de l'école française de Rome*
N.S.   *Nova Series*
PLLS   *Papers of the Liverpool Latin Seminar*
PP   *La parola del passato*
REA   *Revue des Études Anciennes*
REL   *Revue des Études Latines*
RH   *Revue Historique*
RhM   *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie, Geschichte und griechische Philosophie*
RIFC   *Rivista di Instruzione e Filologia Classica*
RPh   *Revue de Philologie*
RSA   *Rivista Storica dell' Antichità*
RSI   *Rivista Storica Italiana*
SBA   *Schweizerische Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft*
SO   *Symbolae Osloenses*
YCS   *Yale Classical Studies*
ZPE   *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*