

HADRIAN, LUCIUS VERUS, AND THE ARCO DI PORTOGALLO

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THE SO-CALLED ARCO DI PORTOGALLO in Rome spanned the ancient Via Flaminia/Lata, the modern Via del Corso, not far from the Ara Pacis of Augustus. Pope Alexander VII ordered its removal in 1662 and hence it is known only from early drawings and from the fragments which survive. All the evidence suggests that it was a late construction, probably dating from the fifth century A.D., which was assembled by taking elements from earlier structures.¹ The two features of the arch which have drawn the most interest are a pair of panel reliefs, originally incorporated in the north side of the structure, which are now displayed in the Palazzo dei Conservatori in Rome.² One of the reliefs shows the *apotheosis* of Hadrian's wife Sabina; the second is a scene with the emperor standing on a *suggestus* delivering a speech. Both have a number of parts restored, but there is general agreement that the emperor represented in each of these reliefs is Hadrian, and that the work is either late Hadrianic or early Antonine.³

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The following works will be cited by author's name or abbreviated title: R. Bianchi Bandinelli and M. Torelli, *L'arte dell'antichità classica* 2 (Rome 1976); A. Bonanno, *Portraits and Other Heads on Roman Historical Relief up to the Age of Septimius Severus* (Oxford 1976, BAR Suppl. 6); M. T. Boatwright, *Hadrian and the City of Rome* (Princeton 1987); N. Hannestad, *Roman Art and Imperial Policy* (Aarhus 1988); F. J. Hassel, *Der Trajansbogen in Benevent* (Mainz am Rhein 1966); E. La Rocca (ed.), *Rilievi Storici Capitolini* (Rome 1986); H. Mattingly, *BMCRE* 3 (1936), 4 (1940); E. Simon, "Hadrianisches Relief, Leichenrede für die Kaiserin Sabina (897)" in W. Helbig, *Führer durch die öffentlichen Sammlungen klassischer Altertümer in Rom* 2 (1966) 264–266; M. Torelli, "Arco di Portogallo," in E. M. Steinby (ed.), *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae* 1 (Rome 1993) 77–79; A. J. B. Wace, "Studies in Roman Historical Reliefs," *PBSR* 4 (1907) 258–263.

¹On this arch (with further bibliography) see Torelli 77–79; Sandro De Maria, *Gli Archi Onorari di Roma e dell'Italia Romana* (Rome 1988) 221–222 and 324–325; M. Bertolotti, "I rilievi dell'arco di Portogallo. Documentazione storica" (La Rocca 21–23); E. Nash, *Pictorial Dictionary of Ancient Rome* (London 1961) 1.83–87; and S. B. Platner, *A Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome* (rev. by T. Ashby, London 1929) 33. Torelli makes a new suggestion concerning the date, attributing it to the emperor Aurelian in the third century A.D.

²One is on the second landing of the museum, the other on the third landing. For a recent bibliography relating to these reliefs, see Gerhard M. Koeppel, "Die historischen Reliefs der römischen Kaiserzeit IV," *BJ* 186 (1986) 38–43.

³E. La Rocca, "I rilievi dell'arco di Portogallo. Consecratio divae Sabinae. Institutio alimentaria (?). Esegesi" (La Rocca 24–28). In discussing the restorations on the second

This article will concentrate on the second panel (Plate 1). Its frame, like that of its companion relief, was re-cut during antiquity, probably at the time that the panels were inserted into the Arco di Portogallo. Many of the sculpted parts were subsequently reworked and restored in 1684.⁴ Yet the composition of the original panel remains clear. In it the emperor was placed just to the left of the centre, and on either side of him were placed three figures. The bearded togate figure standing on the *suggestus* with the emperor and the clean-shaven younger man with a bare torso who is set in front of the platform are clearly identifiable as the *Genius Senatus Romani* and the *Genius Populi Romani*.⁵ The bearded figure who is placed on the ground behind the emperor holds a spear which likely identifies him as a representative of the imperial bodyguard. There has been no agreement on the identities of the other three figures. Two of them, one on the *suggestus* behind the emperor and the other on the ground facing him, are in low relief, placed in the third plane of figures. The viewer sees little more than their heads, and in each case the placement and the restorations make any certain identifications impossible.⁶ The final figure in this panel is a child. He stands directly in front of the *suggestus*, cut in deep relief and placed very prominently in the first plane of figures.

Two problems have been at the heart of earlier discussions of this relief: the identity of the child and the occasion that is portrayed. While a number of suggestions have been put forward, consensus has not yet been achieved and a re-examination of these questions is warranted. Moreover, a consideration of these issues can also contribute to a better understanding of the different types of Roman state relief and the appearance of children in them. Furthermore, since this is one of a small number of works from late Hadrianic or early Antonine Rome, the interpretation of this panel may well have implications which are relevant to the understanding of the history of the last years of Hadrian's principate.

THE IDENTITY OF THE CHILD

Early discussions of the panel in question regarded the boy as part of a group, comprising the three figures in front of the platform, who are

relief, La Rocca notes that the portrait of the emperor could be restored as Antoninus Pius, and this possibility is included in Torelli's discussion of the arch (78).

⁴Maria Grazia Chiosi and Giovanna Martellotti, "I rilievi dell'arco di Portogallo. Dati sulle tecniche esecutive. Manomissioni, rilavorazioni, integrazioni e restauri" (La Rocca 32-37).

⁵For a full study of *Genius* figures in Roman art see H. Kunckel, *Der römische Genius* (Heidelberg 1974).

⁶La Rocca 24. There have been a number of suggestions for these figures, including M. Annius Verus, Marcus Aurelius, and Vetulonius Civica, all of whom can be associated with Hadrian at the time of the apotheosis of Sabina; see below, 328.

listening to the emperor and are to be taken together as representing the people of Rome.⁷ In such an interpretation the child is viewed as being included as a generic figure, standing for all the youth of the city. Erika Simon was the first to suggest another interpretation, namely, that the child was the young Lucius Verus.⁸ She felt that the prominent place given to the boy in this composition ruled out the possibility of his being merely a generic figure. The only youths associated with the imperial family at this time were Lucius Verus and Marcus Aurelius. Observing that at the time of Sabina's death Marcus Aurelius was already fifteen, Simon reasons from the size of the child that he must represent the six-year-old Verus. But the identification which she offered has been followed only by Bianchi Bandinelli and Torelli, who give no reasons to substantiate their claim that the child is Verus.⁹ At the same time Anthony Bonanno argued against Simon's identification, reverting to the notion of the child as symbolic.¹⁰ Subsequently scholars have tended to note the uncertainty and to remain uncommitted concerning any identification, or have followed Bonanno and the earlier interpretation.¹¹ Recently Diana Kleiner has picked up a suggestion first made by Eugenio La Rocca, that the child is a different type of generic figure who represents children receiving a distribution from the emperor.¹² It is necessary to examine these alternatives to Simon's suggestion more closely.

Both Bonanno and Kleiner object to any specific identification of the child, pointing out that the head does not correspond to portraits of the young Lucius Verus.¹³ For several reasons, however, this cannot be regarded as an obstacle. Examination of the relief has shown that most of the boy's original hair was removed in antiquity. At the same time most of the lower part of the face has been restored.¹⁴ This degree of reworking and restoration makes any search for resemblances virtually impossible. But even if the original portrait had survived, no strong similarity might be

⁷Eugénie Strong, *Roman Sculpture from Augustus to Constantine* (London 1907) 236–238; H. Stuart Jones (ed.), *A Catalogue of the Ancient Sculptures Preserved in the Municipal Collections of Rome. The Sculptures of the Palazzo dei Conservatori* (Oxford 1926) 2.37–38.

⁸Simon 265.

⁹Bianchi Bandinelli and Torelli no. 140.

¹⁰Bonanno 108.

¹¹Koeppel (above, n. 2) 40–42; Hannestad 207; Boatwright 231–234. Even Torelli (78) retreats to the view that the three figures in front of the platform represent the people of Rome.

¹²Diana E. E. Kleiner, *Roman Sculpture* (New Haven 1992) 253–254; La Rocca 24–28.

¹³Bonanno 108.

¹⁴Chilosi and Martellotti (above, n. 4) 33; La Rocca 24 and Plate XXI 3 and 4; Wace 259.

recognizable since there was a tendency to produce more general portraits for children which would later change as the adult typology developed.¹⁵ Adding to the difficulty in this case, the body of portraits of the young Verus on which to base comparisons is not extensive, a factor which results partly from the absence of any coin portraits before A.D. 161.¹⁶

Bonanno's argument is based primarily on "the frequent appearance of ordinary children in early II century State reliefs."¹⁷ As examples he mentions the panels on the Arch of Trajan at Beneventum and the Anaglypha Traiani/Hadriani. Indeed these two works contain four illustrations of children, three on the Beneventum arch, but a review of all imperial reliefs of the second century shows that there are in fact a limited number of other examples.¹⁸ Moreover, in the instances cited by Bonanno, and in all other second-century cases except the Portogallo panel, the reliefs belong to one of two clearly defined categories.

The first of these categories is the state sacrifice, an example of which is portrayed on one of the long panels within the arch at Beneventum.¹⁹ In this case the children are *camilli*, or attendants, who carry the instruments necessary for the sacrifice. The presence of young assistants in such scenes was already a well established practice in Roman reliefs, as may be seen in numerous examples throughout the imperial period.²⁰ Other second-century instances may be found on the columns of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius, and in relief panels dating from the reign of Marcus Aurelius now found on the Arch of Constantine and in the Palazzo dei Conservatori. It is clear that the relief from the Arco di Portogallo does not belong with this group.

The second category of relief which includes children relates to the *alimenta*, Trajan's provision for the sustenance of poor children in Italy. It is portrayed most fully on the second long panel within the passageway of the arch at Beneventum. Here Trajan and his attendants stand on the left, while children and their parents come from the right to receive their largesse.²¹ The same event is referred to more symbolically in the upper

¹⁵K. Fittschen, "Zum angeblichen Bildnis des Lucius Verus im Thermen-Museum," *JdI* 86 (1971) 224-228. Fittschen examines portraits which date from the adoption of Lucius Verus until A.D. 160.

¹⁶Fittschen (above, n. 15) 225. Bonanno himself notes this fact when he discusses the Ephesus relief (115).

¹⁷Bonanno 108.

¹⁸This infrequent appearance of children in state reliefs is also noted by Kleiner (above, n. 12) 224 and 254.

¹⁹Hassel 10-11 and Plate 1.2; and M. Rotili, *L'Arco di Traiano a Benevento* (Rome 1972) Plate LIII.

²⁰For a full discussion see I. S. Ryberg, *Rites of the State Religion in Roman Art* (Rome 1955, *MAAR* 22), esp. 154-156 and 194-196.

²¹Hassel 9-10 and Plate 1.1; Rotili (above, n. 19) 87-89, 97-98 and Plate LIV; Hannestad 181.

panel of the right pier on the façade of the arch which faces northeast (the country). In this case a small girl and a very young boy appear standing in front of the emperor. All three face to the left, where the god Mars stands with a female deity who holds a plough. Behind the emperor there are two female personifications.²² The association of this panel with the institution of the *alimenta* is confirmed both by the general use of this arch to portray things given by Trajan to Italy and the provinces, and by the parallels which may be observed between this scene and those found on the coinage of Trajan.²³ A further example of a state relief from this category may be found on the reliefs known as the *Anaglypha Traiani/Hadriani*.²⁴ Although there is still much uncertainty about these panels, there can be no doubt about the portion which contains the children. In this relief a platform is set in the Forum Romanum. The emperor is seated on the right of this platform, and in front of him stands a female figure holding a small child in her left hand while resting her right hand on a second child who stands beside her. The grouping is nearly identical to a reverse type on the coinage of Trajan which refers to the *alimenta*, and the relief almost certainly represents a statue set up in the Forum to commemorate this event.²⁵ Trajan was undoubtedly proud of his role in extending the *alimenta*, as may be seen by these numerous portrayals in the reliefs and issues of coinage from his reign. Since the measure was one designed for the benefit of children, they appear naturally as an essential part of such scenes. As a result of the many examples produced in Trajan's reign, the standard motif relating to this imperial gift was established. By the time of his death the pattern was fixed and similar scenes with children appear on coins to mark the continuation of the *alimenta* in the reigns of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius.²⁶

Is it possible that the panel from the Arco di Portogallo belongs, as suggested by La Rocca and Kleiner, to this second category of imperial relief which included children? The only reason Kleiner indicates for her suggestion is the common presence of children in reliefs relating to the *alimenta*. La Rocca also notes the connection between the *alimenta* and children, but goes on to point out that the boy is wearing a plain shoe, in contrast to the senatorial *calceus* worn by Hadrian.²⁷ He feels that this

²²This particular panel is examined by M. A. Tomei, "Osservazioni su Alcune Personificazioni Femminili dell'Arco di Traiano a Benevento," *Studi Miscellanei* 22 (1974-75) 205-212; see also Hassel 14-15 and Plates 6.2 and 9.

²³Tomei (above, n. 22) 207-210. For the coinage, see *BMCRE* 3, no. 378, and in particular nos. 870-872. See also the examples cited by Tomei (209, n. 38).

²⁴For a recent discussion, with a summary of earlier work, see Boatwright 182-190.

²⁵See M. Hammond, "A Statue of Trajan Represented on the 'Anaglypha Traiani'," *MAAR* 21 (1953) 155-157.

²⁶*BMCRE* 3, Hadrian nos. 1160-62; *BMCRE* 4, Antoninus Pius nos. 324, 325. See also R. Duncan-Jones, "The Purpose and Organisation of the *Alimenta*," *PBSR* 32 (1964) 142-144.

²⁷La Rocca 24-26.

marks the child as a generic figure representing the ordinary class of citizens who might be found at an imperial distribution. It is not clear, however, at what age upper-class Roman boys would begin to wear the senatorial shoes. The togate boys found with the imperial family on the Ara Pacis, for example, all seem to be wearing a basic type of shoe. Thus this fact alone need not imply that the child is not from a senatorial family. Furthermore, the composition of this panel differs significantly from that which is normally associated with the *alimenta*. While grain distributions (*frumentationes*) were a long established practice in the city of Rome,²⁸ the *alimenta* itself was a system designed specifically for distributions to children in the small towns of Italy.²⁹ It was the extension of benefits to the other parts of the peninsula by Trajan and his successors which marked their benevolence and was commemorated on coins and works of art. In the resulting illustrations of this largesse in which a deity is portrayed, it is always the goddess Italia or the personification Annona. The latter was shown standing beside a boy and the inclusion of symbolic ears of grain was an important part of the composition.³⁰ When an emperor appears it is always with more than one child, and either the parents or the goddess Italia may also be present.³¹ To convey the idea of giving in such scenes representing distributions, the emperor is shown reaching out to the children. This is entirely lacking in the Portogallo relief; instead the panel shows the emperor reading a speech, an action not found in other representations of imperial largesse. Thus the appearance in the Portogallo relief of a single child who is associated with the *Genius Populi Romani* and with nothing symbolizing grain would be unique in a reference to the *alimenta*.³²

The close examination of this relief clearly shows that the connection made by La Rocca and Kleiner between this scene and the *alimenta* cannot be maintained. At the same time the objections of Bonanno must be set aside since the presence of the child and his prominence in the panel make it very unlikely that he could be viewed as a generic figure. One is left with Simon's observation that the only child who would be so marked out at this time was the young Lucius Verus.

²⁸G. Rickman, *The Corn Supply of Ancient Rome* (Oxford 1980) 156–197.

²⁹Duncan-Jones (above, n. 26) 124; he lists all the towns for which there is epigraphic evidence in Appendix III (146).

³⁰*BMCRE* 3, Trajan nos. 468–473, 869, 918, 973, 974, 996, 1006, 1007.

³¹*BMCRE* 3, Trajan nos. 378, 379, 870–872; Hadrian 1160–62; *BMCRE* 4, Antoninus Pius 324, 325.

³²It is true that emperors in the second century also enrolled children in Rome on the lists for the grain distributions and that the distinction between this and the *alimenta* is not always clear (Rickman [above, n. 28] 189). But why would such an event be illustrated on a relief appearing on a monument related to Sabina's funeral (see below, 325–329)?

THE EVENT PORTRAYED

Although the relief from the Arco di Portogallo cannot portray an *alimenta* scene, the composition with an emperor on a raised platform making a speech can readily be associated with another well defined motif, the *adlocutio*.³³ The most common portrayal of an *adlocutio* involved the emperor addressing his troops, although speeches to groups of citizens could also be portrayed. In each case the emperor is placed on a *suggestus*, often with his arm raised in the well known pose of an orator.³⁴ He sometimes stands alone, but may also be accompanied by others.

While these elements are easily recognized in the Portogallo relief, there are some unusual elements in the presentation of the crowd which faces Hadrian. In other examples of an *adlocutio* there is always an attempt to give some sense of the large audience present at the event. Indeed the portrayal of a large crowd was one of the special problems of the *adlocutio* scene for which artists tried a number of different approaches.³⁵ Here, in contrast, only three figures, one of whom is almost totally hidden, face the emperor. It might be argued that the placement of the *suggestus* with Hadrian near the centre of the composition did not allow for a large number of figures on the right side of the panel. Yet there is a coin of Hadrian addressing a crowd on which the emperor is also placed near the centre, and even working within this much smaller field the artist has managed to include at least eight citizens.³⁶ The use of only three figures must therefore be regarded both as intentional and as having special significance.

Since there are so few people before the emperor in the Portogallo relief, the attention of the viewer is drawn to three of the figures who stand in the first plane: Hadrian, the *Genius Populi*, and the child.³⁷ Hadrian and the child are placed on vertical lines which are equidistant from the centre of the relief. This spacing seems deliberate since the figure of Hadrian is placed at the back of the *suggestus* to remove him from the central axis.³⁸ Both the child and the *Genius* look up to the emperor; both reach up with

³³Note that most scholars who have dealt with this relief have called it an *adlocutio* without any hesitation. For a discussion of such scenes see G. Hamberg, *Studies in Roman Imperial Art* (Copenhagen 1945) 135-149.

³⁴In this case the raised hand seems to hold the speech which is being read by the emperor, although this has been restored.

³⁵See the discussion by Hamberg (above, n. 33).

³⁶*BMCRE* 3, Hadrian nos. 1309 and 1310.

³⁷The soldier, who also stands in the front plane, is made less prominent by being crowded into the left corner of the relief and by the shadow which results from the placement of Hadrian on the *suggestus* (particularly his right arm).

³⁸The right foot extends over the back edge of the platform, while there is empty space in front of the left foot. Since the *suggestus* was largely reworked and restored in the seventeenth century it is possible that this was not the exact arrangement in the original relief.

their right hands in nearly parallel gestures which form a connection between them and the emperor.³⁹ Since the *Genius* stands partly behind the child, the smaller figure is pushed even more prominently into the foreground. This arrangement draws attention to the child, despite his diminutive stature.

In spite of some non-standard details, the identification of this relief as an *adlocutio* has the most to recommend it. There remains the further question of what specific occasion gave rise to the speech which is illustrated. The common view has been that the event represented here is the *laudatio memoriae* given by Hadrian after the death of Sabina.⁴⁰ Bianchi Bandinelli and Torelli offer a slightly different interpretation. Noting the presence of the *Genius Senatus* on the podium and observing that the edict for *apotheosis* came from the Senate, they suggest that the occasion may have been the reading of the decree that deified Sabina.⁴¹ There is no full discussion of the rationale which led to these identifications, but the logic used seems apparent. The *adlocutio* panel is identical in material, size, and style to the second panel found on the Arco di Portogallo;⁴² the second panel clearly shows the *apotheosis* of Sabina; therefore, the panel with the speech should be related to the same event.

Although the first two points are indisputable, the third does not naturally follow. While on the basis of size and style there can be little doubt that these two panels originally adorned the same monument, the arguments which connect the *adlocutio* specifically to the *apotheosis* of Sabina are plainly influenced by the appearance of the two panels as they face each other on the Arco di Portogallo.⁴³ Yet, as was noted above, the various elements of this structure were taken from earlier monuments to create an arch in the fifth century A.D. There may in fact have been other sculpted panels on the original structure which were not incorporated and which no longer survive. Moreover, it is highly unlikely that the *apotheosis* panel could have been taken from an earlier arch since a scene of this type would be extremely unusual on such triumphal monuments.⁴⁴

³⁹Both arms are restored, but they must be in their original positions or close to them since the panel shows no reworking in the empty spaces below each arm. Originally the right arm of the third figure was also raised; see Chilosi and Martellotti (above, n. 4) 34. On the gestures of both the speaker and the audience in such scenes see R. Brilliant, *Gesture and Rank in Roman Art* (New Haven, Connecticut 1963, *Memoirs of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Science* 14).

⁴⁰Stuart Jones (above, n. 7) 2.37–38; D. E. Strong, *Roman Imperial Sculpture* (London 1961) 96; Simon 264; B. Andreae, *The Art of Rome*, tr. R. E. Wolf (London 1978) 222 and 252; Bonanno 107; De Maria (above n. 1) 222 and 325.

⁴¹Bianchi Bandinelli and Torelli; again they give no reasons for their interpretation. In his more recent treatment, Torelli (78) does not mention his earlier interpretation.

⁴²Technical details may be found in the catalogue in Boatwright (271).

⁴³This is seen explicitly in the discussion by Brilliant (above, n. 39) 132.

⁴⁴Boatwright 234.

The closest parallel to the panel with Sabina is found on the base of the Column of Antoninus Pius, where the *apotheosis* of his wife Faustina is shown. This column was placed in front of the location where that emperor was cremated, his *ustrinum*.⁴⁵ A. B. Wace, who noted this parallel, suggested that the Portogallo reliefs might have come from the base of a similar monument.⁴⁶ Another alternative has been suggested by M. T. Boatwright, who notes the appearance of an altar on the coinage which marks the deification of Sabina and offers the hypothesis that these reliefs might have served as decoration for the altar.⁴⁷ Whether a base or an altar, such a monument would probably have been associated with the location of the cremation of Hadrian's wife and the *apotheosis* panel would have been a natural decoration.⁴⁸

But if we accept that the *apotheosis* came from this type of structure, it is also much less likely that the two reliefs originally faced each other as they did when they were reused on the later arch. Wace, in discussing the possible base, suggested that the two panels might have been on opposite sides with an inscription on the front.⁴⁹ Likewise they could have come from different sides if they had decorated an altar or its enclosure.⁵⁰ In either case, there would have been no such visual connection between the two panels as their appearance on the later arch leads one to expect. Consequently, while the different scenes on the original monument should be interpreted as having been appropriate for the location of Sabina's cremation,⁵¹ there is no need to see a direct link between the events portrayed on the two panels which survive. Without certain knowledge of the type of monument from which the *apotheosis* and the *adlocutio* panels came, and their original placement in relation to each other, the content of the panels must be the main basis for identifying the events portrayed.

It is still possible that the speech represented is the *laudatio memoriae* for Sabina, but this would require a specific chronology. The date of Sabina's death is uncertain, but the most commonly accepted view is that it occurred in A.D. 136 or early in 137.⁵² The *Historia Augusta* (*Hadrian*

⁴⁵On the column and *ustrinum* of Antoninus Pius, see Nash (above, n. 1) 1.270 and 2.487-489.

⁴⁶Wace 262-263.

⁴⁷Boatwright 229.

⁴⁸On the *ustrinum* of Hadrian in the Campus Martius, see Boatwright 218-230.

⁴⁹See above, n. 46.

⁵⁰See, for example, the end panels from the Ara Pacis.

⁵¹La Rocca (27-28), who recognizes this, postulates that the *alimenta* which he sees in the second panel took place at the time of Sabina's deification. But as he notes, there is no evidence to confirm such a distribution. Kleiner's alternatives (above, n. 12) of distributions at the celebration of his *vicennalia* or at the adoption of L. Aelius and Antoninus Pius would be impossible to relate to the location of Sabina's cremation.

⁵²PIR V 414 (Vibia Sabina); also Mattingly (*BMCRE* 3 cl), who notes that the coinage with Sabina ceases after 137.

23.9–10) mentions her death just after the forced suicide of Servianus and immediately before the adoption of Aelius Verus. But an inscription which dates from after the adoption and refers to her as still living suggests that the chronology in the *Historia Augusta* is distorted and that she actually died after the date late in 136 when Aelius Verus was chosen by Hadrian.⁵³ Since the sources indicate that the adoption led to games, an imperial donative, and public rejoicing,⁵⁴ with no mention of any such disruptions as one might expect if the emperor's wife had died at this time, her death cannot have taken place immediately after the adoption. Finally, the absence of Aelius Verus in a scene portraying the *laudatio memoriae* of Sabina would suggest that he had either left Rome for Pannonia by the time of her funeral, or was already dead. This would place the death of Sabina late in 137 or early in 138, a date which might be supported by the evidence of two other inscriptions.⁵⁵

But a further problem in maintaining that the panel shows the *laudatio memoriae* for Sabina is finding sufficient justification for the prominence given to the young Lucius Verus at this event. The occasion of his wife's death would have been an unusual time for Hadrian to think of emphasizing the importance of young Lucius, particularly if his father was still alive. Neither Simon nor Bianchi Bandinelli and Torelli point out these specific problems with their identification of Verus, yet by suggesting names for the minor figures in the panel they show that they would prefer more members of the imperial court at the event. Thus Simon uses a very tenuous argument to identify the figure behind the *Genius Populi* as M. Annius Verus, the adoptive grandfather of Marcus Aurelius.⁵⁶ Bianchi Bandinelli and Torelli also identify this figure as M. Annius Verus, and suggest that the young figure behind Hadrian on the *suggestus* is Marcus Aurelius.⁵⁷ Unfortunately, the extensive restorations on these figures, as well as their places in the background of the panel, make it impossible to confirm any identity.

There may, however, be a more appropriate occasion which can be suggested for this *adlocutio*: the *laudatio memoriae* for Aelius Verus. When the elder Verus died on the first of January 138, Hadrian prohibited public mourning, not wishing to disrupt the normal vows for the state which were made at this time.⁵⁸ Even so, the death of Aelius Verus did not go unmarked. Although Aelius was never deified, his biography in the *Historia Augusta* (*Aelius* 6) says that he was honoured with an imperial funeral,⁵⁹

⁵³ *CIL* VIII.12.266; see W. Eck, "Vibia (?) Sabina," *PW Supp.* 15 (1978) 913–914.

⁵⁴ *S.H.A.Hadr.* 23.12; *Ael.* 3.3; 6.1.

⁵⁵ Eck (above, n. 53) 914.

⁵⁶ Simon 265.

⁵⁷ See above, n. 9.

⁵⁸ *S.H.A.Hadr.* 23; *S.H.A.Ael.* 4.

⁵⁹ This statement might be supported by the existence of one coin type with the head of Aelius Verus on the obverse and a multi-storied funeral pyre on the reverse.

and it is certain that he was buried in Hadrian's new mausoleum on the bank of the Tiber.⁶⁰ This must have taken place before Hadrian's adoption of Arrius Antoninus on February 25, and the young Lucius would have been the only heir within the imperial family at the time. Thus it would have been natural to feature him prominently in a relief, nestled under the protective arm of the *Genius Populi*.

On the basis of this interpretation one must conclude that the monument which originally displayed the *apotheosis* and the *adlocutio* reliefs was used by Hadrian to commemorate the deaths of at least two members of the imperial family. There is no reason to doubt that Sabina and Aelius Verus, who probably died about a year apart, would have been cremated on the same spot in the Campus Martius, and that the structure which held these reliefs, and possibly others, could have marked this site.

LUCIUS VERUS AND HADRIAN'S LAST YEARS

Without further evidence about the monument which originally incorporated the reliefs later transferred to the Arco di Portogallo it is difficult to reach any certain conclusions. On the basis of what is known today, however, the identification of the child in the *adlocutio* as Lucius Verus, suggested by Simon, seems the most probable one. As a result of this identification it appears less likely that this relief portrays the *laudatio memoriae* for Sabina. Either the *laudatio memoriae* for Aelius Verus, as suggested above, or some other event relating to his death would be a more natural occasion for this emphasis on the role of the young Verus in the imperial court. These conclusions concerning both the identification of the figure and the interpretation of the scene would add support to a specific reading of the history of Hadrian's last years and his plans for his successors.

Much of the historical evidence for this period must be taken from the *Historia Augusta*, a source whose quality of information is very uneven. The biography of Lucius Verus preserved in the *Historia Augusta* was often dismissed until its historical value was demonstrated in an important article by T. D. Barnes which appeared in 1967.⁶¹ Although the authorship of this life continues to be disputed, historians have generally accepted the conclu-

BMCRE 3, p. 549 and Plate 101, no. 9. This would be the first of a series of such coins commemorating imperial funerals; see J. M. C. Toynbee, *Death and Burial in the Roman World* (London 1971) 60–61. There is evidence, however, to suggest that the early version of this type is a forgery; see K. Pink, "Claude Augustin de Saint Urbain, Forger of Roman Coins," *NC*⁵ 13 (1933) 203–219, at 209–210.

⁶⁰*S.H.A. Ver.* 11.1; *ILS* 329.

⁶¹T. D. Barnes, "Hadrian and Lucius Verus," *JRS* 57 (1967) 65–79; his views on the value of all of the *Historia Augusta* and its sources are set out more fully in *The Sources of the Historia Augusta* (Brussels 1978, Collection *Latomus* 155).

sions of Barnes concerning the quality of much of the material included.⁶² One of the observations made by Barnes on the basis of his analysis was that after L. Ceionius Commodus was adopted and designated as heir in A.D. 136, Hadrian viewed this man's son, the future Lucius Verus, as the next logical successor. Barnes also suggested that throughout his own life Hadrian preferred the young Lucius Verus, even after the death of Ceionius Commodus and the adoption of Antoninus Pius.

After setting out his arguments, Barnes makes reference to a relief from Ephesus as possible additional support for his suggestion concerning Verus.⁶³ Art historians agree that this work shows the imperial family at the time of Antoninus' adoption, and that the figures include Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus. Significantly, the child Verus is placed in the centre of the group and is prominently marked out. There is, however, a continuing debate about the date of this work, some viewing it as late Hadrianic while others see its origins in the 160s.⁶⁴ If the latter date is accepted, one might argue that the prominence given to Verus in the relief stems from his role in the eastern provinces during the Parthian wars rather than from any favour shown towards him by Hadrian.

Since Barnes's case about the biography of Lucius Verus is based primarily on the written sources, the uncertainty about the date of the Ephesus relief does not invalidate his argument. Therefore it is important to consider whether a prominent role for the young Verus can be discerned in other works of art created during or soon after the last years of Hadrian's reign. I would suggest that the *adlocutio* panel from the Arco di Portogallo, a work undoubtedly from the late Hadrianic or early Antonine period, should be viewed in this way. Thus the relief makes a visual statement about Hadrian's views on the succession which confirms Barnes's reading of the *Historia Augusta*. The importance of such a message would make it a natural one for Hadrian to convey through a state relief, and would also justify the unusual use of a child in this context.

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⁶²For example, see Alan Cameron's review of Ronald Syme, *Ammianus and the Historia Augusta* in *JRS* 61 (1971) 255–267, at 264–265; A. R. Birley, *Septimius Severus* (London 1971) 318–321 and *Marcus Aurelius* (rev. ed. London 1987) 230; G. R. Stanton, *ANRW* II.2.485–487 and 533; H. W. Benario, *A Commentary on the Vita Hadriani in the Historia Augusta* (Chico, California 1980) 5.

⁶³Barnes (above, n. 61) 77–78. A good illustration of this relief, with some discussion and bibliography, may be found in Hannestad 202.

⁶⁴On the date of this relief see the works cited by Hannestad 397, n. 225.

THE ARCO DI PORTOGALLO



Plate 1. Relief panel from the Arco di Portogallo (now in the Palazzo dei Conservatori, Rome). Photograph from the German Archaeological Institute, Rome. (Negative 54.41)