

UNIVERSITY „ALEXANDRU IOAN CUZA” IAȘI

FACULTY OF HISTORY

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

**THE ORIGIN OF THE LEGIONARIES IN MOESIA
INFERIOR**

PhD SUPERVISOR:

PROF. UNIV. DR. LUCREȚIU MIHAILESCU BÎRLIBA

Student – PhD:

ELENA ADAM

IAȘI

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INTRODUCTION

This paper is situated in the series of studies that follow the transition of the perspective over the Roman army seen as an institution, towards the analysis of individuals. The title suggests a composite approach of the subject, without claiming to unravel all the aspects of the issue. The topic can be seen as an equation with multiple variables that this thesis will try to define along the way.

The submitted task is based on the necessity of establishing a pattern of recruitment for the province Moesia Inferior. Even though there are many studies where certain aspects of the legionary recruitment in the Roman provinces have been discussed, for example, Germania, Gallia, Britannia, or analyses of recruiting different ethnic groups in the Roman army (the Batavians, the Thracians, the Dacians, etc.), the analysis of the imperial recruitment system in the Danubian province debated here will underline interesting elements concerning the mobility and also the immobility of the legions.

These been said we should underline the thesis objectives as follows: the analysis of the inscriptions of all three legions (V Macedonica, XI Claudia, I Italica) and identifying the soldiers, followed by the analysis and discovery of their origin and also creating some typological units regarding the regions of recruitment. The next objective will be identifying the evidences of the recruitment patterns and completing a comparison between the three

legions. The last objective and perhaps the most important, will be determining the recruitment policy implemented by the Roman Empire in Moesia Inferior.

I. LEGIO V MACEDONICA

1. Short history of the legion

The history of this legion is attached to the Danubian area. Legio V Macedonica appears for the first time in Strabo's work where is connected to the years 15-14 a. Chr. and to the colonists in Berytus.

In the years 33-34 p. Chr. the legion appears in epigraphic texts alongside legio III Scythica, working at the construction of the road right of the Danube. According to Jerome H. Farnum, the legion was stationed at Kostolac (Viminacium) from 9 till 62 p. Chr.

For almost a decade the Vth Macedonica stayed in the Orient returning to the Danube at Oescus in 72 p. Chr. where it remained until 106 p. Chr. For the period 106-167 p. Chr. the legion was stationed at Troesmis. Her history for this period of time is known through the epigraphic evidences.

With the marcomanic wars of Marcus Aurelius, legio V Macedonica was moved to Potaissa. The last inscriptions that confirm the legion's presence in Dacia derives from the mutual regency Valerianus-Gallienus. Under Gallienus, detachments of the

legions from Dacia were stationed in Poetovio, a strategic point on the road to the Italian peninsula. After the aurelian retreat Vth Macedonica will returned to Oescus (271-388 p. Chr.). The existence of the legion continued until the 6th century p. Chr.

2. The analysis of the inscriptions

Knowing the large number of inscriptions discovered for all three legions, in the following lines, I will present only a few examples trying to underline the diversity of the soldiers' origins. Therefore, perhaps the most important inscription of the legion discussed here is the list of soldiers released in 134 p. Chr. by governor Sextus Iulius Maior. The list presents a number of 300 names, 230 veterans released of their duty and 70 others that remain at the legions' disposal, *reliq(ui) v(eterani)*.

Unfortunately, the list of soldiers from Troesmis does not indicate their origin. They appear presented in cohorts and the ranks include only *immunes* and *principales*. Not knowing the origin of this 300 soldiers gives us the possibility of analyzing their names and implicitly discovering important clues regarding the recruitment system in Moesia Inferior in the time of Emperor Trajan.

All the legionaries have roman names following the model of *tria nomina*. There appear a large number of imperial names: 34 Iulii, 7 Flavii, 5 Claudii. Aponius Moesicus, one of the mentioned soldiers can be situated, because of his cognomen, in the category of

soldiers recruited from Moesia Inferior. In this list we discover names often registered for the danubian area as: Baebius (column III, cohorts III), Aufidius (column VII), Antistius (column I, cohorts I), Cassius (column II, cohorts II; column II, cohorts III), Cornelius (column II, cohorts II), and also rare names specific to the Italian peninsula: Aconteius (column VI), Atisius (column VI), Cabellius (column IX), Caesonius (column I, cohorts I), Ferranius (column II, cohorts II). The cognomina are mostly Latin except some like, Alexander, Eleuther, Philippus, which are considered to be specific for Greeks. In some cases the *cognomen* or the *nomen* can be a perfect indicator of a possible descent, for example Helvius Cantaber for Hispania, Cassius Germanus, Gellius Germanus, Iulius Germanus representing Germans or Maeonius Valens a recruit from the Orient (Maeonius after Maeonia the ancient name of Lydia).

Hence, not knowing the certain origin of the legionaries its more than possible that many could have come from the Italian peninsula or from the Danubian or Balkan provinces.

3. Conclusions

Legio V Macedonica took part in Nero's oriental campaign, after that in the Judaic war, in Trajan's Parthian war, also participated at quashing the Jews rising during Emperor Hadrian and at the Parthian war under Lucius Verus. In these circumstances the large number of oriental soldiers doesn't seem so surprising. The inscriptions of the first century p. Chr. confirm the existence of 6

Italian soldiers and of two other recruited probably from the Greek part of the Empire. For the next two centuries we discovered 2 Italians, 3 Galls, one Spaniard, 4 Greeks, one from Pannonia, 3 Germans and 6 legionaries that seem to be recruited from Moesia Inferior. The presence of these 6 local recruits emphasizes the beginnings of local recruitment in the first part of the second century p. Chr.

II. LEGIO I ITALICA

1. Short history of the legion

Having as a symbol a boar, that appears on a monument discovered at Novae, the legion was created, according to the recent studies in the year 66 p. Chr., before the Emperor Nero left for his PanHellenic expedition. From 69/70 p. Chr. when the legion arrived at Novae it will be stationed here until the fourth century p. Chr.

An inscription mentioning two *primi pilli* of the legio I Italica from Hellespont, Flavius Aphrodisios and Flavius Artemisios, represents a late confirmation of the legion's presence in Moesia Inferior. Their position does not designate the highest rank held by a centurion, but the fact that they were civilian officials having administrative duties. Dated in 432 p. Chr., another inscription discovered at Novae presents two other *primi pili* of the legion from the same province of Hellespont, Flafonius and Diodorus. Knowing

the inscription mentioned above from 367 p. Chr. we can assume that both Faltonius and Diodorus had the same administrative function.

2. The analysis of the inscriptions

On the pedestal of an honorary statue of the Emperor Septimius Severus there appears a dedication of the soldiers, *primi ordines* and centurions. On the flanks of the pedestal, in four columns but only two remained, the legionaries are mentioned in cohorts. The first six names do not present the number of the centuria and observing this detail, T. Sarnowski considers them to be the *primi ordines*. The *Laterculum* from Novae doesn't display the names of all the legion's centurions and so for the first five cohorts we know only 19 of 30 centurions. The inscription is fragmented and so even the names are difficult to identify let alone the origins of the soldiers. Only a few have names so rare that their origin can be indicated with probability. Therefore, Baebius Urvinianus, Mufeijs Ter[...] and Fannius Semninius seem to have Italian origins, Dovijs Fortunatus could originate from Hispania, Aurelius Concessus from Africa, and the Greek part of the Empire could be represented by Aelius Cydias and Aelius Eufeminus.

3. Conclusions

For the second and the third century p. Chr. we can identify a number of 12 Italians, 2 recruits from Gallia, 3 from Hispania, 3 from Noricum and also 3 from Macedonia. The legion's participation at Trajan's Parthian war or at the quashing the insurgence of Jews in the time of Hadrian represents an outside factor that will explain the large number of oriental soldiers and to be precise 18. The conflicts with the Maurs in the north of Africa in the time of Emperor Antoninus Pius will represent the perfect occasion for recruiting the five legionaries with African origin attested in Moesia Inferior. Unlike legio V Macedonica the inscriptions of legio I Italica demonstrate the existence of a preceding period for the local recruitment and specifically recruiting soldiers from the neighboring provinces: 3 from Dacia and one soldier from Moesia Superior. An interesting element discovered for Moesia Inferior, but registered in other provinces of the Roman Empire is the presence of a large number of Thracians soldiers – 11. We can't conclude this short recall of the second chapter without mentioning the 15 legionaries with a local origin, underlining once more that the first half of the second century is when the local recruitment began.

III. LEGIO XI CLAUDIA

1. Short history of the legion

According to Jerome H. Farnum, the legion was created in 58 a. Chr. by Iulius Caesar having the god Neptun as symbol. But the first mention of the legion belongs to the second part of the first century a. Chr., when at Perugia appears a legion with the number XI in the army of C. Iulius Caesar Octavianus. The same Farnum asserts that in the period 41-31 a. Chr. the legion was stationed in the Italian peninsula. After that in 31 a. Chr. we rediscover it at Actium in the army of Octavian.

With the separation of Ilyricum the legion was moved in Dalmatia at Burnum. Starting with 70 p. Chr. the legion's castrum was Vindonissa in Germania Superior, occupied before by legio XXI Rapax. The camp in Vindonissa was evacuated in 100-101 p. Chr. according to the monetary evidences. From 106-107 p. Chr. Durostorum becomes the permanent garrison of legio XI Claudia (106-400 p. Chr.), and the first epigraphic confirmation belongs to the years 115-117 p. Chr.

For a late period, J. H. Farnum, asserts in his analysis the presence of some detachments of the legion in Mauretania in 298-299 p. Chr., and in 300 p. Chr. other detachments appear in Mesopotamia.

1. The analysis of the inscriptions

An inscription dated in 155 p. Chr., discovered in the territory of Montana, presents a number of 65 soldiers under the command of centurion Flavius Maximus. The first mentioned are the *principales*: *tesserarius*, *tubicen*, *cornicen*, *medicus* and two *immunes venatores*. After that the soldiers of five cohorts are cited. Most of the soldiers bear specific Roman names, making it impossible to establish a certain origin, but some of them present names that might indicate an oriental origin: Heracla, Chaires or from the Greek part of the Empire: Artemo, Agathocles.

2. Conclusions

The Italian recruits also appear in this analysis but unlike the other two legions their number is rather small only 5. In legio XI Claudia the number of soldiers recruited from Moesia Inferior, 14, exceeds the number of oriental recruits, just 8. We must mention the 3 Thracians, 2 from Grecia, 3 from Africa, one from Macedonia, one from Germania, one from Gallia, 2 from Dacia and one recruited from Moesia Superior.

2. CRITERIA OF RECRUITMENT

1. Fighting for Rome

Why did the Roman soldiers fight? What exactly made them ready to give their lives to Rome? Was there a moral or abstract ideal that would justify risking their lives? In order to discover the source of the Roman soldier's „patriotism” we must go back at the beginnings of Rome, when the image of the Roman soldier seen as a conqueror of others was connected to the success and expansion of the eternal city.

The Roman Republic is the period of dual life, civilian and military. It was considered that the property represented the supreme connection between the soldier and the state and implicitly, what motivated the soldier to fight. Starting with Marius major changes appear, maybe the most important being the transition of the military service from duty to career. And so the character of the army changed. The Republic offered a double identity to the soldier he was able to establish strong bonds with his companions-in-arms, followed by the return to the gentle enclosure of his family. But when fighting became a career, the family disappeared, and the only connection was with others like him.

The Republican soldier was a sentimental soldier, for him the self-sacrifice was a way of ensuring that Rome will become *perpetuus*. It's a man with two worlds, a civilian sphere where he protects his family and fights for its welfare. On the other side, the duty towards the Republic moves him in the military sphere, where

the family micro cosmos is replaced by the Republican macro cosmos. This utopian “patriotism” will disappear once the soldier-civilian “entity” will. Starting with the Empire we can see the career soldier as part of a military community, soldier that through the oath he pledges upon recruitment swears to fight and die for the *res publica*. But still, completely separated from the civilian life, having no connection to the Roman state, what exactly made him surrender his life? Was it the glorious death? Was it the promise of *donativa* and other rewards? But, as M. A. Speidel said we do not know the thoughts and ideals of a simple Roman soldier.

2. Considerations regarding recruitment in the Roman Empire

Before we can talk about the differences and variations that appear in the recruitment system of the Roman Empire we need to remember that we can't talk about a unitary pattern applicable to the entire empire. Each province and implicitly each legion had a specific pattern due to geographic positioning and other internal or external factors. G. Forni reaches the conclusion that a legion needed only 240 new recruits each year, and that for all the legions that represented a number of 6000 new soldiers plus new recruits for the auxiliary units, fleet, and troops stationed in Rome. Perhaps knowing that we understand why Yann Le Bohec referred at the army as a machinery that replicated citizens. Surely all the provinces

glide with certain temporal differences towards a regional recruitment and eventually to local recruitment.

THE PATTERN OF RECRUITMENT IN MOESIA INFERIOR

Analyzing the inscriptions of the soldiers of all three legions, V Macedonica, I Italica și XI Claudia, discovering their origin or just searching for clues regarding their origin, we confront with probably the most important question: why the need of mentioning the origin?

The presumptive explanation brings forth the self-image of the soldier. Belonging to the military community since the recruitment, his only connection with the civilian world and with this concept of home is his origin. The inscriptions of the soldiers represent the material that allowed me to shape a pattern of recruitment of legionaries in Moesia Inferior.

The present study tries to continue the series of analyses regarding recruitment in the Roman Empire. As I said before the recruitment system in Moesia Inferior is influenced by two major components: the mobility and immobility of the legions stationed here. And so, the participation of the legions or just some detachments at the military events that took place in the empire led to massive recruitments meant to supplement the troops that fought and lost a part of their soldiers. Hence, the oriental campaigns of Nero, Vespasian, Titus, Traian, Hadrian, Lucius Verus explain the large number of oriental soldiers that appear in Moesia

Inferior, 44 legionaries. The oriental recruits take the first place in this list followed by the 35 soldiers recruited from Moesia Inferior and the 26 Italian recruits. The elevated proportion of legionaries with local origin demonstrates without a doubt the existence of local recruitment that began in the first half of the second century p. Chr. Also, these 35 soldiers underline the immobility of the troops and the need to replenish the legions, and that is the moment that the transition towards the local recruitment takes place. As we saw the number of Italian recruits is also considerable, emphasizing the contribution of the Italian peninsula for the recruitment system in Moesia Inferior.

The presence of the 14 Thracian recruits asserts the common element of the system applied to the Empire where, as J. C Mann claims, in the third century p. Chr. we can observe an explosion of Thracian recruits. Also we can observe the existence of soldiers recruited from the neighboring provinces of Moesia Inferior, representing probably the preceding step to local recruitment.

The number of soldiers with a certain origin is doubled by those that appear in this study under the name of *Incerti*. We must remember that this category can contain a large number of Italian, Oriental, local recruits or from other provinces of the Roman Empire. But the absence of some clues regarding their descent does not allow us to include them in our analysis.

SUPPLEMENTUM EPIGRAPHICUM

The inscriptions are organized in three sections following each legion: V Macedonica, I Italica și XI Claudia; and with every legion they are ordered according to the place of discovery.

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