

THE LEGIONS AND AUXILIARY UNITS IN MOESIA

THE MOVEMENT AND EMPLACEMENT OF THE LEGIONS AND AUXILIARY
UNITS OF THE ROMAN ARMY IN MOESIA FROM 29 BC TO AD 235

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a history of the legions and auxiliary units of the Roman province of Moesia from 29 BC to AD 235. Some of the principal battles and campaigns undertaken in the area are discussed; however, the focus of the study is the movement of those units both in and out of the province, and also their emplacement, where possible, in the numerous forts so far found in Moesia. A variety of different types of evidence are used: inscriptions, and in particular stone inscriptions and the bronze diplomas are the most valuable sources; the ancient authors are important, and Tacitus, Josephus, Cassius Dio, and Ptolemy are the most valuable, although others are used. There are a handful of conclusions drawn from this study. Generally, during the Julio-Claudian period military units tended to cluster around each other. In the second and third centuries, they are more spread out, and tend to be fairly evenly distributed along the Danube. During the two major campaigns that happened over the course of the years from 29 BC to AD 235, there was a significant influx of troops, and in particular auxiliary units, which were well suited to the conditions. The total legionary disposition remained fairly consistent from Vespasian to Severus Alexander. In the second century, units became stationary and vexillations were often dispatched when the gravity of the moment called for reinforcements.

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TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

The abbreviations used for ancient authors are those found in the 3rd (1996) edition of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*.

AE = *l'Année Épigraphique*

CIL = *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*

IDR = *Inscriptiones Daciae Romanae*

IGRR = *Inscriptiones Graecae ad res Romanas Pertinentes*

ILBulR = *Inscriptiones Latinae in Bulgaria Repertae*

ILJug = *Inscriptiones Latinae quae in Iugoslavia inter annos MCMXL et MCMLX Repertae et Editae sunt*

ILS = *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*

IMS = *Inscriptions de la Mésie Supérieure*

ISM = *Inscriptiones Scythiae Minoris*

RA = *Revue Archéologique*

RMD = *Roman Military Diplomas Volumes 1-4*

RMR = *Roman Military Records on Papyrus*

ZPE = *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*

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INTRODUCTION:

THE ROMAN ARMY:

Scholarship concerned with the Roman army has remained steady throughout the last century. Recently, however, we have been privy to the updating of some of the fundamental works of Roman army studies. For decades, Ritterling's article, "legio", was the reference tool for anyone interested in the history of any particular legion.¹ Although that article is still useful, we have more inscriptions now than Ritterling did in 1925; thus, the history of some legions has changed. Fortunately, a team of scholars led by Le Bohec and with the assistance of Wolff, have updated Ritterling's article with the publication of the two volume collection, *Les Légions de Rome sous le Haut-Empire*.² While Ritterling's article was the standard work for the history of the individual legions, Cichorius' two articles, "ala", and "cohors" were the counterparts for the auxiliary units of the Roman army.³ In this case the difference between the legions and the auxiliary units is rather dramatic: we know significantly more now about the history of the auxiliary units than Cichorius did over 100 years ago.⁴ Furthermore, one lone and brave

¹ Of course, we cannot forget the important monograph of Parker (1958). Parker's work, however, looked at the legions as a whole, and although he did discuss many aspects of the individual legions, appendix aside, he did not treat the legions individually. In his book-sized article Ritterling, by contrast, looked at the development of the legions as a whole; he also treated each legion on an individual basis.

² Le Bohec and Wolff 2000.

³ Cichorius 1893, "ala"; Cichorius 1900, "cohors". Cheesman gave us his important monograph, *The Auxilia of the Roman Imperial Army*, in 1914. Just as with Parker in his book on the legions, Cheesman treated the *auxilia* as a whole, rather than piecemeal. In both articles Cichorius tackled the various units on an individual basis. Holder (1980) and Saddington (1982) have each contributed a volume on the auxiliary units, but neither author's study extends far beyond the first century, nor do they treat each individual unit with any depth.

⁴ If we look at the diplomas alone we can get some idea of the increase in the amount of evidence at our disposal. See for example, Roxan's (in the last case with the aid of Holder) four corpora entitled *Roman Military Diplomas*. The first volume, which was published in 1978, contains 78 relatively complete diplomas and 4 fragments that are not found in *CIL XVI*. The second volume, which was published in 1985, contains 56 diplomas not found in *CIL XVI*. The third volume, published in 1994, contains 67 diplomas not found in *CIL XVI*. The fourth and most recent volume, published in 2003, contains 121 complete and fragmentary diplomas not found in *CIL XVI*.

scholar has taken it upon himself to update Cichorius' articles. Spaul released *Ala 2* in 1994, which was followed by *Cohors 2* in 2000. In these works Spaul has done a masterful job of presenting significant portions of the respective inscriptions, the literary references, providing a respectable bibliography, discussing the scholarly literature for each unit, and providing, where necessary, his own interpretation of each unit's history. One need only flip through the pages of these two volumes to appreciate the amount of work that has gone into their preparation. Despite the publication of three such important reference works more work on the army on the frontiers is indeed necessary.

THE TOPIC:

In 1952 at a conference for epigraphists the eminent student of the Roman army Eric Birley presented a paper in which he set out those aspects of the armed forces that at that time still needed work.⁵ Almost forty years later, Michael P. Speidel was asked to do the same and take stock of the current "state of the art" in Roman army studies.⁶ Speidel noted that much of what Birley had called for had been accomplished, and in many cases by his own students.⁷ Yet, he also acknowledged that there was still a lot of work remaining. And so, Speidel decided to highlight those aspects of the organisation of the army that still need work.⁸ The list that Speidel provides is both daunting, and inspiring.⁹

⁵ This intriguing paper was republished as the opening chapter of Birley's collection of essays, *The Roman Army Papers 1929-1986* (1988). Pp 3-11.

⁶ It was originally published in 1989 (*BIAL* 26), and republished in Speidel's second collection of essays, *Roman Army Studies Volume 2* (1992).

⁷ In an enlightening recent review article Lendon (2004: 441-449) made some similar pronouncements – although he did not specifically outline those particular topics that should garner more attention – in regard to the Roman army which for him, and rightfully so, was "essentially Roman", "part of Roman society", and "an aspect of Roman culture."

⁸ Speidel 1992: 13-20. The title of the paper is in fact, "Work to be done on the Organization of the Roman Army".

After calling for the collation of the many disparate articles concerned with the army, and recognising the value of monographs he provided a table with those topics “that will richly repay research, especially if they come with a catalogue of the sources”.¹⁰ The topic that garnered the largest discussion from that was the provincial armies. It would be of some benefit to reproduce here Speidel’s pronouncement:

Some topics ... [include] a survey of the various provincial armies, such as the *exercitus Moesiacus* or *Syriacus*. What were they called? How were they looked at from Rome? What clout did they have there? How did they differ from each other in name, strength, structure, quality, weapons, equipment and fighting techniques, in recruitment, administration, religion, buildings, fortifications, and in their role in the field army? How was their uniformity maintained? How did they cooperate or even communicate with each other? Some of the answers are found in Tacitus, Suetonius and Vegetius, but the inscriptions and papyri would also tell much.¹¹

There is enough material in that statement to fill a rather lengthy monograph.

Of those two armies singled out by Speidel, that is the Syrian and Moesian armies, it is the latter that has shown more signs of neglect. There has been a respectable output from scholars concerned to some degree with the military history of the Moesias,¹² but they are not without their problems.¹³ First, the three principal studies concerned with the army in Moesia are in need of revision.¹⁴ Second, of those studies that have appeared in English over the past thirty years, a significant number are concerned with the military architecture of the frontier, and thus only provide a cursory discussion of the

⁹ As he himself readily admits, there is more than enough material in some aspects of the army to occupy someone for an entire career.

¹⁰ Speidel 1992: 16.

¹¹ Speidel 1992: 16.

¹² The Roman province of Moesia, and later Moesia Inferior (Lower Moesia) and Moesia Superior (Upper Moesia), roughly correspond to the modern Bulgaria and Serbia.

¹³ The problems outlined are in no particular order.

¹⁴ The remarkable increase in the number of inscriptions at our disposal means that many of their views are no longer valid. For the *auxilia* I am referring to Wagner 1938, *Die Dislokation der Römischen Auxiliarformationen in den Provinzen Noricum, Pannonien, Moesien und Dakien von Augustus bis Gallienus*; and to Benes 1978, *Auxilia Romana in Moesia atque in Dacia*. In regard to the *legiones* I am referring to Filow 1963, *Die Legionen der Provinz Moesia von Augustus bis auf Diokletian*.

legions and auxiliary units.¹⁵ Third, many of the studies are more general in scope, and thus cover not just Moesia, but the Pannonias and Dacia as well.¹⁶ Due to the dearth of studies on the army of Moesia, this essay will focus on the province – and later provinces – of Moesia,¹⁷ and more specifically, the *exercitus Moesiacus*.

As noted above, Speidel calls for more work than the size of this essay permits. Thus, I must be selective. What follows is a history of the movement of the various legions and auxiliary units that passed through, and remained in, the Moesias from 29 BC, to the demise of Severus Alexander nearly 270 years later in AD 235.¹⁸ In this paper I shall also cover in some detail the troop emplacement, and I shall provide a survey of the battles both won and lost in the Moesian provinces. As a result, I should be able to address the questions: “What were they called?”; to some extent, “How did they differ from each other in name, strength, structure?” The issues of “quality, weapons,

¹⁵ Biernacka-Lubanska 1982, *The Roman and Early-Byzantine Fortifications of Lower Moesia and Northern Thrace*; Scorpan 1980, *Limes Scythiae*; Zahariade and Gudea 1997, *The Fortifications of Lower Moesia*; and Karavas 2001, *The evolution of Roman frontier fortification systems in the lower Danube provinces, 1st-2nd centuries A.D.* Scorpan’s study does not fall within the set chronological limits of this paper. That work focuses on the fortifications of the later Roman Empire.

¹⁶ Benes at n. 27 above; Biernacka-Lubanska in the preceding note; Gerov 1980, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Römischen Provinzen Moesien und Thrakien*; Kraft 1951, *Zur Rekrutierung der Alen und Kohorten an Rhein und Donau*; Mocsy 1974, *Pannonia and Upper Moesia: a History of the Middle Danube Provinces of the Roman Empire*; Petrović 1996, *Roman Limes on the Middle and Lower Danube*; and Wagner 1938, *Die Dislokation der Römischen Auxiliarformationen in den Provinzen Noricum, Pannonien, Moesien und Dakien von Augustus bis Gallienus*. Conversely, the work can also be quite specific, as is the case with Ariescu’s (1980) work, *The Army in Roman Dobrudja*.

¹⁷ Although the focus of this paper is the military history of the Moesian provinces, there will also be some discussion of military activity in the Crimea in the north Black Sea. It seems that the Crimea, although nominally ruled by its own king/s, was often included as part of the “sphere of operations” for the Moesian army. For further discussion of the inclusion of the Crimea see my discussion below.

¹⁸ The legions and the auxiliary units are the two fundamental components of this essay. I shall not be going into any detail about either the *numeri*, or the navy. For one thing, the evidence for these two branches of the army, at least as far as they pertain to the Moesias, is limited. The only evidence that we have for any *numeri* in the Moesias is discussed by Speidel (1992: 140-144). The best discussion of the *numeri* in general is Southern’s (1989: 81-140). As regards the navy, Bounegru and Zahariade (1996) devote any entire book to the Moesian fleet.

equipment and fighting techniques” are beyond my scope, as are the differences “in recruitment, administration, religion, buildings, and fortifications.”¹⁹

As Speidel noted, some of the answers are indeed found in the ancient authors. Those authors which have the most to tell us about troop movements include Strabo, Velleius Paterculus, Florus, Josephus, Suetonius, Tacitus, who is undoubtedly the best source, Ptolemy, Cassius Dio, Herodian, the author/s of the Antonine Itinerary, Aurelius Victor, Eutropius, and the writer of the *Historia Augusta*. The inscriptions, particularly for the second and third chapters, are an invaluable source. The movements of the auxiliary units are decipherable from Vespasian through Antoninus Pius primarily because of the diplomas. When we come to the reign of Marcus Aurelius, the stone inscriptions become essential, although they will play a significant role throughout the essay.²⁰ Finally, we come to the papyri, and as we might well expect with the climate that we find in the Moesias, they have not survived in any useful fashion.²¹ And so, with the aid of these varied pieces of evidence, I hope to unravel the troop movements of the Moesian legions and auxiliary units.

¹⁹ That leaves the following questions: (1) “How were they looked at from Rome?”; (2) “What clout did they have there?”; (3) “How was their uniformity maintained?”; and (4) “How did they cooperate or even communicate with each other?” On the level of the provincial armies, these questions could all form the basis of future work (although this may not be possible for every provincial army based on the number of inscriptions, papyri, and the focus of the ancient authors). However, if we look at the army as a whole, there are a few works available that address those questions. In regard to (1), and I am equating the emperor with Rome, I would direct the reader to Campbell’s (1984), *The Emperor and the Roman Army*; and for the relationship between the army and the individual soldier Stäcker’s (2003), *Principes und miles*. For a look at how the provincials regarded the army in the east, see Isaac’s (1992), *The Limits of Empire: the Roman army in the east*. In regard to (2), there is work to be done, but again Campbell’s and Stäcker’s works might be good starting points. In regard to (3), I would direct the reader to Goldsworthy’s (1996), *The Roman Army at War*; Goldsworthy’s (1997), *The Roman army as a Community* and in particular his own article, “Community under pressure: the Roman army at the siege of Jerusalem”; Lendon’s article (2004), “The Roman army now”; and Lendon’s new book (2005), *Soldiers and Ghosts*. Finally, we come to (4) and as with (2), there is work to be done, although in regard to communications I would direct the reader to Woolliscroft’s (2001), *Roman Military Signalling*.

²⁰ There is a range of inscriptions that I shall be using, particularly soldiers’ or veterans’ epitaphs, in addition to any honorary inscriptions that a soldier, or unit, may have erected.

²¹ There is one noteworthy exception: Hunt’s or the Moesian “Pridianum”.

CHAPTER 1:

THE SITUATION IN MOESIA FROM 29 BC to AD 81

AUGUSTUS:

There is some uncertainty surrounding the date when Moesia first became a province. Sometime after the campaigns of M. Licinius Crassus in 29-27 BC and the conquest of the Moesians, the *civitates* of Moesia fell under the jurisdiction of the province of Macedonia.¹ How long this situation persisted is unclear. The first imperial legate of Moesia is M. Caecina Severus, whom Dio mentions in his account of the events of AD 6 in the province.² Appian tells us that “[the Mysians] were not subject to tribute in the time of Augustus, but by Tiberius”.³ The most we can say is that Moesia became a separate *provincia*, whether it was in an administrative or military sense, sometime between the years AD 1 and 4.⁴

The earliest recorded military operation subsequent to Actium was in 29 BC, in which M. Licinius Crassus engaged the Dacians and their Bastarnae allies.⁵ Dio tells us that the Bastarnae overran part of Moesia and part of Thrace, but entered territory that belonged to the Dentheleti, a tribe who were Roman allies.⁶ Marcus Crassus was then sent to engage the Bastarnae and the Dacians in Macedonia.⁷ Mocsy posits that the Romans undertook an offensive operation by attacking the Dacians under Cotiso.⁸ As a result of his defeat, Cotiso appealed to his erstwhile allies, the Bastarnae. The Bastarnae

¹ Wilkes 1996: 993; *CIL* V.1838.

² Cass. Dio 55.29.3. Cf. Syme 1934; Wilkes 1996.

³ App. *Ill.* 30, trans. White.

⁴ Syme 1934: 131ff.

⁵ Mocsy 1974: 23.

⁶ Cass. Dio 51.23.3-4. This affair is also briefly described by Florus 2.26.

⁷ Cass. Dio 51.23.2.

⁸ Mocsy 1974: 23.

then attacked those tribes, particularly the Triballi and the Dentheleti, who wanted to rid the region of Dacian control. The Triballi too were likely allies of Rome.⁹ Crassus took on the Bastarnae, the Dacians, and the Thracians who had been Roman allies.¹⁰ They were summarily crushed; after Crassus subdued both the Thracians and the remaining Moesian rebels, order was restored.

Dio reports some problems in Macedonia and Thrace in the year 16 BC caused by the wayward Scordisci and Dentheleti, those same people who thirteen years before had appealed to Rome for assistance.¹¹ Tiberius was sent to pacify the Scordisci.

More problems plagued the region in 10 BC when the Danube froze and the Dacians crossed and plundered the neighbouring provinces. Both Dio and Augustus recorded the event, though Augustus gave it more prominence.¹² After chasing the invaders out, Augustus claims that he conquered the recalcitrant tribes. Mocsy plausibly suggests that the general in charge of this operation was M. Vinicius, who left an account of his exploits on an inscription erected in Tusculum.¹³

The next set of operations in the region occurred between 6 BC and AD 4, with the precise dates unclear. Florus, in his "*Bellum Dacicum*", remarks that the Danube froze over which allowed King Cotiso to cross and make raids upon his neighbours.¹⁴ Augustus then sent Lentulus to push them beyond the banks of the river. In addition, he also established garrisons on the nearer bank.¹⁵ Florus also discusses the "*Bellum*

⁹ Mocsy 1974: 24.

¹⁰ Cass. Dio 51.25.1-27.1.

¹¹ Cass Dio 54.20.3 ff.

¹² RG 30; Cass. Dio 54.36.2.

¹³ ILS 8695.

¹⁴ Flor. 2.28.

¹⁵ Flor. 2.28: *citra praesidia constituta*.

Sarmaticum”.¹⁶ Here “it was deemed sufficient to debar [them] from access to the Danube, and Lentulus was entrusted to this task also.”¹⁷ On the other hand, according to Ovid, at some point early in the first century the Getae took the cities of Aegyssus and Troesmis.¹⁸ Strabo briefly talks about Boerebistas, a Getan, who took control of the tribe and then became a menace to the Romans, as he would often cross the Danube and plunder Thrace, as well as Macedonia and even Illyria.¹⁹ However, before the Romans could send a punitive expedition, he was deposed and his kingdom divided. Strabo also curiously states that Augustus made an expedition against the Getae, “only recently”.²⁰ This could be the events that he described a little earlier when Aelius Catus, a consul in AD 4, transplanted from the far side of the Danube onto the Roman side nearly fifty thousand persons of the Getae. He says that these people now live in Thrace and were henceforth called Moesians.²¹ We also have a brief footnote in Tacitus’ *Annals*.²² According to Tacitus, the year AD 25 saw the end of two great nobles, including Gnaeus Lentulus, who won triumphal decorations against the Getae. We cannot date the campaigns of Lentulus and the transplantation of Getae by Aelius Catus. The most plausible scenario is that these connected events occurred between AD 1 and AD 4.²³

The years AD 6 – 9 filled the Romans with fear, as the Pannonians revolted against their rule. A large force was required to quell this disturbance. Early on in this campaign there was an incursion in Moesia and A. Caecina Severus, the first known governor of Moesia, who had been operating in Pannonia, was forced to return to deal

¹⁶ Flor. 2.29.

¹⁷ Flor. 2.29. trans. Forster.

¹⁸ Ov. *Pont.* 1.8.11-16; 4.9.79-80.

¹⁹ Strabo 7.3.11.

²⁰ Strabo 7.3.11.

²¹ Strabo 7.3.10.

²² Tac. *Ann.* 4.44.

²³ Syme 1934: 131 ff.; Cf. Mocsy 1974: 35 – 37.

with the situation. These events occurred in AD 6 and involved the Dacians and Sarmatians.²⁴

NERO:

Sometime around AD 60, or perhaps shortly thereafter, the Moesian governor Plautius Silvanus claims that he brought across the Danube more than 100,000 from the Transdanubian peoples.²⁵ This boastful inscription also describes the suppression of an insurrection of Sarmatians; positive diplomatic dealings with the Bastarnae and Rhoxolani, including the restoration of some sons of the respective kings; and the successful raising of a siege of the city of Chersonesus in the Crimea, which had been assaulted by the Scythians.

The next major incursion occurred at the beginning of the civil war. Sometime in the winter of AD 67 and AD 68, the Rhoxolani had reportedly massacred two Roman cohorts (infantry?).²⁶ By the second half of AD 68, they had again invaded Moesia with a force 9000 strong. Despite the civil war, the Romans were prepared for battle and crushed their Sarmatian adversaries. The current governor of Moesia, Marcus Aponius, was rewarded for his victory with a triumphal statue; his three legionary commanders, Fulvius Aurelius, Julianus Tettius, and Numisius Lupus, were also rewarded with “the decorations of a consul”.

²⁴ Cass. Dio 55.30.1 ff.

²⁵ *ILS* 986. Cf. Berciu 1981: 271; Conole & Milne 1983; Rice 1981: 290; Wilkes 1983: 259-260.

²⁶ Tac. *Hist.* 1.79.

THE YEAR OF THE FOUR EMPERORS AND VESPASIAN:

There was another brief episode on the lower Danube in October, or, at the very least, the autumn of AD 69.²⁷ The Dacians “stormed the winter quarters of our auxiliary infantry and cavalry and put themselves in possession of both banks of the Danube.”²⁸ The Dacians, however, were prevented from causing any further injuries through the efforts of the Sixth legion.

The last major event of significance occurred in the winter of 70 – 71, when the Sarmatians attacked. Josephus tells us that their crossing of the Danube caught the Romans unawares.²⁹ A great many of the Roman soldiers, deployed to protect against such an incursion, fell. What is more, the governor of Moesia, a certain Fonteius Agrippa who had advanced to meet them, was killed in battle. When Vespasian learned of this invasion, he sent Rubrius Gallus with reinforcements to push back the Sarmatian aggressors. He was successful and “the war in Moesia was thus speedily decided.”³⁰

Troop Movements from Augustus through Vespasian

LEGIONS:

We shall begin with the legions, and those that might plausibly have served in the campaigns of Crassus. The Fifth Macedonian legion might have earned that name from its service in Macedonia from 30 BC to AD 6.³¹ Mitchell, however, believes that the legion, led by L. Calpurnius Piso, earned the title for meritorious service during the

²⁷ Tac. *Hist.* 3.46; Filow 1963: 27.

²⁸ Tac. *Hist.* 3.46, trans. Moore.

²⁹ Joseph *BJ* 7.4.3.

³⁰ Joseph *BJ* 7.4.3, trans. Thackeray.

³¹ Parker 1958: 266; Campbell 1996a: 840; Keppie 1998: 207. Not all scholars, however, are wholly convinced that the Fifth legion spent the duration of those years in Macedonia. Both Syme (1933) and Mitchell (1976) believe that the legion may have spent an indeterminate amount of time in the East.

uprising in Thrace.³² At the same time, it seems that the Fourth Scythian legion may have earned that designation from its service in the war of M. Licinius Crassus.³³ We can then safely assume that both legions were present in the region, at this point Macedonia, with Moesia not yet a *provincia*.³⁴

Sometime between 13 and 11 BC there was an uprising in Thrace. L. Calpurnius Piso was summoned from Pamphylia to deal with this problem, which persisted for three years.³⁵ As the Fourth and Fifth legions were likely stationed in Macedonia, it is entirely possible that those two legions, or at least some part of the Macedonian army, were mobilised to deal with the threat. Piso may have been summoned to reinforce the Macedonian forces, and upon his arrival, assumed command and won the day. The problem that now arises is determining whether he (Piso) brought, and subsequently left, any part of this Anatolian force behind.³⁶

We know that in AD 23 there were two legions in Moesia, presumably the Fourth Scythian and the Fifth Macedonian.³⁷ Prior to Tacitus' digression on the disposition of the Roman armed forces, the earliest record that we have concerning the movement of any units, if not to Moesia, at least through Moesia, comes in AD 7 during the Pannonian revolt. At the time, Tiberius had been stationed on the Danube preparing for a major

³² Mitchell 1976: 307.

³³ Parker 1958: 266; Campbell 1996a: 840; Keppie 1998: 206; Speidel 2000: 327.

³⁴ According to Syme (1933), the legions in the lower Danubian region would have been under the command of the proconsul of Macedonia prior to the transformation of Moesia into a province, or at the very least, some sort of a military command.

³⁵ Vell. Pat. 2.98; Cass. Dio 54.34.5ff.

³⁶ The consensus among many scholars, including Ritterling, Filow, Syme, Szilágyi, and Parker, is that by AD 6 there were three legions in Moesia; however, while all agree that the Fourth Scythian and Fifth Macedonian legions were there at the time, uncertainty surrounds the identity of the third legion. See Ritterling 1925; Syme 1933; Szilágyi 1954; Parker 1958; Filow 1963. Parker (1958: 92) believes there were 3 or even 4 legions, while all the other scholars noted prefer a total of 3.

³⁷ Tac. *Ann.* 4.5.

assault upon the Marcomanni in Bohemia.³⁸ When news broke about the revolt of the Pannonians, and then the Dalmatians, Tiberius' attention shifted. Dio tells us that while Tiberius marched to head off some of the attackers, Caecina Severus, the Moesian governor who had already been mobilised, hurried with an indeterminate force to save Sirmium from the Breucians, a Pannonian tribe participating in the revolt.³⁹ Additionally, Velleius describes in outline detail the size of the Roman force. He says that the two consulars, Aulus Caecina (the same governor of Moesia mentioned by Dio) and Silvanus Plautius, "were bringing five of our legions, together with the troops of our allies and the cavalry of the king (for Rhoemetalcus, king of Thrace, in conjunction with the aforesaid generals was bringing with him a large body of Thracians as reinforcements for the war)".⁴⁰ The problem here is that we do not know to whom we should allocate those five legions: if we stick with two legions, then we would have the same number of legions under Caecina Severus that were left in the province as we do in AD 23. But, we do not know how many legions were deployed under Silvanus Plautius who was in Galatia prior to the Pannonian war.

During the year in which A. Caecina Severus was dispatched to Pannonia, there arose a disturbance in Moesia. He was forced to return to defend his province. Dio, who describes Severus' movement, does not provide us with the strength of the force with which he returned.⁴¹ What is more, we know from Dio that Silvanus Plautius continued on in the war, although which legions he took with him is still unclear.⁴² Syme erroneously suggests that Silvanus took with him the legions that had already been

³⁸ Vell. Pat. 2.110.

³⁹ Cass. Dio 55.30.4.

⁴⁰ Vell. Pat. 2.112.4 trans. Shipley.

⁴¹ Cass. Dio 55.30.1ff.

⁴² Cass. Dio 55.32.3

deployed in Moesia.⁴³ Using a force conditioned to Balkan warfare, such as the Moesian army, is not an unreasonable possibility. Still, given the gravity of the situation, both in Pannonia and in Moesia, we must not underestimate the importance of keeping units with the commanders with whom they were comfortable and well-acquainted. Changing the dynamic could prove disastrous, and we know that the Romans were successful in both encounters. Therefore, we must conclude that at best in AD 6, the only two legions in Moesia, which had been deployed there previously, were the Fourth Scythian and the Fifth Macedonian. However, we cannot yet rule out the possibility of another legion participating.

The Seventh legion is often considered part of the garrison of Moesia/Macedonia under Augustus; moreover, on at least five occasions the legion is found with the cognomen, *Macedonica*.⁴⁴ There are two interpretations for the origins of this title. On the one hand, this legion may have earned that name while stationed in Macedonia as did the Fifth legion.⁴⁵ In this case, it may very well have served in the campaigns of M. Licinius Crassus against the Bastarnae and Dacians in the years 29BC – 27BC. On the other hand, Mitchell posits that the legion earned this title from commendable service during the war in Thrace in which Piso participated.⁴⁶ He argues that since the Thracian war of 13-11 BC was so serious that Piso received the triumphal decorations for his victory, it would not be far fetched to imagine that the Seventh legion too earned due praise for its efforts. The problem is, if the legion had participated in that campaign and

⁴³ Syme 1933: 30-31.

⁴⁴ Ritterling 1925: 1362; Syme 1933: 31; Szilágyi: 124; Keppie 1998: 159; Laporte 2000: 560-561. The five inscriptions which bear the title *Macedonica* are: *CIL* III.7368; *CIL* X.1711, 4723, 8241; and *AE* 1938, 141.

⁴⁵ Keppie 1998: 208.

⁴⁶ Mitchell 1976: 302.

earned its title from its success, why would it have been called a Macedonian legion and not a Thracian legion? Mitchell's suggestion does not explain why we have two legions with the same cognomen only for different reasons: the Fifth for service in the province of Macedonia; the Seventh for meritorious service in combat. Therefore, the legion must have earned its title from service in Macedonia.

We now know that the Seventh legion was in Macedonia early in Augustus' reign. Three of the four inscriptions from *C.I.L.* III that name this unit, however, hail from the east, and more specifically, from Pisidian Antioch and Iconium.⁴⁷ It is probably significant that in these inscriptions the legion no longer bears the cognomen, *Macedonica*. Prior to the earning of the title *Claudia*, the legion is referred to in most inscriptions as the Seventh Legion (*VII legio*).⁴⁸ Thus, the legion seems to have shifted to the east sometime after the episode with Crassus, or perhaps following the campaign against the Thracians in 13-11 BC.⁴⁹ Mitchell, against Syme, convincingly argues that the legion was permanently stationed in Galatia, at least for a time, perhaps along with the Fifth legion prior to the Pannonian Revolt. In fact, he thinks that Macedonia was only garrisoned by one legion prior to the Pannonian Revolt. This, however, is certainly wrong. Compared with Macedonia and the later province of Moesia, Galatia and central and northern Anatolia were more peaceful during the reign of Augustus. So, it seems more likely that if there was an extra legion in one of the two provinces, that it would be in Macedonia.

⁴⁷ *CIL* III.6826, 6827; Cf. *IGRR* III.1476.

⁴⁸ *CIL* III.192, 195, 1674, 1813, 1818, 2033, 2048, 2071, 2709, 2710, 2716, 2717, 2882, 2908 (a. 18/19), 2913, 2914, 3200, 6826, 6827, 8487bis., 8488, 8493, 8544, 8687, 8723, 8763, 8767, 9711, 9712, 9733, 9734, 9736, 9737, 9738, 9741, 9742, 9832, 9864a, 9939, 9973, 12416, 12666, 12814 (teg.).

⁴⁹ Mitchell 1976: 307.

We do have at least three inscriptions that name just the title of the Seventh Legion in Moesia: one hails from Naissus in Moesia Superior, one from modern Kosovo in Moesia Inferior, and one from Cupria in Moesia Superior.⁵⁰ The first two of those inscriptions are from soldiers, and so we must at least entertain the possibility that these soldiers were based in Moesia at some point. The bulk of the remaining inscriptions listing the legion from *CIL* III in the Balkans are from Dalmatia, which is where the legion is believed to have been deployed after AD 9.⁵¹ So, we have only a little less evidence for the legion's presence in Moesia than we do for Galatia. We can probably propose a sojourn for the Seventh legion in Macedonia at some point prior to its return under Nero, but we cannot say the exact dates when that may have been.⁵²

There are two other legions that Syme suggested might have been stationed in Moesia at some point under Augustus, namely the Eighth Augustan legion and the Eleventh legion.⁵³ However, unlike the other three legions, the Fourth Scythian, Fifth Macedonian, and Seventh legion, we have no evidence that either of those legions were based in Macedonia. We cannot make any inferences from their nomenclature as we can with the other three; in fact, there are no inscriptions for the Eleventh legion in Moesia without the epithet *Claudia*.⁵⁴ As a result of this, we are again left with the Seventh legion as the only other possible third legion in the region. Thus, the following is the most probable reconstruction. The Fourth Scythian legion and Fifth Macedonian legion were stationed in Macedonia following the civil war between Antony and Octavian and

⁵⁰ *CIL* III.1674, 12416, 12666.

⁵¹ Ritterling 1925: 1363; Szilágyi 1954: 141; Parker 1958: 119; Laporte 2000: 561.

⁵² For its later "return" to Moesia, see below.

⁵³ Syme 1933: 31.

⁵⁴ As with the Seventh legion, the Eleventh legion also was bestowed with the epithet *Claudia* subsequent to the revolt of Scribonianus in AD 42.

participated in the war of M. Licinius Crassus. What is more, the Fourth legion likely earned the title *Scythica* as a result of its exploits in that war. The Seventh legion also seems to have participated in that war; at the very least, it was in Macedonia at the time, where it earned the epithet *Macedonica*.⁵⁵ Following this war against the Bastarnae and Dacians, the Fourth and Fifth remained, while the Seventh was transferred to Galatia where it stayed until the war of L. Calpurnius Piso. While in Galatia it dropped the title *Macedonica*. Following the Thracian uprising of 13-11 BC, it likely remained in Macedonia, only stationed to the north, where it stayed until Silvanus Plautius arrived with two more legions from the east.

Around the conclusion of the Pannonian Revolt, Varus' three legions were massacred north of the Teutoburg Forest in AD 9. With the subsequent gaps in the German Army, units were shifted from elsewhere, notably Spain and the Upper Danube. To compensate, the Seventh legion moved to Dalmatia either initially with the arrival of Silvanus' reinforcements, or, the legion did stick with Severus, with whom it remained until the military reorganisation following the Teutoburg disaster.

There seems to have been some movement of troops into Moesia during the reign of Claudius. As late as AD 43 the two legions in Moesia were still the Fourth Scythian and Fifth Macedonian;⁵⁶ by AD 46, it seems that the Eighth Augustan legion had been transferred from Illyricum before moving to Novae.⁵⁷ This is based on an inscription from Castulo in Spain that names a Quintus Cornelius Valerianus who was a prefect of a

⁵⁵ In this case it received the title for serving in Macedonia, not for an excellent performance in the war.

⁵⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 4.5.

⁵⁷ *CIL* XI.1835; Ritterling 1925: 1363; Parker 1958: 132; Filow 1963: 10; Mocsy 1974: 48; Reddé 2000: 121.

vexillation composed of the Fifth Macedonian and Eighth Augustan legions.⁵⁸ Reddé argues that the legion arrived in Moesia the previous year, AD 45, for the campaign of Didius Gallus against Mithridates, the king of the Bosporan kingdom.⁵⁹ Parker suggests that it may have come in AD 44.⁶⁰ The truth is, we cannot be certain. The book in Tacitus' *Annals* that would have described the events is lost. Instead we have a passing reference to a campaign of Gallus from the later uprising involving Mithridates. Tacitus tells us that Didius Gallus had left with the strength or main body of the army (*roburque exercitus*), but left behind a few cohorts under the Roman knight Julius Aquila.⁶¹ We do not know the exact makeup of the Roman force, but it may have been composed largely of legionary vexillations and auxiliaries, if the inscription naming the three legions and the references in Tacitus are an indication.⁶²

The next major movement of legions in Moesia comes from sometime around AD 56-58.⁶³ During Corbulo's campaigns in the east, Tacitus tells us that "a legion from Germany was added with the cavalry wings and infantry cohorts."⁶⁴ The problem with Tacitus' statement is that there seems to be no evidence of any legion leaving Germany for the east around this time. Yet, the Fourth Scythian legion had shown up in the east with Corbulo by AD 62 and was never attested in Germany.⁶⁵ Thus, the Fourth Scythian

⁵⁸ *CIL* II.3272.

⁵⁹ Reddé 2000: 121.

⁶⁰ Parker 1958: 132.

⁶¹ Tac. *Ann.* 12.15.

⁶² *CIL* II.3272; Tac. *Ann.* 12.16.

⁶³ Most scholars date the changes to AD 58, but Speidel (2000: 329) suggests that they may have taken place in AD 56 or 57.

⁶⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 13.35.

⁶⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 15.6.

legion is the one referred to in Tacitus and from this time onward was stationed in Syria.⁶⁶

Around the time of the departure of the Scythian legion, the Fifth Macedonian legion also departed the province. In those same campaigns against Vologeses in the east, Corbulo had been compelled to summon further reinforcements, and in particular the Fifth Macedonian legion.⁶⁷ We do not know whether the legion departed for the east at the same time as the Fourth legion, or only a short time later; however, the career inscription of Ti. Plautius Silvanus provides us with a clue.⁶⁸ In that inscription it says he had achieved success against the Sarmatians, “although he had sent a great part of his army for the expedition in Armenia.” We already know that by AD 46 there were three legions in the Moesian army. The question is whether Silvanus would have considered the loss of only one legion, from a force of three legions and several auxiliary units, a great part of his army. True, it would be unwise to take the boastful inscription at face-value, as the 100,000 transplanted transdanubian peoples is surely an exaggeration. Yet, Silvanus could still aggrandise his exploits with minimal “artistic license” by mentioning the great troop transfer, which likely included the movement of both the Fourth and Fifth legions, but omitting the subsequent arrival of another legion in compensation. Thus, halfway through Nero’s reign, the two stalwarts of the Moesian army, the Fourth and Fifth legions, had left.

To compensate for the loss of the two legions, some other legions were transferred to the province. We saw above that around AD 45 or 46, the Eighth Augustan Legion was transferred to Moesia. The other legion which eventually saw service in

⁶⁶ Speidel 2000: 329.

⁶⁷ Tac. *Ann.* 15.6.

⁶⁸ *ILS* 986.

Moesia was the Seventh Claudian legion. It was transferred from Dalmatia sometime between AD 42 and 62.⁶⁹ We know that the Seventh and Eleventh legions were in Dalmatia in AD 42. Dio tells us that the legions received the titles “Claudian” and “Loyal and Faithful” following their loyalty in the revolt of Marcus Furius Camillus Scribonianus.⁷⁰ By now we know that there would have been three legions prior to the departure of the Fourth and Fifth, with arrival of the Eighth a few years earlier; moreover, given the increased activity on the lower Danube, it is rather unlikely that Moesia would have been left with only one legion for too long. Thus, the Seventh Claudian legion probably arrived sometime between the years of AD 57 and 59, just before or after the departure of the two legions for the east.

The next major period of change on the Moesian front was the end of Nero’s reign and the civil war of AD 68-69. In a speech manufactured by Josephus, M. Julius Agrippa II says that the neighbours of Thrace, the Illyrians, are “kept in check by no more than two legions”.⁷¹ By Illyria, Agrippa, or rather Josephus, surely means Moesia, as it was held by two legions at this point: the Seventh Claudian legion and the Eighth Augustan legion.⁷² Furthermore, Josephus says that the Illyrians inhabit the land between Dalmatia and the Danube. He also says these two legions are used to repel incursions of Dacians. The Dacians did not dwell in that part of the Danube opposite to Pannonia. Instead they inhabited the land opposite to Moesia. According to Tacitus, by the first half of AD 69, most likely by the last month or two of spring, the Third Gallic legion was

⁶⁹ Laporte 2000: 561.

⁷⁰ Cass. Dio 60.15.4.

⁷¹ Joseph *BJ* 2.16.4, trans. Thackeray.

⁷² See Filow (1963: 22-23) and Thackeray (1997: 467 n. h) in the Loeb version of Josephus’ “Jewish War”.

stationed in Moesia.⁷³ Moreover, Suetonius tells us that there were detachments from the three legions in the army that had been sent to help Otho, presumably early in AD 69.⁷⁴ Thus, the legion was transferred sometime between AD 66 and 69. In fact, the legion was transferred before the death of Nero.⁷⁵ This probably took place in the first half of AD 68, and perhaps - in light of the revolt of Vindex - in March of that year.

During the civil war, the Moesian legions, and perhaps by proxy the auxiliaries too, declared their allegiance to Otho.⁷⁶ We saw above that Tacitus reported a force of only 9,000 for the invasion of the Rhoxolani that year. These Sarmatians had apparently felt that a force that size was sufficient because of the Roman pre-occupation with the civil war. Thus, we must wonder whether Roman forces had already moved to the Italian theatre. We know that early in AD 69, Otho's force had included the armies of Dalmatia and Pannonia.⁷⁷ We also hear in a speech credited by Tacitus to Suetonius Paulinus for Otho that the troops from Moesia were on their way to Italy; however, they were not marching together as we later find out that the advanced forces had reached Otho while the rest of the army was only in Aquileia.⁷⁸ If we accept that many of the auxiliary troops would be more lightly armed than their legionary counterparts, this advanced force might be a contingent of auxiliaries.⁷⁹ Of course, we cannot verify this, though we know that at least two cavalry units were involved.⁸⁰

Later, perhaps in the spring or summer of AD 69 and after the death of Otho, all three Moesian legions were in Cisalpine Gaul trying to persuade their Pannonian and

⁷³ Tac. *Hist.* 2.74.

⁷⁴ Suet. *Vesp.* 6.

⁷⁵ Suet. *Vesp.* 6.

⁷⁶ Tac. *Hist.* 1.76.

⁷⁷ Tac. *Hist.* 2.11.

⁷⁸ Tac. *Hist.* 2.32, 2.46.

⁷⁹ Tac. *Hist.* 3.18.

⁸⁰ Tac. *Hist.* 3.2.

Dalmatian counterparts to jump to Vespasian's side.⁸¹ It seems though that this did not represent the entire Moesian force because later Vespasian summoned Aponius Saturninus with the rest of the Moesian army.⁸² We do learn that when Saturninus arrived in Italy, he was in command of the Seventh legion.⁸³ The Moesian garrison included some auxiliary units because when the Dacians attacked in the autumn of AD 69, it was auxiliary units alone that were attacked. Furthermore, we do not hear of an attack on the former garrison of Moesia, which included the Third Gallic, the Seventh Claudian, and the Eighth Augustan legions.⁸⁴ Instead, it was the Sixth legion that proved to be Moesia's salvation. Thus, Saturninus had probably left by the autumn of AD 69 prior to the attack of the Dacians.

Despite the absence of the Moesian garrison for the civil war, we know that the province was supplemented by reinforcements from the east. While in Berytus campaigning during the Jewish War, Vespasian sent ahead an advance force under Mucianus to Italy.⁸⁵ This force included the *legio VI Ferrata* and a vexillation 13,000 strong which was composed of infantry and cavalry soldiers.⁸⁶ Licinius Mucianus' layover in Moesia was brief: he was there long enough to repel the Dacians who had attacked in the absence of the regular Moesian legions. Following the battle of Bedriacum, Agrippa was sent as governor. It is then that Mucianus likely left. Moesia, however, was not abandoned as additional troops from the army of Vitellius were sent.⁸⁷ This included

⁸¹ Tac. *Hist.* 2.85-86.

⁸² Tac. *Hist.* 3.5.

⁸³ Tac. *Hist.* 3.9; Filow 1963: 24, 25.

⁸⁴ Tac. *Hist.* 3.46.

⁸⁵ Joseph. *BJ.* 4.11.1, 5.1.6.

⁸⁶ Joseph. *BJ.* 4.11.1; Tac. *Hist.* 2.83; Filow 1963: 26.

⁸⁷ Tac. *Hist.* 3.46.

the *legio I Italica* and the *V Alaudae*.⁸⁸ When these legions were sent to Moesia is open to debate: following the defeat of the Vitellians in the Battle of Cremona the defeated legions were dispersed through Illyricum.⁸⁹ Tacitus does not specify whether these troops arrived prior to or after the campaigns against the Dacians. These legions may have been sent to Illyricum before being sent to Moesia, and at the same time as Fonteius Agrippa's transfer to Moesia from Asia.⁹⁰

The following winter the Sarmatians attacked.⁹¹ Not long after that Josephus tells us that Titus, who had remained in the east to tackle the Jewish Revolt while his father headed to Italy for the civil war, dismissed the Fifth legion to its former station of Moesia.⁹² The Seventh legion was sent to Moesia as well, possibly in light of the defeat and death of Fonteius Agrippa in AD 70 and Vespasian's attempts to shore up the Danubian frontier.⁹³ Originally, scholarly opinion had tended toward the belief that the *V Alaudae* survived through the reign of Vespasian to the Dacian incursions of AD 85 and AD 86.⁹⁴ The Adamklissi monument was considered a tribute to the fallen soldiers of that legion with the death of either Oppius Sabinus, or Cornelius Fuscus. However, it is now clear that the Adamklissi monument dates to some time during Trajan's Dacian wars, and that the *V Alaudae* did not last beyond AD 71 at the latest.⁹⁵ Franke has convincingly argued that the legion was heavily depleted following the death of Fonteius Agrippa in

⁸⁸ Parker 1958: 148; Absil 2000: 227-228; Franke 2000: 43-46.

⁸⁹ Tac. *Hist.* 3.35.

⁹⁰ Ritterling 1925: 1409, 1410, 1569; Parker 1958: 142; Filow 1963: 27; Absil 2000: 229.

⁹¹ This was in AD 70 or AD 71.

⁹² Joseph. *B.J.* 7.5.3.

⁹³ Joseph. *B.J.* 7.4.3; Ritterling 1925: 1620; Szilágyi 1954: 163; Parker 1958: 144; Filow 1963: 29ff.

⁹⁴ For example, see Rossi (1971: 22) and Mocsy (1974: 82).

⁹⁵ Campbell (1996a: 840) alluded to the possibility that the legion may not have survived too long beyond the civil war.

AD 70; as a result, the surviving soldiers were re-distributed.⁹⁶ Thus, by AD 71 and through to AD 81, the legions stationed in Moesia were the *I Italica*, *V Macedonica*, and *VII Claudia*.⁹⁷

AUXILIA:

The evidence for the *auxilia* before the use of diplomas is problematic and so the best that we can do is make some general comments. In the first decade of the first century AD, between the years AD 1 and AD 6, there were at least four *alae* operating in Macedonia/Moesia.⁹⁸ These *alae* were the *ala Aetorigiana*, *Mauretana*, *Thracum Herculiana*, and the *Scubulorum*. The last of those four *alae*, the *ala Scubulorum*, was transferred to Britain for the invasion of Claudius.⁹⁹ We also know that an *ala Bosporanum* was transferred from Moesia to Syria sometime between the reigns of Tiberius and Nero.¹⁰⁰ Knight composed a list of auxiliary units moved to the Rhine after the Batavian revolt.¹⁰¹ He suggested that some of these units might have been in Moesia before the civil war. The list included the *ala Sulpicia*, *ala Moesica*, *ala Afrorum veterana*, and the *cohors II Varcianorum*.¹⁰² The respective inscriptions do indeed suggest that the Sulpician, African, and Varcianorian units were in Moesia prior to the ascension of Vespasian. As regards the Moesian unit, the nomenclature does suggest that it may have been in the province of its origin, at least at first. The Thracian uprising in

⁹⁶ Franke 2000: 44-45.

⁹⁷ Cf. Wilkes 1983: 265-266; Strobel 1989: 38.

⁹⁸ Spaul 1994: 261.

⁹⁹ Spaul 1994: 38.

¹⁰⁰ *AE* 1925, 70; *AE* 1969/1970, 649; Cf. Knight 1991: 193.

¹⁰¹ Knight 1991: 194.

¹⁰² Knight (1991: 194) believes that the *ala Sulpicia* might have been in Moesia based on two inscriptions: *CIL* XIII.8311, 8312; that the *ala Moesica* may have been in Moesia based on its title; that the *ala Afrorum veterana* might have been in Moesia based on three inscriptions from *CIL* XIII: 8304, 8305, and 6223; and that the *cohors II Varcianorum* might have been in Moesia based on *CIL* XIII.7382.

AD 26 and Batavian revolt of AD 70 both suggest that auxiliary units were at first stationed close to their homeland. In fact, Tacitus tells us that the reason for the revolt in AD 26 was the displeasure of the auxiliary units from Thrace, who believed that they were to be mixed with other tribesmen, sent to foreign lands, and led by Romans as opposed to their own chieftains.¹⁰³ Assuming that the normal practice demonstrated by these two uprisings was to station auxiliaries close to their recruiting area, we might also conjecture that the *ala Moesica* was posted in Moesia prior to its transfer.

Staying with the Thracian war of AD 26, we can find more possible evidence of the Tiberian troop disposition. Tacitus tells us that Poppaeus Sabinus, imperial legate of Moesia, talked to the tribesmen to try and assuage their fears, and to delay any further eruptions of violence prior to the arrival of reinforcements from Moesia.¹⁰⁴ Pomponius Labeo arrived with an unknown legion, and King Rhoemetalces also arrived with auxiliaries.¹⁰⁵ These reinforcements were added to Sabinus' forces, which included some auxiliary units. Tacitus mentions a select group of archers (*delectos sagittariorum*) and a cohort of Sugambrians.¹⁰⁶ We can assume that these Sugambrians were part of the Moesian force, and that they were an auxiliary cohort and not a cavalry wing because there was a *cohors I Sugambrorum veterana* in Moesia in AD 75.¹⁰⁷ The epithet *veterana* suggests that the unit had been in Moesia for a while; this unit had some seniority over the other cohorts in the province. That epithet also enables us to identify Tacitus' cohort of Sugambrians with the *cohors I Sugambrorum veterana*, and not the *cohors I Sugambrorum tironum*, which was in Moesia Inferior from at least Vespasian to

¹⁰³ Tac. Ann. 4.46-47.

¹⁰⁴ Tac. Ann. 4.46.

¹⁰⁵ We do not which legion and Tacitus provides us with no clue.

¹⁰⁶ Tac. Ann. 4.47.

¹⁰⁷ RMD 2.

Trajan.¹⁰⁸ Now, as regards the group of archers, there was a *cohors II Chalcidenorum sagittaria* in Moesia Inferior by AD 99.¹⁰⁹ Spaul suggests that this unit might have been raised before the Flavian dynasty from Lebanon.¹¹⁰ But, we have no evidence for its presence in Moesia prior to AD 99. There is yet another cohort that might be equated with these Tacitean archers, namely the *cohors I Cilicum sagittaria* in Moesia in AD 78.¹¹¹ Wagner suggests that the unit was in Moesia by the reign of Claudius.¹¹² Interestingly, there is an inscription from Uxama in Spain that lists a certain M. Magius Antiquus who was both prefect of the *cohors Cilicum*, and military tribune of the *legio III Scythica*.¹¹³ This inscription dates to Augustus and from that, and the reference to the Scythian legion, we can infer that the Cilician cohort was indeed in Moesia, or, rather, at this point Macedonia, during the reign of Augustus.¹¹⁴ Thus, we can probably argue that the archers referred to by Tacitus are none other than those hailing from this Cilician cohort.

We do have a handful of inscriptions that list auxiliary units that were stationed in Moesia in the first century. We hear of an *ala Asturum* in an inscription that probably dates to the reigns of Claudius or Nero.¹¹⁵ The cohort of Cretans also seems to have been stationed in Moesia, and more specifically at Naissus, during the first century.¹¹⁶ At the very least it was in Upper Moesia by AD 94.¹¹⁷ When it arrived in Moesia is unclear. There is a veteran of the cohort of Lusitanians who was interred at Tomis, possibly

¹⁰⁸ For a more detailed discussion of the *cohors I Sugambrorum tironum* see below.

¹⁰⁹ *CIL* XVI.45.

¹¹⁰ Spaul 2000: 429.

¹¹¹ *CIL* XVI.22; *RMD* 209.

¹¹² Wagner 1938: 119. Kraft (1951: 173) believes that it made its appearance in Moesia in AD 78.

¹¹³ *ILS* 8968.

¹¹⁴ Devijver 1987: 178.

¹¹⁵ *AE* 1988, 988.

¹¹⁶ *AE* 1964, 262.

¹¹⁷ *CIL* XVI.39.

during the reign of Nero.¹¹⁸ Coincidentally, in an Illyrian diploma of AD 60 there is a *cohors I Lusitanorum* listed.¹¹⁹ There is also a *cohors I Lusitanorum* stationed in Moesia in AD 75, which Spaul argues is the same unit.¹²⁰ Thus, we might suggest that sometime before the civil war, if not shortly thereafter, this unit was transferred to Moesia from Illyria. We also have an inscription from Timacum Minus in Moesia for a certain L. Vecilius Modestus, who was prefect of the *cohors Thracum Syriaca*.¹²¹ This inscription can probably be dated to sometime between AD 50 and AD 68.¹²² One further auxiliary unit to document for the Julio-Claudian period is the *cohors I Cisipadensium*. This unit seems to have served with the Fourth Scythian legion in Moesia under Tiberius.¹²³

A certain *cohors I Montanorum* may also have been in Moesia during the reigns of Claudius and Nero. Wagner, Kraft, and Szilágyi, suggest that the cohort was in Moesia briefly during that period, though it may have originated in Noricum.¹²⁴ Wagner's and Szilágyi's suggestion is based on a funerary inscription found at Timacum Minus.¹²⁵ Wilkes believed that this unit was part of the early Julio-Claudian army in Dalmatia, which later moved to Moesia under Claudius.¹²⁶ The problem here is that Wagner and Szilágyi seem to be referring to a different unit than Wilkes. All that we can

¹¹⁸ *AE* 1957, 189.

¹¹⁹ *CIL* XVI.4.

¹²⁰ *RMD* 2.

¹²¹ *CIL*. III.8261.

¹²² Spaul (2000: 366) points out that evidence for this unit in Syria after AD 70 is lacking, which suggests that it was Moesia before that time; moreover, this unit was at Timacum Minus by the reign of Vespasian, as another inscription (*CIL* III.14375) proves.

¹²³ Wagner 1938: 121; 464; Kraft 1951: 173; Roxan and Weiß 1998: 371-420; Spaul 2000: 464.

¹²⁴ Wagner 1938: 170; Kraft 1951: 181; Szilágyi 1954: 152.

¹²⁵ *RA* 1903, 289.

¹²⁶ Wilkes 1969: 473. This move seems likely as the Seventh Claudian Legion moved from Dalmatia to Moesia some time after AD 42.

conclude then is that one cohort of Montani was possibly in Moesia briefly and perhaps in between its postings in Dalmatia and Pannonia.¹²⁷

Our first Moesian diploma is dated to April 28, AD 75.¹²⁸ It lists the following ten cohorts: *I Antiochensium*, *I Sugambrorum veterana*, *I Raetorum*, *I Lusitanorum*, the *III*, *IV*, *V*, *VII*, and *VIII Gallorum*, and the *Cisipadensium*. We saw earlier that the *cohors I Sugambrorum veterana* was in Moesia. This diploma also lists a considerable number of Gallic units. It seems that the Third cohort of Gauls might have been transferred to Moesia sometime in the second half of AD 74, as it is listed in a German diploma dated to May 21st of that year; but, it is absent from the next two German diplomas.¹²⁹ The Fourth cohort of Gauls also seems to have arrived sometime before AD 75, and it would not be unreasonable to suggest that it came to Moesia with the Third cohort, though not necessarily from the same place.¹³⁰ The same is probably true for the Fifth, Seventh, and Eighth units. The unit of *Cisipadenses* seems to have been stationed in Moesia since the reign of Tiberius; it remained in Moesia until the death of Domitian.¹³¹ As noted above, the *cohors I Lusitanorum* had been in Moesia since the latter half of Nero's reign. The First cohort of Raetians might have been transferred to the Danube with Licinius Mucianus.

¹²⁷ *CIL* XVI.26 (Dalmatia); *CIL* XVI.31 (Pannonia Inferior). Even though a cohort of Montani is listed on both diplomas that might be considered one and the same unit, Spaul (2000: 292-294) believes that they are in fact different units. Wagner (1938: 168-171), moreover, also distinguished between the two units, describing, as did Spaul both a *cohors I Montanorum*, and a *I Montanorum civium Romanorum*.

¹²⁸ *RMD* 2.

¹²⁹ *CIL* XVI.20. It is absent from *CIL* XVI.36, which dates to AD 90 and is from Upper Germany. It is also absent from the next diploma from Lower Germany – *RMD* 52. Of course, these two diplomas come from quite a bit later and the diploma from Lower Germany dates to AD 158. Still, there is no reason to suspect that we simply lack the evidence to prove its existence in Germany sometime earlier than AD 158, but later than May 21, AD 74.

¹³⁰ See Spaul 2000: 164-165.

¹³¹ Wagner 1938: 121; Roxan and Weiß 1998: 371-420; Spaul 2000: 464.

We have two diplomas from Moesia for AD 78, which again only list cohorts.¹³² These diplomas only enumerate two of the auxiliary units from the earlier diploma, namely the Third and Eighth Gallic cohorts. We already know that the *cohors Cilicum* was in the province. There is no evidence for the *I Cantabrorum* and the *II Lucensium* before these diplomas. Thus, they may very well have been moved to Moesia under Vespasian after they were raised in Spain.¹³³ Another cohort mentioned is the *cohors I Thracum Syriaca*. There seems to be little evidence for this unit in Syria after AD 70 and so it was probably transferred to Moesia early in the reign of Vespasian. It may have come with Licinius Mucianus towards the end of the civil war with the *legio VI Ferrata*.¹³⁴ Finally, this brings us to the *cohors I Sugambrorum tironum*. This is a distinct unit from the *cohors I Sugambrorum veterana*, as both the name *veterana* from the other cohort and a later diploma prove.¹³⁵ Based on the title *tironum*, this unit probably came to Moesia after the veteran cohort of Sugambrians, and before AD 75 if an earlier diploma from Moesia is any indication.¹³⁶

There is another unit listed in both diplomas which we have not yet discussed: the *cohors Mattiacorum*. The only reason why this is significant is that Spaul only records the existence of one of these units, that being the *cohors II Mattiacorum*.¹³⁷ There is no evidence, however, that this is the case here. Upon inspection of *tabella* I for RMD 209, at least in the photograph provided on page 404, there is no room for the insertion of a “II” before the “*Mattiacorum*” in the unit’s name.¹³⁸ The numbers are

¹³² *CIL* XVI.22; RMD 208.

¹³³ Spaul 2000: 69-71.

¹³⁴ Mocsy 1974: 81; Spaul 2000: 366.

¹³⁵ RMD 222.

¹³⁶ RMD 2. The diploma names the *cohors I Sugambrorum veterana*.

¹³⁷ Spaul 2000: 243-244.

¹³⁸ Roxan and Holder 2003: 404.

clearly reproduced and visible for other units, such as the *I Sugambrorum* and the *III Gallorum*.¹³⁹ Moreover, *RMD* 208 was restored to correspond with *CIL* XVI.22.¹⁴⁰ Although *CIL* XVI does not provide a photograph of number 22, there again seems to be no indication that the “II” was intentionally omitted. The lack of a number associated with the unit name on an official document such as this suggests that this might have been the only such unit at this time.¹⁴¹ Spaul, however, claims that “many units use two forms, one a simple ethnic name without numeral, and the other with numeral.”¹⁴² No distinction is made, however, between different types of documents in his statement. As both documents listed here are diplomas, that is, official documents, and ones that would be of fundamental importance to their owners, we must question why the lapicide would be allowed to miss what is presumably an important part of a unit’s name. Thus, we must leave open the possibility that there were in fact two units. Both Wagner and Kraft distinguished between the *cohors Mattiacorum* and the *cohors II Mattiacorum*.¹⁴³ Wagner even refers to two inscriptions that list respectively, a L. Spurennius Rufus *bucinator ch(o)r(tis) Mattiacorum*,¹⁴⁴ and a L. Clodius Ingenuus *praef(ectus) coh(ortis) Mattiacor(um)*;¹⁴⁵ however, he does raise the possibility that the *cohors Mattiacorum* developed into the *cohors II Mattiacorum*. The next two diplomas, from Moesia Inferior, that list a unit of Mattiaci date to August 14, AD 99.¹⁴⁶ They list a *cohors II Mattiacorum*. Although this may only be a mistake on the part of the lapicide, it might not be unreasonable to suppose that the original unit, the *cohors Mattiacorum*, was

¹³⁹ Roxan and Holder 2003: 404.

¹⁴⁰ Roxan and Holder 2003: 405 n. 4.

¹⁴¹ Devijver 1987: 178.

¹⁴² Spaul 2000: 244.

¹⁴³ Wagner 1938: 164-165; Kraft 1951: 180.

¹⁴⁴ *CIL* III.12437.

¹⁴⁵ *CIL* VI.37247.

¹⁴⁶ *CIL* XVI.44, and 45.

destroyed when either Oppius Sabinus or Cornelius Fuscus suffered serious defeats, likely in the years AD 85-86. Thus, the *cohors II Mattiacorum* may be the creation of a levy subsequent to the destruction of the original unit of Mattiaci.

Finally, we have the respective *alae* units, for which we have little evidence. It is more than likely that the three of the four *alae* mentioned above, namely the *I Asturum*, *Herculiana*, and the *Atectorigiana* remained posted in Moesia in the interim.¹⁴⁷ We do have one Moesian diploma, dated to AD 75 or 78, which may have listed the following three unattested units: the *ala I Gallorum*, the *ala Gallorum Flaviana*, and the *ala I Vespasiana Dardanorum*.¹⁴⁸ The *ala Claudia nova*, listed on a German diploma dated to September 20, AD 82, also seems to have been transferred to the province sometime under Vespasian.¹⁴⁹ This cavalry unit was in Germany on May 21, AD 74, and so was transferred to Moesia sometime in between. Perhaps it was transferred with the Gallic cohorts in the second half of AD 74, or early in AD 75.¹⁵⁰

Troop Emplacement from Augustus through Titus¹⁵¹

LEGIONS:

In the early history of Moesia the *legio V Macedonica* was stationed, at least from the reign of Tiberius, at Oescus.¹⁵² Although we do not know when the legion was moved to Oescus on the Danube, Florus states that Lentulus created garrison posts on the

¹⁴⁷ All three are recorded in later diplomas.

¹⁴⁸ *RMD* 209.

¹⁴⁹ *CIL* XVI.28. This diploma also names the Third cohort of Gauls.

¹⁵⁰ *CIL* XVI.20.

¹⁵¹ All place names cited are ancient names unless otherwise specified.

¹⁵² Mocsy 1974: 43. Gerov 1980: 2ff, 149ff.

near bank of the river.¹⁵³ Thus, we would probably not be wrong to associate those garrison posts with the creation of a new legionary camp at Oescus for the Fifth Macedonian legion, as Mocsy does.¹⁵⁴

Trying to track down the base of the *legio III Scythica* is even more problematic. Mocsy suggests that it may have been based close to Macedonia at Scupi, or even Naissus.¹⁵⁵ M. A. Speidel's recent history of the unit does not even suggest the possible Moesian headquarters for the unit. Regardless, he readily admits that we know little more concerning the early history of the legion than Ritterling did.¹⁵⁶ The unit was involved in road construction between Ratiaria and Viminacium in AD 33/34, but so was the Fifth Macedonian legion.¹⁵⁷ Gospodin Vir, the modern location of the roadwork is a considerable distance from Oescus; thus, if the *legio V Macedonica* traveled a considerable distance to participate, it would not be unreasonable to assume the same from the *legio III Scythica*. This need not mean that the legion was stationed in Viminacium or Ratiaria, or even near by.¹⁵⁸ We should leave the question of the legion's location unanswered.

When the *legio VIII Augusta* arrived in Moesia, it was stationed at Novae.¹⁵⁹ Traces of a Julio-Claudian camp have been found at the site. We also have one inscription that attests its presence in the region between the years AD 45 and AD 69.¹⁶⁰ The legion does not seem to have changed its base while in Moesia. The Seventh

¹⁵³ Flor. 2.28: *citra praesidia constituta*.

¹⁵⁴ Mocsy 1974: 43.

¹⁵⁵ Mocsy 1974: 44.

¹⁵⁶ Speidel 2000: 327.

¹⁵⁷ *CIL* III.1698.

¹⁵⁸ Parker 1958: 126.

¹⁵⁹ Reddé 2000: 121; Karavas 2001: 132.

¹⁶⁰ *ILBulg* 300.

Claudian legion garrisoned Viminacium upon its arrival in the province between AD 57 and AD 59.¹⁶¹

The *legio III Gallica* was in Moesia too briefly for us to try and determine its location; regardless, given that short stay, if anything it would most likely have shared the accommodations of another legion. Similarly, the *legio V Alaudae* was also in Moesia briefly; again, we do not know where it stayed. When the Fifth Macedonian legion was transferred back to Moesia around AD 71, it returned to Oescus where it stayed until some point before or after Trajan's two Dacian wars.¹⁶² The last legion left to mention is the First Italian legion. It was based in Novae when it arrived in Moesia, and remained there through the second century.¹⁶³

AUXILIA:

Mocsy says that the pre-Flavian tombstones of auxiliaries that we have in Moesia have only been found at Naissus and perhaps Ratiaria.¹⁶⁴ Yet, Mocsy also acknowledges the presence of auxiliary units around the base of the *legio V Macedonica* at Oescus.¹⁶⁵ He also says that auxiliary units were likely stationed on the road through the Morava river valley in pre-Flavian times.¹⁶⁶ The same seems to be true for the Timok river valley. There is evidence of a pre-Flavian fort at Timacum Minus.¹⁶⁷ Mocsy tells us that

¹⁶¹ Mirković 1986: 36; Campbell 1996a: 841; Strobel 2000: 528.

¹⁶² Campbell 1996a: 840; Zahariade and Gudea 1997: 44.

¹⁶³ See Filow (1963: 63), Campbell (1996: 839), Zahariade and Gudea (1997: 43-45), and Absil (2000: 228-232).

¹⁶⁴ Mocsy 1974: 43-44.

¹⁶⁵ Mocsy 1974: 43. Cf. Gerov 1980: 149ff. This is based on the presence of tombstones from some soldiers.

¹⁶⁶ Mocsy 1974: 51. Pre-Flavian tombstones have been found around Naissus and Ratiaria.

¹⁶⁷ *CIL* III.8261; Cf. Mocsy 1974: 51.

there was a fort at Taliata in Moesia Superior during the early years of Vespasian.¹⁶⁸ An auxiliary unit would have garrisoned such a fort.

Spaul makes some attempt to identify some of the pre-Flavian garrisons, but identifying forts - and auxiliary forts more so than legionary forts - based on inscriptions is problematic.¹⁶⁹ Still, such an exercise is not without its merits, given the lack of material evidence. Beginning with the cavalry wings, the *ala Dardanorum* unit might have been based at Troesmis,¹⁷⁰ or it may have been at Arrubium.¹⁷¹ There is sparse evidence for the *ala Scubulorum* at the modern Nikopol, which is where it may have been from the reign of Tiberius.¹⁷² The *ala Claudia Nova* may have been based at, or at least close to Ratiaria.¹⁷³ The *ala I Asturum* may have been stationed at Tomis; the *ala I Asturum* may also have been based at modern Sofia.¹⁷⁴ The *ala Aetorigiana* may have been stationed at the modern town of Rjahova.¹⁷⁵ Finally, the *ala Bosporanorum* may have been at Securisca.¹⁷⁶

Moving on to the cohorts, the *cohors Mattiacorum* might have served at Sexaginta Prista in the early Flavian period.¹⁷⁷ The *cohors I Cisipadensium* was probably

¹⁶⁸ Mocsy 1974: 81.

¹⁶⁹ Spaul (1994: 11) claims that the findspot of an official inscription indicates that the particular unit listed was stationed there at that time. However, while this is likely true in most cases, there were exceptions such as when a unit may have been in a region aiding another unit in building construction.

¹⁷⁰ Spaul 1994: 324. Cf. *CIL* III.7504, which is a funerary stone with an invocation.

¹⁷¹ Spaul 1994: 325. Cf. *CIL* III.7512, which is a building inscription.

¹⁷² Spaul 1994: 325. Cf. Gerov 1980: 155-163; and *AE* 1967, 426 which is a funerary stone with an invocation.

¹⁷³ Spaul 1994: 90. Cf. *CIL* III.14500. The funerary stone does not prove the presence of the unit at this later colony; but there is a possibility, however remote, that a fort was attached to the colony.

¹⁷⁴ Spaul 1994: 37, 326.

¹⁷⁵ Spaul 1994: 326. Cf. *CIL* III.12452, which is a funerary stone with an invocation.

¹⁷⁶ Gerov 1980: 163; Spaul 1994: 326; Karavas 2001: 134. Karavas noted that there was epigraphic evidence discovered at the site during excavations. Cf. *AE* 1925, 70, which is a funerary stone with an invocation.

¹⁷⁷ Spaul 2000: 244; Karavas 2001: 131. Cf. *AE* 1957, 307, which is a dedicatory stone (to Vespasian).

stationed at modern Lomec.¹⁷⁸ When the *cohors VII Gallorum* moved to Moesia it was probably stationed at Tomi.¹⁷⁹ The *cohors II Lucensium* might have been stationed at Montana when it came to Moesia.¹⁸⁰ The *cohors Cilicum* might have been stationed at Naissus under the Flavians.¹⁸¹ Karavas, on the basis of the presence of brick stamps, argues that Saldum was the home of the *cohors I Antiochensium*, the *cohors I Cisipadensium*, and the *cohors I Raetorum*.¹⁸² In addition, by the last quarter of the first century Karavas says that the *cohors I Raetorum* had moved to Taliata.¹⁸³ The *cohors I Thracum Syriaca* was based at Timacum Minus in the years from AD 70 – AD 106.¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁸ Spaul 2000: 464. This is based on the presence of a dedicatory stone, albeit a later one (*CIL* III.14429).

¹⁷⁹ Spaul 2000: 171. Cf. *CIL* III.7548, which is a funerary stone.

¹⁸⁰ Spaul 2000: 84. Cf. Velkov 1990: 247-256

¹⁸¹ Spaul 2000: 398.

¹⁸² Karavas 2001: 81.

¹⁸³ Karavas 2001: 86. This is based on the discovery of a diploma on the site.

¹⁸⁴ Karavas 2001: 102.

CHAPTER 2:

THE SITUATION IN THE MOESIAS FROM AD 81 to AD 161

DOMITIAN:

Around June of AD 85, the Dacians under their commander Diurpaneus invaded what later became Moesia Inferior.¹ It was in the middle of this year that the governor C. Oppius Sabinus fell.² We learn that the winter-quarters of the legions were threatened.³ In addition, Jordanes tells us that “many fortresses [*castella*] and cities were seized”.⁴ Domitian then prepared a counterattack and sent in Cornelius Fuscus against the marauding Dacians. This Roman force attacked Diurpaneus on the Danube.⁵ However, by July of AD 86, Cornelius Fuscus had fallen.⁶ At some point in September or October of that year, a certain M. Cornelius Nigrinus Curiatius Maternus launched another campaign against Diurpaneus and the Dacians.⁷ What is more, by the end of AD 86, Domitian had divided Moesia into two provinces: Moesia Inferior to the east and Moesia Superior to the west.⁸ In AD 88 another campaign against the Dacians was launched, this time under the command of L. Tettius Iulianus. Iulianus got as far as the Dacian capital Sarmizegethusa.⁹ The war broke off during the winter of AD 88 – as it had during the winters of the previous campaigns – and by June and July of the following year, AD 89,

¹ My summary of the events of the reign of Domitian is largely based on the reconstruction of Strobel (1989).

² Suet. *Dom.* 6; Cass. Dio 67.6.1; Eutr. 7.23; Jord. *Get.* 13.76.

³ Tac. *Agr.* 41.

⁴ Jord. *Get.* 13.76.

⁵ Suet. *Dom.* 6; Cass. Dio 67.6.5; Jord. *Get.* 13.77; Cf. Strobel 1989: 116.

⁶ Suet. *Dom.* 6; Jord. *Get.* 13.77; Cf. Strobel 1989: 117.

⁷ Strobel 1989: 117.

⁸ Strobel 1989: 117-118.

⁹ Strobel 1989: 118.

peace negotiations had begun with Decebalus, the Dacian king.¹⁰ By the end of July, a peace treaty had been signed and Dacia was now recognised as a client kingdom.¹¹

TRAJAN:¹²

Trajan launched two Dacian campaigns: the first one ran from AD 101 through AD 102, the second from AD 105 through AD 106. It was in AD 106 that the province of Dacia was created. Before the wars began, Trajan made a treaty with the Iazyges.¹³ This Sarmatian tribe then provided additional troops for Rome's campaigning army. In AD 101 Trajan marched as far as Tapae and engaged the encamped Dacians.¹⁴ Before the Romans won, Decebalus sent envoys in the hopes of reaching a new treaty. Dio's excerpter, however, says that Decebalus' inability to make the plea in person helped ensure that no agreement would be reached.¹⁵ Trajan then crossed the Danube and marched towards the interior of Dacia.¹⁶ While marching through Dacia, "Trajan seized some fortified mountains...".¹⁷ This success led Decebalus to sue for peace again; Dio's excerpter claims that this was so that he could recuperate from his reverses and strengthen his position.¹⁸ At the conclusion of the first war, Decebalus "was ready to agree without exception to every demand that had been made."¹⁹ Trajan then left the

¹⁰ Strobel 1989: 119.

¹¹ Mart. 6.76; Cf. Strobel 1989: 119.

¹² The reconstruction of the Dacian wars of Trajan is based on the literary evidence and is supplemented by the artistic evidence. The assigning of particular scenes from Trajan's Column with events from the Dacian wars is based on the assumptions of both Rossi (1971: 130-212) and Le Bohec (2000: XI-XXII).

¹³ Mocsy 1974: 91.

¹⁴ Cass. Dio 68.8.1-2.

¹⁵ Cass. Dio 68.9.2-3; Trajan's Column Plate 45.

¹⁶ Trajan's Column Plates 4-5.

¹⁷ Cass. Dio 68.9.3, trans. Cary; Trajan's Column Scenes 27-28, 30, 39-40, 43, 46, 52.

¹⁸ Cass. Dio 68.9.5; Trajan's Column Plates 54-55.

¹⁹ Cass. Dio 68.8.3, trans. Cary.

camp at Sarmizegethusa, where the treaty had been ratified, and returned to Italy thus ending the first Dacian war.²⁰

By AD 105, “Decebalus was reported to him to be acting contrary to the treaty in many ways...”²¹ As a result, “the senate declared him an enemy and Trajan once more conducted the war against him in person instead of entrusting it to others.”²² By the spring of AD 105 the Romans had set out again.²³ Dio’s excerpter tells us that the war was running fairly smoothly for the Romans, and poorly for the Dacians. So, Decebalus attempted to assassinate Trajan through the use of deserters.²⁴ The Dacian king did manage to capture one of the Roman commanders, a certain Longinus, though the general later tricked Decebalus and committed suicide.²⁵ Trajan built his famous bridge across the Danube at this time, which the excerpter of Dio describes at great length.²⁶ After Trajan crossed the Danube he steadily marched towards Sarmizegethusa and “crushed the Dacians.”²⁷ Decebalus was then captured, and later committed suicide.²⁸ Trajan then set about reorganising the conquered territory into the new province of Dacia.

HADRIAN:

The final major disturbance occurred during the reign of Hadrian. Hadrian’s biographer notes that trouble arose shortly after he ascended the throne. “For those nations which Trajan had subjected rebelled”, including the Sarmatians, “who were

²⁰ Cass. Dio 68.9.7.

²¹ Cass. Dio 68.10.3. trans. Cary.

²² Cass. Dio 68.10.4, trans. Cary.

²³ Trajan’s Column Plates 59-60, 66.

²⁴ Cass. Dio 68.11.3.

²⁵ Cass. Dio 68.12.1-5; Trajan’s Column Plates 67-112.

²⁶ Cass. Dio 68.13.1-6; Cf. Aur Vict. *Caes.* 13.

²⁷ Cass. Dio 68.14.1.

²⁸ Trajan’s Column Plates 108-109.

waging war.”²⁹ Apparently, following the second war with the Dacians, Trajan had concluded a peace treaty with the Rhoxolani.³⁰ For reasons that are unclear, the Rhoxolani developed some sort of quarrel with Rome over this treaty and thus banded together with their neighbours to wage war. The governor of Dacia, C. Julius Quadratus Bassus, was killed.³¹ When Hadrian heard news of the incursions of the Sarmatians and Rhoxolani and the death of Bassus, he set out for Moesia himself.³² He put Marcius Turbo in charge of the Pannonian and Dacian command and eventually made peace with the Rhoxolani king.³³ This conflict lasted from AD 117 to AD 119.³⁴

Troop Movements from Domitian through Antoninus Pius

LEGIONS:

In AD 81 there were three legions stationed in Moesia: the *I Italica*, the *V Macedonica*, and the *VII Claudia*. The question that arises is, were any legions lost in Domitian’s Dacian conflict? Suetonius mentions the destruction of a legion with its commander in Sarmatia.³⁵ Eutropius also reports the loss of a legion. Prior to his report of the deaths of Oppius Sabinus and Cornelius Fuscus with their great armies (*cum magnis exercitibus*), he tells us that “in Sarmatia his [Domitian’s] legion was destroyed with its general”.³⁶ The loss of a legion, however, was in AD 92, after the last of

²⁹ HA *Hadr.* 5.2.

³⁰ Mocsy 1974: 100.

³¹ Mocsy 1974: 100.

³² HA *Hadr.* 6.6.

³³ HA *Hadr.* 6.7-8.

³⁴ Mocsy 1974: 99.

³⁵ Suet. *Dom.* 6.

³⁶ Eutr. 7.23.

Domitian's clashes with the Dacians had ended.³⁷ These two references do not apply to the loss of a Moesian legion.³⁸

Nevertheless, Tacitus tells us that "so many armies [*tot exercitus*] in Moesia and Dacia and Germany and Pannonia were lost with the thoughtlessness or through the laziness of their generals; so many military men [*militares viri*] with so many cohorts [*cum tot cohortibus*] were killed or captured."³⁹ Suetonius tells us that both "Oppius Sabinus of consular rank was defeated", and that Cornelius Fuscus, whom Domitian had entrusted with the conduct of the war, was defeated.⁴⁰ What is more, Tacitus gives us no indication of the scale of the losses on the Roman side. Despite these accounts, we also have the account of the excerpter of Dio who tells us that when Trajan took some of the Dacians' fortified positions he "found the arms and the captured engines, as well as the standard which had been taken in the time of Fuscus."⁴¹ The problem with this interesting tidbit is that we do not know to whom this standard belongs. If we go back to Suetonius' account we see that Cornelius Fuscus was the prefect of the Praetorian Guard.⁴² Thus, it is conceivable that this standard may belong to Fuscus, and not necessarily some defeated legion.⁴³ That detail aside, the preceding accounts allude to a significant depletion of the Moesian army, even though no legion was lost, as was previously believed.⁴⁴

³⁷ Syme (1928: 45) suggested that it was the *XXI Rapax* that was annihilated by the Sarmatians in AD 92, but more recently Bérard (2000: 56) says that it may have existed at least until the reign of Trajan.

³⁸ Sarmatia is generally understood to have been opposite the Pannonias.

³⁹ Tac. *Agr.* 41.

⁴⁰ Suet. *Dom.* 6.

⁴¹ Cass. Dio 68.9.3, trans. Cary.

⁴² Suet. *Dom.* 6.

⁴³ Wilkes 1983: 289, n. 42. The only problem is the question of whether he would have had a praetorian's standard with him at his death.

⁴⁴ See Rossi (1971: 22) and Mocsy (1974: 82) for the supposition that a legion was lost in combat.

The defeats were significant enough to warrant Domitian's presence on the Danube and also the transfer of at least one legion to the theatre of operations. The *IIII Flavia* was a creation of Vespasian, as its name implies.⁴⁵ This Fourth Flavian legion had been based in Dalmatia. It is, however, later attested in Moesia Superior and the scholarly consensus is that the legion arrived in Moesia around AD 86.⁴⁶

Were any other legions sent to the Moesias? There is some indication that the *I Adiutrix* was transferred to the region for the Sarmatian war, if not the Dacian war.⁴⁷ At the very least, this legion may have been in the region during the reign of Nerva as the Q. Attius Priscus, mentioned in *CIL* V.7425, received the *dona donativa* from that emperor for the war with the Suebi.⁴⁸ This Priscus, who was a tribune of the *I Adiutrix*, was also prefect of the *cohors I Hispanorum*, the *cohors I Montanorum*, and the *cohors I Lusitanorum*. There was a *cohors I Hispanorum* in Illyria in AD 60. This unit had moved to Moesia Inferior by AD 99. A different *cohors I Flavia Hispanorum* had arrived in Moesia sometime between AD 78 and AD 80. We do not know, however, which Spanish cohort is mentioned in Priscus' inscription. There were two *cohortes I Montanorum* on the Danube in the last quarter of the first century. One of those units remained in Pannonia through the reign of Trajan. The other cohort had moved to Moesia Superior by AD 96. There was a *cohors I Lusitanorum* in Moesia by AD 75; there was also a cohort of Lusitanians in Pannonia around AD 84. From the dispositions of these auxiliary units we can probably conclude that the *I Adiutrix* was stationed in

⁴⁵ Wilkes (1983: 279, n. 42) suggests that it is also possible that the legion was not a new unit, but in fact a reformed older unit, particularly the Fourth Macedonian legion.

⁴⁶ Syme 1928: 46; Parker 1958: 153; Filow 1963: 39-40, 46; Strobel 1989: 44, 71; Le Bohec and Wolff 2000: 239.

⁴⁷ *CIL* V.7425 (from Libarna in Regio IX).

⁴⁸ The inscription is dated to AD 97.

Pannonia or Moesia during the reign of Domitian.⁴⁹ Of these two possibilities, that is a posting in Pannonia or Moesia, a Pannonian posting is preferable since we know that there is at least one attestation of each of those cohorts in Pannonia during the wars. With that said, although the legion was probably based in Pannonia, that does not rule out the possibility that the legion was operating in the Moesias for the Dacian or Sarmatian wars.⁵⁰ And so, by the end of AD 86, we can conclude that the following four legions were in the Moesias: the *I Italica* and the *V Macedonica* in Moesia Inferior; the *III Flavia*, and the *VII Claudia* in Moesia Superior.

By the start of Trajan's first Dacian war, the disposition of the legions was the same as it had been in AD 86. Unfortunately, we cannot trace the movements of the legions through the course of the Dacian wars. We do have an inscription from Rome that lists the names of the various legions and lists them in order based on the province and the city where their camps were located. It dates to the middle of the second century, and perhaps to the beginning of the reign of Marcus Aurelius.⁵¹ From this inscription we find the *legio III Flavia* and the *legio VII Claudia* based in Moesia Superior; and the *legio I Italica*, the *legio V Macedonica*, and the *legio XI Claudia* based in Moesia Inferior. According to that list, one further legion was added to the Moesias following the Dacian wars of Trajan, namely the Eleventh Claudian legion. The specific year for the arrival of that legion is unknown. We know that at the start of Trajan's reign the legion had been based in Upper Germany at Vindonissa.⁵² In between its postings in

⁴⁹ Syme 1928: 46; Lorincz 2000: 154-155.

⁵⁰ Parker 1958: 153; Strobel 1989: 72.

⁵¹ *CIL* VI.3492.

⁵² *CIL* XIII.6298.

Germania Superior and Moesia Inferior, the legion was posted in Pannonia. Campbell and Fellman date the transfer to either AD 100 or AD 101.⁵³ Perhaps the earliest evidence that we have of the legion belonging to the army of Moesia Inferior comes from an inscription in Rome that lists a Lucius Paconius Proculus, who was a military tribune of the *legio XI Claudia*.⁵⁴ At the same time, the inscription also tells us that he was a prefect of a vexillation from Moesia Inferior. This inscription dates to some point between AD 114 and AD 117. And so, we can conclude that the legion had moved by AD 114. In fact, some scholars suggest that the legion had arrived by the end of the second war in AD 106 or AD 107, which is probably not far from the truth.⁵⁵

The Fourth Flavian legion, which had arrived around AD 86, seems to have left the province in the midst of the second Dacian campaign. When the new province of Dacia was set-up, two legions were sent: the *IIII Flavia*, and the *XIII Gemina*. The Fourth Flavian legion seems to have established a base at Berzobis in AD 106, where it remained for the next thirteen years.⁵⁶ Following the death of Bassus in the Sarmatian conflict of the years AD 117-119, Hadrian's biographer said, "after he sent ahead the armies he made for Moesia."⁵⁷ We cannot determine just how big those armies were that Hadrian sent ahead with Marcius Turbo. Nevertheless, the fact that the writer uses *exercitus*, and not *cohors* or something else, does seem to suggest that it was a substantial

⁵³ Campbell 1996a: 841; Fellman 2000: 129.

⁵⁴ *CIL* VI.32933.

⁵⁵ Ritterling (1925: 1690) postulates a date of AD 106. Filow (1963: 72) merely states that the legion was in the province by AD 107. Parker (1958: 158), Campbell (1996a: 841), and Fellman (2000: 130) are vague about the unit's transfer. Cf. Szilágyi 1954: 171; and Strobel 1984: 93-95.

⁵⁶ Piso 2000: 210-211.

⁵⁷ *HA Hadr.* 6.6.

force. And so, at the beginning or the end of the Sarmatian war, the *legio IIII Flavia* had returned to Moesia Superior.⁵⁸

We can now conclude that by the reign of Marcus Aurelius, the following legions were stationed in the Moesias: the *I Italica*, the *V Macedonica*, and the *XI Claudia* in Moesia Inferior; the *IIII Flavia* and the *VII Claudia* in Moesia Superior.⁵⁹ Over the middle decades of the second century the legions became increasingly stationary. As a result, if there was a need for troops on another frontier, we would see the transfer of detachments of troops, called *vexillations*, sent to the various fronts.⁶⁰ The same tended to be true for the auxiliary units, a theme to which we shall now turn.

AUXILIA:

With the ascension of the Flavians the diplomas become increasingly prevalent; what is more, they enable us to chart the movement of the auxiliaries with greater precision. Of course, diplomas are not perfect: they do not name all of the units present in a province on a given date, but only those which have soldiers who have earned a discharge. This point aside, the diplomas are still an invaluable tool. As a result of their importance we shall still proceed chronologically in this discussion of the auxiliary units.

In a diploma dated to September 20, AD 80, from Germany, the *ala Scubulorum* is listed. The *ala Scubulorum* was in Germany at this point. In fact, that same cavalry unit had departed Moesia sometime after the civil war and was stationed in Germany by the 21st of May, AD 74.⁶¹ The same diploma also lists a future Moesian *ala*, namely the

⁵⁸ Piso 2000: 211.

⁵⁹ Ritterling 1925: 1365; Szilágyi 1954: 179; Parker 1958: 163.

⁶⁰ We shall discuss the intricacies of the *vexillation* in more depth in the next chapter.

⁶¹ *CIL* XVI.20.

ala Claudia nova. This unit is listed as part of the army of Upper Moesia in AD 93.⁶² Three other cavalry units had departed Moesia by the 15th of April, AD 78: the *ala Sulpicia*, the *ala Moesica*, and the *ala Afrorum veterana*.⁶³ We might conjecture that these three units also departed from the Balkans for Germany in the wake of the civil war or the Batavian revolt. The remaining five *alae*, the *Asturum*, the *Atectorigiana*, the *I Gallorum*, the *Gallorum Flaviana*, and the *I Vespasiana Dardanorum* all remained in Moesia through the reign of Trajan.

A newly discovered diploma of May 21, AD 92 from Moesia Inferior lists seven *alae*.⁶⁴ Of those seven units the *II Claudia Gallorum* seems out of place and for two reasons. The first problem is that there is no independent record of any second wing of Gauls anywhere and at any time in the Balkans. There was, however, an *ala II Gallorum* in Spain in the first century before it was transferred to Cappadocia.⁶⁵ If we follow the suggestions of Cichorius and Spaul, and there is no reason not to, then it is possible that the unit may have stopped in Moesia, perhaps for Domitian's Dacian war, on its way east. This conjecture, though seemingly unreasonable, becomes plausible when we realise that this unit does not show up in any diplomas for the Moesias, or anywhere else for that matter, before or after AD 92. It is conceivable that the unit was in the region solely for the Dacian wars before heading, or continuing east. The second problem centres on the name *Claudia*; this rules out the possibility that the *ala II Claudia Gallorum* is a previously unknown unit that may have been raised specifically for the Dacian wars of

⁶² *CIL* XVI.39.

⁶³ *CIL* XVI 23, from Germany.

⁶⁴ Petolescu and Popescu 2004: 269-273.

⁶⁵ Cf.: Arrian, *Acies contra Alanos*, 2, 9; *CIL* IX.3610; Cichorius 1893: 1246-1247; Le Roux 1982: 86; Spaul 1994: 130.

Domitian. Had Domitian raised a new unit of Gauls, it is unlikely that he would have called it the *II Claudia Gallorum* and not the *II Flavia Gallorum*. The inscription which places an *ala II Gallorum* in Spain, reads "...ALAE II GALLOR...".⁶⁶ *Claudia* is not part of the unit's name in this inscription. The same is true for an inscription naming the unit from Caesarea.⁶⁷ It is not unusual to find units honoured for meritorious service with imperial cognomina or some other title. As a result, and with these two problems in mind, we must consider one further possible identity for this unit. In a diploma from Moesia Inferior, dated to May 13, AD 105, we find an *ala I Claudia Gallorum*.⁶⁸ It is also mentioned in a diploma, from the same province, dated to September 25, AD 111.⁶⁹ Thus, it might not be unreasonable to suppose that the lapicide simply made a mistake in writing "II" and not "I".⁷⁰ This would be the simplest solution, and without further proof for the existence of the *II Gallorum*, or another *II Gallorum* in Moesia for that matter, the most plausible.⁷¹ Now, if we assume that the diploma should read *ala I Claudia Gallorum*, then perhaps we might conjecture that that is what should be restored in the *intus* of *tabella I* of RMD 209 from Moesia, where we find "...ET I GAL[...]."⁷² Thus, the unit listed in the AD 92 diploma may really be the *I Claudia Gallorum* and therefore may have been part of the garrison of Moesia since the reign of Vespasian.

⁶⁶ CIL IX.3610.

⁶⁷ AE 1925, 44.

⁶⁸ CIL XVI.50.

⁶⁹ RMD 222.

⁷⁰ For some further examples of possible errors on the part of the lapicide as regards the unit number of the units in diplomas see, for example, RMD 47 (= CIL XVI.110), RMD 53, RMD 185, RMD 239, RMD 278, and RMD 287. We should keep in mind, however, that in some of these examples the incorrect number is recorded only on the *intus* of the *tabella*; in some cases all we have is the fragment from the *intus* that names the unit and we do not have the number from the *extrinsecus*.

⁷¹ I have not seen the diploma myself and thus if the "II" is a reconstruction, I cannot say whether it is a mistake on the part of Petolescu or Popescu or the lapicide. The unit is, nevertheless, listed on the outer face of the tablet, which adds to its credibility (Spaul 1994: 11; Spaul 2000: 8). Thus, the possibility remains that this is a previously unknown auxiliary unit.

⁷² This is the suggestion of Holder and Roxan (RMD IV: 407, note 4).

The other six cavalry wings are less problematic, though not entirely so. Above we followed the suggestion of Spaul in placing an *ala Aetorigiana* in Moesia from the Julio-Claudian dynasty on. This new diploma is, however, the first such attestation of the unit in the province. Prior to the publication of this diploma, the earliest record of an *ala Aetorigiana* was September 18, AD 97, and it was listed without the title *Gallorum* that appears in this diploma.⁷³ Thus, on the one hand it is quite possible that the “[...]ET I GAL[...”, from *RMD* 209 dated to AD 75 or AD 79, might be referring to the *ala I Gallorum Aetorigiana*. On the other hand, the earlier inscriptions are more likely to leave off the unit number; thus, we must also entertain the possibility that in this case the diploma is referring to some other wing of Gauls. In fact, the subsequent mention of the *ala Aetorigiana* is from a diploma, from Moesia Inferior, dated to August 20, AD 127, and there it is called the *ala Gallorum Aetorigiana*.⁷⁴ It is not until around AD 157 that the unit is entitled the *ala I Gallorum Aetorigiana*;⁷⁵ moreover, the outer face of *tabella* I from *RMD* 241 is nearly complete, particularly for the unit lists. Despite all of these discrepancies in the names of the unit, and the problem of the official status of the diplomas themselves, there is no reason to suppose that we are dealing with multiple units.⁷⁶ Of the remaining *alae* from the diploma dated to May 21, AD 92, the *ala Gallorum Flaviana*, and the *ala I Vespasiana Dardanorum* had both been in Moesia

⁷³ MacDonald and Mihaylovich 2002: 225–228. However, we should keep in mind that with this diploma the text is from the inner face.

⁷⁴ *RMD* 241.

⁷⁵ *RMD* 50.

⁷⁶ The problem is that it is usually assumed that diplomas, much like building inscriptions and dedicatory inscriptions, are official documents. Therefore, in these cases we would expect to find the units listed in their official form. Conversely, on personal inscriptions we would expect to find the informal names of the units. Still, many units had multiple names and so without further evidence, we should always exercise caution before proclaiming the discovery of a new unit.

previously,⁷⁷ whereas the *I Flavia Gaetulorum*, the *I Pannoniorum*, and the *Hispanorum* all came to Moesia during the Flavian dynasty.⁷⁸

Now let us examine the infantry cohorts listed in the AD 92 diploma. There are fifteen *cohortes* listed. Of those fifteen cohorts, there are eight which are previously unattested in the Moesias: the *I Bracaraugustanorum*, the *I Lusitanorum Cyrenaica*, the *I Flavia Commagenorum*, the *[II Chal]cidenorum*, the *II Bra[caraug]ustanorum*, the *II Flavia Bessorum*, the *[II] Gallorum*, and the *Ubiorum*. One of those eight, the *cohors I Lusitanorum Cyrenaica* may be the exception. In *RMD* 2 from Moesia, dated to April 28, AD 75, a *cohors I Lusitanorum* is mentioned without the name *Cyrenaica*. If these two units were the same we are left to wonder under what circumstances the unit would have left the province for Cyrene – the most plausible explanation for the appearance of the name *Cyrenaica* - before returning in AD 92. What is more, during that span of seventeen years Moesia experienced a major war with the Dacians. Thus, we can rule out a mistake on the part of the lapicide: the *cohors I Lusitanorum Cyrenaica* was either a different unit which had recently entered the province, or did not have any soldiers eligible for discharge any earlier than AD 92. In three later diplomas dated to AD 99⁷⁹ and AD 105,⁸⁰ the *cohors I Lusitanorum Cyrenaica* is still in the province. Yet, a *cohors I Lusitanorum* shows up in Pannonia on September 3, AD 84.⁸¹ This same unit, however, is also listed for a diploma from Illyria dated to July 2, AD 60.⁸² And so, with no obvious

⁷⁷ *RMD* 209.

⁷⁸ For the *ala I Flavia Gaetulorum*, see: Cichorius 1893: 1243; Wagner 1938: 38; Strobel 1984: 111; and Spaul 1994: 124-125. For the *ala I Pannoniorum* see Wagner 1938: 58; Kraft 1951: 155; Strobel 1984: 113; and Spaul 1994: 167-17. For the *ala Hispanorum* see Wagner 1938: 44; Kraft 1951: 150; Beneš 1978: 10; Strobel 1984: 111-112; and Spaul 1994: 145.

⁷⁹ *CIL* XVI.44 and XVI.45.

⁸⁰ *CIL* XVI.50.

⁸¹ *CIL* XVI.30.

⁸² *CIL* XVI.4.

reason for the *cohors I Lusitanorum* to have left Illyria in the mid seventies, only to return to Pannonia by AD 84, we must entertain the possibility that there were two cohorts of Lusitanians in Moesia; hence the *Cyrenaica*. What is more, on Aug 20, AD 127, there was a *cohors I Lusitanorum* listed on a Moesian diploma; only ten years later there was a *cohors I Lusitanorum Cyrenaica* listed in Moesia Inferior.⁸³ Again, there may have been two cohorts of Lusitanians in the province.

Of the remaining seven cohorts, at least two were Flavian creations: the *I Flavia Commagenorum* and the *II Flavia Bessorum*. The *I Bracaraugustanorum* was in Mauretania Tingitana on January 9, AD 88 and called the *cohors I Bracarum*.⁸⁴ Prior to its sojourn in Africa, the unit had been in Dalmatia during the Julio-Claudian period.⁸⁵ It follows that at some point between January of AD 88 and May of AD 92, the unit came to Moesia Inferior. With this information we can discard the older view that the unit was in Dalmatia before coming to Moesia Inferior, and that this happened around AD 86.⁸⁶ This cohort is attested in Moesia Inferior through AD 161. The *cohors II Chalcidenorum* first shows up in Moesia Inferior in AD 92. We can then rule out the possibility that Trajan brought the unit to the province.⁸⁷ Instead, Vespasian or even Titus probably raised the unit, and perhaps when they were active in the east.⁸⁸ It too remained in Moesia Inferior for quite some time.⁸⁹ The *cohors II Gallorum* arrived in the Moesias

⁸³ *RMD* 241; *CIL* XVI.83.

⁸⁴ *CIL* XVI.159.

⁸⁵ Alföldy (1987): 249-250.

⁸⁶ The older view is held by Cichorius (1900: 255), Wagner (1938: 97-98), Kraft (1951: 170), Beneš (1978: 18), and Strobel (1984: 125). See also Spaul 2000: 89.

⁸⁷ This was the view of Strobel (1984: 126).

⁸⁸ Wagner (1938, 118) suggested long ago that the unit was raised during the Flavian dynasty, although he did not go so far as to suggest a more precise date.

⁸⁹ Cheesman (1914: 156) placed it in Moesia Inferior through AD 161. It is, for example, listed in a diploma dated to AD 157 (*RMD* 50).

perhaps as early as Vespasian.⁹⁰ By November 24, AD 107 the unit had moved to Mauretania Caesarensis.⁹¹ It then returned to Moesia Inferior sometime before AD 114, prior to setting out for Britain most likely between about AD 119 and June 17, AD 122.⁹² The *cohors Ubiorum* arrived in Moesia sometime after AD 70 - Tacitus records their presence in Germany during the revolt of Civilis - and perhaps in AD 86 as Beneš suggests.⁹³

At last we come to the *cohors II Bracaraugustanorum*. Paunov and Roxan suggest that the unit may have moved to Thrace following the creation of the province during the reign of Claudius.⁹⁴ This unit may have arrived in the Balkans along with its namesake, the *cohors I Bracaraugustanorum*.⁹⁵ Instead of being garrisoned in Dalmatia, this unit may very well have been in Thrace since its arrival from Spain, and in fact may have arrived at the creation of the province in AD 46.⁹⁶ The unit was recorded in Thrace on June 9, AD 114.⁹⁷ As the Thracian diploma of AD 114 is the earliest diploma that we have for that province, that would not be an unreasonable suggestion. Based on the discovery of a bilingual inscription that was found in modern Sipka in northern Thrace, the unit was possibly guarding a pass through the Haemus Mountains.⁹⁸ Prior to the AD 92 diploma, this unit was not attested in Moesia Inferior, or Superior for that matter, anytime before AD 157.⁹⁹ It does seem, however, based on this new diploma that it was active at least in the Dacian wars of Domitian, if not also the wars of Trajan. With a

⁹⁰ Strobel 1984: 130.

⁹¹ *CIL* XVI.56.

⁹² *CIL* XVI.69.

⁹³ Tac. *Hist.* 4.18, 77; Beneš 1978: 54; Cf. Strobel 1984: 145.

⁹⁴ Paunov and Roxan 1997: 275.

⁹⁵ Paunov and Roxan 1997: 275.

⁹⁶ Paunov and Roxan 1997: 275; Spaul 2000: 91.

⁹⁷ *RMD* 227 (= *RMD* 14).

⁹⁸ *AE* 1965, 347; Paunov and Roxan 1997: 275.

⁹⁹ See *RMD* 165; *RMD* 50.

posting so close to Moesia Inferior, it would have been easy for Domitian or Trajan to summon the unit towards the Danube to help counter the Dacian incursions. As noted, this unit was “back” in Thrace by AD 114. It is not, however, listed in the subsequent Thracian diploma, a fragmentary one that is dated to around AD 138.¹⁰⁰ Fragmentary as this diploma may be, it only records the presence of two cohorts which have soldiers eligible for discharge: “...QUI MILITAV(ERUNT) IN COH(ORTIBUS) [D]UAB(US)...” On the one hand, this could mean that the cohort had moved back to Moesia Inferior at this point; on the other hand, it could also mean that the unit did not have any soldiers eligible for discharge at this time.

The next diploma that we have hails from Moesia Superior and dates to September 16, AD 93.¹⁰¹ On it we find the following cavalry wings: the *ala II Pannoniorum*, the *ala Claudia nova*, and the *ala Praetoria*. The *ala Claudia nova* had arrived in Moesia by AD 80, as we saw above, and remained in the province for many years to come.¹⁰² As regards the *ala II Pannoniorum*, this is the earliest record of its presence in Moesia Superior. It is mentioned in a diploma dated to November 7, AD 88 from Syria.¹⁰³ Thus, it presumably was transferred to Moesia Superior at some point in the intervening five years. The *ala Praetoria* was in Pannonia on September 3, AD 84.¹⁰⁴ It does not appear on any diplomas in the interim; as a result, it would be reasonable to suggest that it came to Moesia Superior directly from Pannonia without any other

¹⁰⁰ *RMD* 260; cf. Paunov and Roxan 1997: 269-279; Roxan and Weiß 1998: 371-420.

¹⁰¹ *CIL* XVI.39.

¹⁰² It was still around in AD 100 (*CIL* XVI.46), AD 132 (*RMD* 247), and AD 159 (*CIL* XVI.111).

¹⁰³ *CIL* XVI.35.

¹⁰⁴ *CIL* XVI.30.

sojourns. It is possible that it might have moved to Moesia Superior as a result of the Dacian wars of Domitian.¹⁰⁵

As regards the cohorts listed on the diploma, four were already stationed in Moesia: the *cohors I Cilicum* may have been in Moesia by the reign of Claudius; and the *cohors I Antiochensium*, the *cohors V Gallorum*, and the *cohors I Cisipadensium* are all listed in a diploma dated to April 28, AD 75 discussed above.¹⁰⁶ That leaves four cohorts unaccounted for: the *I Cretum*, the *I Flavia Hispanorum milliaria*, the *V Hispanorum*, and the *II Gallorum Macedonica*. The two Spanish units, namely the *cohors I Flavia Hispanorum* and the *cohors V Hispanorum*, are attested in Germany during the reign of Vespasian, but not in a German diploma dated to AD 80.¹⁰⁷ Thus, we might conjecture that the units had moved to Moesia Superior between AD 78 and AD 80. Both the *cohors I Cretum* and the *cohors II Gallorum Macedonica* are hitherto unmentioned units. We can deduce that they were probably Flavian creations; perhaps they date to the start of Vespasian's reign.

The next diploma is dated to July 12, AD 96 and it hails from Moesia Superior.¹⁰⁸ There is only one *ala* listed, the *ala Praetoria*, which we just saw was already in the province. All of the remaining ten units listed are cohorts. Of those ten cohorts, the *cohors I Cretum*, the *cohors I Cilicum*, the *cohors I Flavia Hispanorum milliaria*, and the *cohors V Hispanorum* were already in Moesia Superior. There was a *cohors I*

¹⁰⁵ Strobel 1984: 116.

¹⁰⁶ RMD 2.

¹⁰⁷ The *cohors I Flavia Hispanorum milliaria* was in Germany on April 15, AD 78 (CIL XVI.23); the *cohors V Hispanorum* was in Germany on May 21, 74 (CIL XVI.20). In CIL XVI.158 dated to AD 80 and from Germany, neither Spanish unit, or any other Spanish unit for that matter is mentioned.

¹⁰⁸ RMD 6.

Lusitanorum in AD 92 and AD 99 in Moesia Inferior, but this latter *cohors Lusitanorum* is probably not that unit as we argued above. Thus, this *cohors Lusitanorum* can probably be equated with that unit listed in Moesia in AD 75.¹⁰⁹ This same unit was transferred to Pannonia by September 3, AD 84, where it was a year later.¹¹⁰ It probably returned to Moesia following the invasion of the Dacians in AD 85.

The other recently arrived cohorts include the *I Montanorum*, the *II Flavia Commagenorum*, the *III Raetorum*, the *VI Thracum*, and the *VII Breucorum civium Romanorum*. Based on the nomenclature and the date of the diploma, we might speculate that the cohort of Commageni was raised by Vespasian. It may have come west with Vespasian as he marched from the east in the wake of the turmoil around AD 69-70, and consequently remained in the province.¹¹¹ The name of the *cohors VII Breucorum civium Romanorum* also provides us with some clues about its origins. The title *civium Romanorum* is usually bestowed on a unit for meritorious service. Thus, it could not have been a recently raised regiment. Indeed, there is a *cohors VII Breucorum* mentioned in the Pannonian diploma dated to September 5, AD 85.¹¹² For that reason, the regiment was probably transferred to Moesia Superior in light of the Dacian incursion of that year, participated in the Roman counterattacks, and fought well enough to merit the honorary epithet *civium Romanorum*.

The *cohors I Montanorum* was in Pannonia prior to its arrival in Moesia Superior. In *CIL XVI.31*, from Pannonia, dated to September 5, AD 85, there are two *cohortes I Montanorum*. On the one hand, one of those two cohorts remained in Pannonia, and is

¹⁰⁹ *RMD* 2.

¹¹⁰ *CIL XVI.30*. Cf. *CIL XVI.31* dated to September 5, AD 85.

¹¹¹ Spaul 2000: 401.

¹¹² *CIL XVI.31*.

listed in diplomas dated from AD 102 and later.¹¹³ On the other hand, the other *cohors I Montanorum* moved to Moesia Superior and first appears in this diploma. The *cohors IIII Raetorum* is unattested in any other diploma and so its history probably began in Moesia Superior.¹¹⁴ On September 3, AD 84, and September 5, AD 85, the *cohors VI Thracum* was based in Pannonia.¹¹⁵ This Thracian unit is first recorded in Moesia Superior in AD 96.

Our next diploma is from Moesia Inferior. It is dated to January 17, AD 97.¹¹⁶ This diploma lists the following, as of yet unspecified units: the *[I Claudi]a Gallorum*, the *II Ara[vacorum]*, the *[Flavi]ana Gallorum*, the *Hispanorum [...c.11...]*a, the *I Hispanorum [veterana]*, the *[Sugambroru]m [tir]onum*, the *I Fla[...c.7...]*, the *I Flavia Commagenorum*, the *[I Fla]via Bessorum*, the *[II Lu]censium*, the *IIII Gal[lo]rum*, and the *Ubiorum*. We can determine which of those units listed were *alae*, and which were *cohortes*, with reasonable certainty. There is an *ala Gallorum Flaviana*, and an *ala Hispanorum* in an earlier Moesian diploma dating to May 21, AD 92.¹¹⁷ There is also an *ala I Claudia Gallorum* listed in that same diploma. Even the fact that this unit comes first in the list ensures us that we are dealing with a cavalry wing. In fact, we argued above that the diploma of AD 92 should read *ala I Claudia Gallorum*, which is what we probably have here. Let us now look at the *II Aravacorum* unit. If we look at the situation in Pannonia nearly fifteen years earlier we can track it down. In *CIL XVI.30*

¹¹³ *CIL XVI.47* dated to November 19, AD 102 through to *RMD 181* dated to AD 166/168.

¹¹⁴ Cichorius 1900: 327; Wagner 1938: 180; Strobel 1984: 141; Spaul 2000: 282.

¹¹⁵ *CIL XVI.30* and *CIL XVI.31*.

¹¹⁶ Weiß 1997: 233-238.

¹¹⁷ Petolescu and Popescu 2004: 269-273.

and *CIL* XVI.31 we find an *ala II Arvacorum* (sic).¹¹⁸ This unit does not show up in any further diplomas in Pannonia, and thus was probably sent to Moesia Inferior in or shortly after AD 85, and can be identified with this unit. Until recently, this unit was only found with the double ethnic name in diplomas hailing from Moesia. However, this new diploma eliminates any doubt that this unit was transferred to Moesia from Pannonia and allows us to claim with confidence that the *II ARA* recorded in this diploma is in fact the *ala II Aravacorum (et Hispanorum)*.¹¹⁹

The remaining units listed on this diploma were certainly cohorts. Of these, all but one were already stationed in Moesia Inferior, namely the *cohors I Hispanorum veterana*. This unit is listed in two diplomas, from Moesia Inferior, which both date to AD 99.¹²⁰ It also seems to be listed in an Illyrian diploma dated to AD 60.¹²¹ That diploma, dated to July 2, AD 60, lists a *cohors I Hispanorum*. The title *veterana* is not merely a distinguishing epithet; it is also a mark of seniority. Thus, as this unit was probably active under Claudius, if not earlier, this unit may very well have had a certain amount of clout over the other cohorts in the province. Yet, we cannot completely rule out the possibility that there was another Spanish unit operating in the province at the same time and that this cohort took the epithet *veterana* as a result. Without more evidence, we cannot argue definitively one way or the other. One other interesting point concerning this unit is its history after August 14, AD 99. It most likely participated in the Dacian wars, although it is no longer recorded, at least as the *cohors I Hispanorum*

¹¹⁸ *CIL* XVI.30 is dated to September 3, AD 84; *CIL* XVI.31 to September 5, AD 85.

¹¹⁹ The only uncertainty that remains now surrounds the discrepancy between *ala II Arvacorum* in the later Pannonian diplomas on the one hand, and *ala II Hispanorum et Arvacorum* from an earlier Illyrian diploma, and the later Moesian diplomas, on the other hand.

¹²⁰ *CIL* XVI.44 and *CIL* XVI.45, both dating to August 14, AD 99.

¹²¹ *CIL* XVI.4.

veterana, on any subsequent diplomas in Moesia or elsewhere. Some suggest that the unit remained in Dacia following the war, only to be renamed the *cohors I Hispanorum pia fidelis*.¹²² However, we should wonder why the unit would have given up such a prestigious title upon moving to of all places, a new province. Accordingly, we should not rule out the possibility that the unit was lost in the Dacian wars.

A new diploma from Moesia Inferior was recently published, and it dates to September 9, AD 97.¹²³ This diploma lists five *alae*, all five of which were already in the province prior to the production of this diploma.¹²⁴ There are also nine cohorts listed in this new diploma. With one possible exception, none of the cohorts listed were new to the province. The only cohort that poses any problems is the *cohors I Flavia ---rum*.¹²⁵ Regrettably, trying to find a possible unit to substitute in is quite problematic. This unit did appear in the diploma discussed above.¹²⁶ The problem is trying to find a suitable cohort that bears the name “FLAVIA” and ends with the suffix “RUM”. The two most favourable suggestions, namely the *cohors I Flavia Commagenorum*, and the *cohors II Flavia Bessorum*, are listed in this diploma, as they are in Weiß’ diploma. If we go back further to the diploma of AD 92, we find seven cohorts of the fifteen listed that are not listed on this new diploma.¹²⁷ They are the *cohors I Raetorum*, the *cohors I Bracaraugustanorum*, the *cohors I Lusitanorum Cyrenaica*, the *cohors [II*

¹²² Spaul 2000: 109-111. Cf. *CIL* XVI.57 dated to February 17, AD 110, and *CIL* XVI.163 dated to July 2, AD 110.

¹²³ Eck and Pangerl 2005: 185-192.

¹²⁴ Eck and Pangerl 2005: 192.

¹²⁵ In the article from which this diploma hails, Eck and Pangerl discuss three previous diplomas, namely *RMD* 140 dated to AD 97, the diploma published by Weiß (1997) discussed above, and the diploma published by MacDonald and Mihaylovich (2002) discussed below.

¹²⁶ Weiß 1997: 233-238.

¹²⁷ Petolescu and Popescu 2004: 269-273.

Chal[cidenorum, the *cohors II Bra[caraug]ustanorum*, the *cohors [II] Gallorum*, and the *cohors VII Gallorum*. Based on the number of characters that Weiß believed were lost, we can probably eliminate the *cohors I Bracaraugustanorum*, the *cohors I Lusitanorum Cyrenaica*, , the *cohors [II Chal]cidenorum*, and the *cohors II Bra[caraug]ustanorum*.¹²⁸ Yet, of those three remaining, none bear the epithet Flavia. If we look ahead two years, we find a *cohors II Flavia Brittonum* recorded on two identical diplomas from Moesia Inferior.¹²⁹ This cohort is not attested any earlier than August 14, AD 99. There are two problems with this possibility: the “II” before the epithet “FLAVIA”, and the “NUM” as opposed to “RUM” for the ethnic component of the name. There are units entitled “Britannorum”, but that name seems to be too long for this fragment. There is one further possibility, and the length of the ethnic name fits well with the known number of missing characters. There is a *cohors I Flavia Numidarum* recorded on a diploma, from Moesia Inferior, dated to September 25, AD 111.¹³⁰ In this case we have six characters, only one shy of Weiß’ conjecture: “NUMIDA”. Furthermore, this unit may have been in Moesia Inferior as early as the reign of Domitian. Thus, we might tentatively suggest that the unknown cohort from these two diplomas is in fact the *cohors I Flavia Numidarum*. What is more, if this unit is the Numidian cohort listed in the Syrian diploma dated to November 11, AD 88,¹³¹ in which the cognomen “Flavia” is not found, we might conjecture that the unit moved to Moesia Inferior shortly thereafter. It may have fought well in Domitian’s Dacian wars and as a result earned the name “FLAVIA”.

¹²⁸ In the article Weiß (1997: 238) gives the following reconstruction: “I Fla[via (?) - ca. 7 -]rum”. Significantly, this line is recorded on the extrinsecus.

¹²⁹ *CIL* XVI.44 and *CIL* XVI.45. These diplomas are discussed below.

¹³⁰ *RMD* 222.

¹³¹ *CIL* XVI.35.

We stay in Moesia Inferior for the next diploma.¹³² It also dates to AD 97, and before September 18, and lists four cavalry units which were already based in the province.¹³³ This diploma also claims that it will list ten cohorts; however, only the names of three can be restored. These three cohorts are the *cohors I Lusitanorum Cyrenaica*, the *cohors I Tyriorum*, and the *cohors I Lepidiana civium Romanorum*. As we saw above, the *cohors I Lusitanorum Cyrenaica* was already based out of Moesia Inferior. The *cohors I Tyriorum*, judging by its nomenclature, was raised in Syria. This diploma marks its historical debut. It may have been raised in the east during the civil wars and then sent to the Danube by Vespasian along with Licinius Mucianus. On June 13, AD 80, the *cohors I Lepidiana* was posted in Pannonia.¹³⁴ At some point between the seventeen years separating that diploma and this one, the unit was transferred to Moesia Inferior. The honorary title *civium Romanorum* suggests that the unit distinguished itself in combat at some point during those seventeen years. Thus, it would be safe to posit that the unit was transferred to Moesia Inferior during Domitian's Dacian war and earned its honorary title for commendable service in that war.

We remain in Moesia Inferior for the next two identical diplomas; both are dated to August 14, AD 99.¹³⁵ There are six cavalry wings recorded and all six of these cavalry wings were already stationed in the province. The only unit that requires further discussion is the *ala II Hispanorum et Arvacorum*. There is a bit of a discrepancy

¹³² MacDonald and Mihaylovich 2002: 225–228.

¹³³ MacDonald and Mihaylovich 2002: 226.

¹³⁴ *CIL* XVI.26.

¹³⁵ *CIL* XVI.44 and *CIL* XVI.45. There is a third fragmentary diploma, recently published in *RMD IV* (number 217), from Moesia Inferior, that is dated to AD 99 and lists the following three units: the *Gallorum Flaviana*?, the *I Sugamborum veterana VEL tironum*, and the *II Flavia Brittonum*. The first unit is an *ala* while the other two are *cohortes*.

between the name *ala II Arvacorum* found in Moesia Inferior two years earlier, and *ala II Hispanorum et Arvacorum* found in this diploma. The Arevaci were an Hispanic tribe and the earlier diplomas tell us that the unit was originally called the *ala II Arvacorum* (sic).¹³⁶ Usually, in regard to *alae*, when two ethnic names are used in the genitive, this is a result of a conflation of two different ethnic groups into one auxiliary unit, which need not be the case with the *cohortes*.¹³⁷ Perhaps what happened in this case is that in the years, and perhaps months leading up to the first Dacian offensive, Trajan may have had cause to replenish any potentially depleted ranks with new recruits from their original recruiting grounds.¹³⁸ For reasons that we may never know, there may not have been enough suitable recruits from among the Arevaci; thus, Trajan would have had recourse to collect additional troops from elsewhere in Spain, and thus we see the appearance of the “new” name. The change could not have simply been a distinguishing feature, as there was no other Arevacian unit in the province, or even on the Danube at this time, that might have caused some confusion.

There are thirteen cohorts listed on the diploma of August 14, AD 99. Two of these cohorts are previously unattested: the *II Mattiacorum* and the *II Flavia Brittonum*. The *cohors II Mattiacorum* appears for the first time in this diploma. Some scholars have argued that the *cohors Mattiacorum* listed in an earlier diploma is to be identified with this unit; for the moment, we shall stick with our earlier argument and assume that this is a distinct, and new unit.¹³⁹ The final unit is the *cohors II Flavia Brittonum*. The

¹³⁶ Saddington 1982: 73; Spaul 1994: 35. There is an Illyrian diploma (RMD 202) that dates to July 2, AD 61, and lists a *cohors II Hispanorum et Arvacorum*.

¹³⁷ Holder 1980: 22.

¹³⁸ The *auxilia* were not yet swollen with soldiers who were both Roman citizens and from the local area.

¹³⁹ There are two earlier Moesian diplomas, both dated to AD 78, that list a *cohors Mattiacorum*: CIL XVI.22 and RMD 208. For a fuller discussion of the possibility that these two units may be one and the same unit, see above.

cognomen *Flavia* suggests that the unit was raised either by Vespasian, or Domitian.¹⁴⁰

This auxiliary unit was not previously attested; thus, it may have been created around AD 74.

For the next diploma we turn back to Moesia Superior.¹⁴¹ This diploma is dated to May 8, AD 100, and lists three cavalry wings: the *ala I praetoria*, the *ala I Claudia nova*, and the *ala II Pannoniorum*. All three units were already stationed in Upper Moesia. While there is a paucity of cavalry units, the same cannot be said in regard to the number of infantry cohorts. There are twenty-one cohorts listed, six of which were not previously recorded in the province: the *cohors I Flavia Bessorum*, the *cohors I Thracum civium Romanorum*, the *cohors I Vindellicorum milliaria civium Romanorum*, the *cohors II Hispanorum*, the *cohors II Brittonum milliaria civium Romanorum pia fidelis*, and the *cohors III Brittonum*. The *cohors I Flavia Bessorum* may have been in Moesia Inferior as early as AD 97, before being transferred to Moesia Superior.¹⁴² Regardless, it was in a Moesian province by the end of the century.

The *cohors I Thracum civium Romanorum* named in this diploma presents us with a whole host of problems. First, there was a *cohors I Thracum* based out of Upper Germany on October 27, AD 90.¹⁴³ Wagner and Beneš both believe that this Thracian cohort based out of Germania Superior is to be equated with the Thracian cohort from this diploma from Moesia Superior.¹⁴⁴ Rather conveniently, we do not have any record

¹⁴⁰ According to Holder (1980, 16), Titus did not bestow the title on any auxiliary units; given the brevity of his rule and the fairly stable conditions across the empire, this point is undoubtedly correct.

¹⁴¹ *CIL* XVI.46.

¹⁴² Weiß 1997: 234.

¹⁴³ *CIL* XVI.36.

¹⁴⁴ Wagner 1938: 1989; Beneš 1978: 52.

of the *cohors I Thracum*'s presence in Germany at any point between AD 90 and AD 116. What is more, when the unit does "resurface" in Upper Germany on September 8, AD 116, it has the full title *cohors I Thracum civium Romanorum*. Trouble arises, however, when we look at two separate diplomas: one dated to February 17, AD 110 and from Dacia; the other dated to July 2, AD 110 and from Pannonia Inferior.¹⁴⁵ One solution would be to suggest that the unit was operating in Dacia during the Dacian wars, where it remained following the inception of the province through the first quarter of AD 110, only to return west to Upper Germany, with a brief layover in Pannonia Inferior later in AD 110. Indeed, we have another diploma from Germania Superior dated to AD 129/130 that lists a *cohors I Thracum civium Romanorum*.¹⁴⁶

The second problem is as follows. After its posting in Upper Germany, this Thracian unit returned to the middle Danube where it was recorded in a diploma dated to May 19, AD 135 from Pannonia Inferior;¹⁴⁷ however, this same diploma lists two *cohortes I Thracum civium Romanorum*. So, by AD 135 there were two *cohortes I Thracum civium Romanorum* operating in the middle Danube region. We must somehow disentangle this mess. Spaul's solution is to suggest two units: one of the units, which was first attested in the Upper Moesian diploma of AD 100, was active in Dacia in AD 110 before being transferred to Pannonia Inferior in AD 110, and flip-flopping back and forth between Pannonia Inferior and Superior – which may reflect the flexible nature of provincial boundaries more than a busy unit – for the rest of its existence;¹⁴⁸ the second

¹⁴⁵ *CIL* XVI.57 (Dacia); *CIL* XVI.164 (Pannonia Inferior).

¹⁴⁶ *RMD* 90.

¹⁴⁷ *RMD* 251.

¹⁴⁸ Spaul 2000: 361.

unit was in Germany - and then Upper Germany - from its inception through AD 129/130 until being transferred to Pannonia Inferior, where it spent the rest of its days.¹⁴⁹

Third, we are still left with the problem of trying to make sense of the title *civium Romanorum* from the Moesian diploma for a Thracian unit that does not seem to have been in Moesia Superior prior to AD 100.¹⁵⁰ It is true that auxiliary units first appear with the title *c(ivium) R(omanorum)* on diplomas beginning with Trajan.¹⁵¹ What is more, the majority of the citizenship grants under Trajan were granted after the Dacian wars.¹⁵² Thus, we can rule out the possibility that the unit was a Trajanic creation. Furthermore, if the title *civium Romanorum* does not show up in diplomas before Trajan, then we can also assume that the unit earned the epithet before Trajan, and probably during the Flavian dynasty. There were not many opportunities, at least that we are aware of, for a unit to earn praise for its performance in combat, realistically the only avenue that a unit had to distinguish itself. So, we must turn to the wars on the Danube. Knight has singled out Moesia as a region of the empire which experienced a massive build-up of troops; and he argued that the chief architect of this was Domitian.¹⁵³ In addition, he pointed out the regional nature of most auxiliary transfers: troops in Germany would most often be sent to Britain whereas troops in Pannonia would most often be sent to Moesia, and then from Moesia to Dacia.¹⁵⁴ And so, based on these final arguments we can conjecture that this unit of Thracians was created during the Flavian period, was immediately based in what later became Moesia Superior, and that it was

¹⁴⁹ Spaul 2000: 364.

¹⁵⁰ Spaul 2000: 362.

¹⁵¹ Holder 1980: 35; Saddington 1982: 175.

¹⁵² Holder 1980: 34.

¹⁵³ Knight 1991: 207.

¹⁵⁴ Knight 1991: 207.

rewarded for its efforts in the Dacian wars of Domitian. This *cohors I Thracum civium Romanorum* remained in Moesia Superior following the war before moving to Dacia following Trajan's Dacian war, and then moved to the Pannonias, where it remained.

Now that we have finally sorted out the *cohors I Thracum civium Romanorum*, we can sort out the remaining cohorts beginning with the *cohors I Vindelicorum milliaria civium Romanorum*. Most scholars suggest that this unit started out in Germany on the basis of a funerary inscription from Köln which names the unit.¹⁵⁵ Wagner goes further suggesting that the unit was based in Pannonia in the interim;¹⁵⁶ however, his argument is suspect, particularly in light of the discovery of a new diploma from Lower Germany.¹⁵⁷ That diploma, dated to February 20, AD 98, lists a *cohors I Vindelicorum civium Romanorum milliaria*. This new piece of evidence confirms the theories of Beneš and Spaul, and modifies the theory of Wagner, thereby placing the transfer of the unit sometime between AD 98 and AD 100. The *cohors II Hispanorum* was stationed in Pannonia as late as September 5, AD 85.¹⁵⁸ It was probably transferred to Moesia Superior later that year or perhaps in the following year. It is first recorded in the province in a fragmentary diploma dated to August 14, AD 99, in which the recipient served in the *cohors II Hispanorum*.¹⁵⁹

The final two cohorts both have British origins. In regard to the first of those two units, the *cohors II Brittonum milliaria civium Romanorum pia fidelis*, there is a *cohors II Brittonum* listed on a diploma from Germania Inferior dated to February 28, AD 98.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁵ Wagner 1938: 196-197; Beneš 1978: 54; Spaul 2000: 289; *CIL* XIII.8320.

¹⁵⁶ Wagner 1938: 196-197.

¹⁵⁷ *RMD* 216.

¹⁵⁸ *CIL* XVI.31.

¹⁵⁹ *RMD* 7.

¹⁶⁰ *RMD* 216.

This German-based unit is probably to be equated with the Moesian unit.¹⁶¹ It was transferred sometime between AD 98 and AD 100. Its stay in Moesia Superior was brief, as it later shows up in Dacia.¹⁶² The *cohors III Brittonum* seems to have been a relatively new creation. It is not documented in any other province prior to AD 100; what is more, it seems to have spent all of its time in Upper Moesia. Thus, the unit probably arrived in Moesia Superior not long after it was recruited.

The next substantial diploma, dated to AD 103/107 and from Moesia Superior, lists five new units. All of these units are cohorts, and they are the *cohors I Brittonum milliaria*, the *cohors Britannica milliaria civium Romanorum*, the *cohors III campestris civium Romanorum*, the *cohors IIII Cypria civium Romanorum*, and the *cohors VIII Raetorum civium Romanorum*.¹⁶³ The *cohors I Brittonum milliaria* was in Pannonia on September 5, AD 85, and was likely transferred to Moesia Superior in the context of the Dacian incursions.¹⁶⁴ The *cohors Britannica milliaria civium Romanorum* first appears in Moesia Superior in this diploma. Prior to its stay in the province, it had been based out of Pannonia, where it is recorded on September 5, AD 85.¹⁶⁵ This unit moved on to Dacia following Trajan's war, and became part of the initial occupying force of the new province.¹⁶⁶ There is a fragmentary diploma dated to January 12, AD 105, from Moesia Superior, that lists a *I Britannica milliaria civium Romanorum*. The problem here is that we do not know whether this unit was an *ala* or a *cohors*. There was an *ala I Flavia*

¹⁶¹ This was the conjecture of Wagner (1938: 110), Strobel (1984: 125) and Spaul (2000: 198), none of whom had access to this diploma. Both Wagner and Spaul based their arguments on inscriptional evidence which document the unit's presence and assistance in building construction in Lower Germany.

¹⁶² It is listed on a Dacian diploma dated to October 14, AD 109 (*RMD* 148).

¹⁶³ *CIL* XVI.54.

¹⁶⁴ *CIL* XVI.31; Cf. Wagner 1938: 106; Beneš 1978: 20; Strobel 1984: 124; Spaul 2000: 195-197.

¹⁶⁵ *CIL* XVI.31.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. *CIL* XVI.160 dated to August 11, AD 106.

Britannica milliaria civium Romanorum based in Pannonia on November 19, AD 102.¹⁶⁷

This same cavalry wing next appears in a Dacian diploma dated to July 2, AD 110.¹⁶⁸

Coincidentally, this same unit, or what is believed to be this same unit, is listed in a diploma that is also dated to July 2, AD 110, only it is from Pannonia Inferior.¹⁶⁹ Spaul posits that the unit may have been listed twice, and on the same date because the unit was in the process of being transferred from Dacia to Pannonia Inferior, which is where it remained for the rest of the second century.¹⁷⁰ If this unspecified unit from AD 105 is in fact an *ala*, then it is likely that its stay in Moesia Superior would have been brief as it would likely have continued to Dacia immediately following the Dacian wars of Trajan. Of course, this unit may also have been the cohort listed in the diploma dating to AD 103/107, the current diploma of discussion. Regardless, without further evidence we must leave this question open. The cohort was probably among the many auxiliary units transferred to Moesia in the wake of Domitian's Dacian troubles.

This diploma also marks the debut of the *cohors III campestris civium Romanorum* in the history of Moesia Superior. It is not attested on any other documents. Spaul suggests that the fourth Cyprian cohort of Roman citizens was raised in a levy made by Claudius, and that it was based in the Chersonesos and served in support of the Bosporan kingdom.¹⁷¹ It seems to have been in Moesia Superior only briefly, because it turns up in a Dacian diploma dated to February 17, AD 110.¹⁷² It is unattested after that

¹⁶⁷ Spaul (1994: 70) calls this unit the "most traveled unit of the auxilia", "the unit with the longest title", and "the unit which presents the most problems".

¹⁶⁸ *CIL* XVI.163.

¹⁶⁹ *CIL* XVI.164.

¹⁷⁰ Spaul 1994: 71, n. 2.

¹⁷¹ Spaul 2000: 389.

¹⁷² *CIL* XVI.57.

point, though it may have returned to the Bosphorus.¹⁷³ The Eighth Raetian cohort of Roman citizens was based in Pannonia Inferior on September 5, AD 85.¹⁷⁴ With no record of its presence in Pannonia Inferior after that date, it was likely transferred to Upper Moesia in AD 86. Like the *cohors IIII Cypria civium Romanorum*, this unit was later part of the Dacian occupying force.¹⁷⁵ By the middle of the second century, however, it had returned to Moesia Superior.

In the years following Trajan's Dacian wars, the number of Moesian diplomas indicating new units drops. The next diploma of any significance is from Moesia Inferior and it is dated to September 25, AD 111.¹⁷⁶ The *alae* listed were already recorded in the province. Of the seven cohorts, three of them require further discussion: the *cohors I Flavia Numidarum*, the *cohors I milliaria Brittonum*, and the *cohors I Claudia Sugambrorum tironum*. Both the *cohors I Flavia Numidarum* and the *cohors I milliaria Brittonum* pose a few problems.¹⁷⁷ Neither unit was originally believed to have been in the province at this time. In fact, Beneš and Spaul both suggest, or at the very least allude to a mid second century arrival in Moesia Inferior.¹⁷⁸ Recent diplomas, however, have shown that these units were in Moesia by the first quarter of the second century, if not earlier. There is a *cohors I Numidarum* listed on a diploma from Syria dated to

¹⁷³ Wagner 1938: 127-128; Spaul 2000: 389.

¹⁷⁴ *CIL* XVI.31.

¹⁷⁵ It is found in two Dacian diplomas: one, *RMD* 148 dated to October 14, AD 109; the other, *CIL* XVI.57, dated to February 17, AD 110.

¹⁷⁶ *RMD* 222.

¹⁷⁷ We conjectured above on the basis of the evidence from this diploma that the *cohors I Flavia Numidarum* may have been in the province at least as early as AD 97.

¹⁷⁸ Cichorius (1900: 320), Wagner (1938: 110), Kraft (1951: 172), and Strobel (1984) fail to discuss the presence of this unit in Moesia Inferior; none of these four scholars were privy to the evidence now available. Cf. Beneš 1978: 47; and Spaul 2000: 473.

November 7, AD 88.¹⁷⁹ Roxan was of the frame of mind that there were in fact two series of Numidian cohorts: the Flavian series, and the rest.¹⁸⁰ If that is the case, then this unit may have been in Moesia as early as Domitian's Dacian wars, which may have been the context for the naming of the unit *Flavia*, as we suggested above.

The *cohors I milliaria Brittonum* was previously unattested in Moesia Inferior. There was a similar unit based in Moesia Superior in AD 103/105. This same unit, as noted above, moved into Dacia where it is recorded in diplomas dating from AD 106 to AD 110.¹⁸¹ This same unit is mentioned again in Dacia – only at this point it was Dacia Inferior - but not for another nineteen or twenty years.¹⁸² Roxan claims that it was recorded in Dacia Superior in AD 119, though the source of this information is unknown.¹⁸³ Thus, there is more than enough time for that unit to have moved to Moesia Inferior, perhaps in preparation for the mass exodus of units east for Trajan's Parthian war. Whichever of these two possibilities is correct, they both allow time for this unit to have returned to the lower Danube after the war at the beginning of Hadrian's reign, when we know that there was a considerable bit of reorganisation on the frontiers across the empire.

We now come to the *cohors I Claudia Sugambrorum tironum*, which is only unusual because of the imperial cognomen *Claudia*. On the one hand, none of the earlier diplomas which list this unit add the cognomen *Claudia*.¹⁸⁴ In fact, this inscription appears to be only the third diploma to record its existence with both of the other

¹⁷⁹ *CIL* XVI.35.

¹⁸⁰ Roxan and Holder 2003: 433-434, n. 5.

¹⁸¹ *CIL* XVI.160: August 11, AD 106; *RMD* 148: October 14, AD 109; *CIL* XVI.163: July 2, AD 110.

¹⁸² Weiß (1997: 244) places the unit in Dacia Inferior in AD 129/130.

¹⁸³ Roxan and Holder 2003: 434, n. 7.

¹⁸⁴ *CIL* XVI.22 (February 7, AD 78): I SUGAMBRORUM TIRONUM; Weiß 1997: I SUGAMBRORUM TIRONUM.

diplomas pre-dating this one. On the other hand, the much better documented *cohors I Sugambrorum veterana*, mentioned in the diploma of AD 111, also seems to have been called *cohors I Claudia Sugambrorum veterana*. Roxan suggested that the epithets *tironum* and *veterana* indicate that both *cohortes Sugambrorum* bore the cognomen *Claudia* in their full titles.¹⁸⁵ This is certainly plausible if we consider that the title *Claudia* would have been sufficient to distinguish between the two units, had only one of the two used that title. Unfortunately, with the exception of this diploma, all other cases in which the title *Claudia* is included do not include the epithets *tironum* or *veterana*.¹⁸⁶ Thus, trying to decipher which cohort is which can be quite problematic. We saw above that this particular cohort of Sugambrians may have been in Moesia sometime before AD 75. This new evidence proves unequivocally that the unit remained in the province well into the second century; perhaps some of the later inscriptions which simply list a *cohors I Claudia Sugambrorum* in fact refer to the younger unit, and not the older one. In this light, the unit (*I Claudia Sugambrorum*) mentioned on a Syrian diploma dated to AD 156/157 should probably be identified with this one.¹⁸⁷ As this Sugambrian unit is not mentioned in any Moesian diplomas between AD 111 and 156/157, we can only speculate about when the unit departed for the east, with the two most probable occasions being the Parthian war of Trajan and the second Jewish war under Hadrian.

We have one further diploma from Moesia Inferior that records a significant change.¹⁸⁸ This diploma, dated to June 1, AD 125, lists one unit which previously had

¹⁸⁵ Roxan 1978: 73, n. 2.

¹⁸⁶ Some of these diplomas, however, are fragmentary, such as *RMD* 165.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. *CIL* XVI.106. This is the view of Roxan (Roxan and Holder: 434 n. 6).

¹⁸⁸ *RMD* 235.

not appeared on a diploma from the province. The *cohors I Thracum Syriaca* was last recorded in a diploma from Moesia Superior that dates to May 8, AD 100.¹⁸⁹ It is not recorded in any of the subsequent diplomas from Moesia Superior, including the next substantial one which dates to AD 103/107.¹⁹⁰ Thus, we might surmise that the unit was transferred to Moesia Inferior perhaps as early as AD 103. Yet, we have a diploma from Moesia Inferior that dates to September 25, AD 111, and the cohort is not listed.¹⁹¹ We seem to have a twenty-five year period in which the unit is missing in action.¹⁹² Perhaps this is because the unit may not have had any soldiers who were eligible for discharge during that period. If that was the case, and given the length of the interval,¹⁹³ then it seems that the unit would have experienced the recruitment of an almost completely new complement of soldiers around AD 100; but this is hard to rationalise. With this scenario, we may very well suppose that the cohort experienced some sort of catastrophic defeat perhaps in Trajan's first Dacian war.¹⁹⁴ Still, this is pure speculation and so it is hoped that we may get some evidence of the unit's whereabouts between AD 100 and AD 125 in the future.¹⁹⁵

Moesia Superior is where we turn for the next unit and a diploma which dates to September 9, AD 132.¹⁹⁶ This also happens to be the last diploma from which we can deduce any changes in the auxiliary garrison of the province before the reign of Marcus

¹⁸⁹ *CIL* XVI.46.

¹⁹⁰ *CIL* XVI.54.

¹⁹¹ *RMD* 222.

¹⁹² It is not found in any other province in the interval. Its absence could be due to a lack of diplomas from either province during that period.

¹⁹³ Twenty-five years is the standard tour of duty of an auxiliary soldier.

¹⁹⁴ This is possible, as the date for the mass recruitment roughly falls within the time frame of the war.

¹⁹⁵ Petrović (1995: 44) has suggested that the unit was transferred to Moesia Inferior in the middle of the second century, but *RMD* 235 proves that the unit was transferred well before the middle of the century.

¹⁹⁶ *RMD* 247.

Aurelius.¹⁹⁷ The *auxilia* worthy of note are all *cohortes*. There are three cohorts listed in this diploma that had been in Moesia Superior, were transferred to Dacia during and after Trajan's second Dacian war, and then returned to Moesia Superior. The first of these is the *cohors I Cretum sagittariorum*. When it was last recorded in Moesia Superior, it was called the *cohors I Cretum*.¹⁹⁸ This unit participated in Trajan's Dacian wars and then stayed when the new province first emerged, which is when it was first listed as the *cohors I Cretum sagittariorum*.¹⁹⁹ It is recorded in Dacia as late as May of AD 114 with the same titles.²⁰⁰ Thus, this Cretan unit returned to Moesia Superior during the reign of Hadrian, though at what point we cannot say. The other two units are the *cohors I Montanorum* and the *cohors III Campestris*. These two units were last attested in Moesia Superior in AD 103/105.²⁰¹ Both are then listed on a Dacian diploma dating to October 14, AD 109.²⁰² The *cohors I Montanorum* was based in Dacia at least as late as the second or third of May in AD 114;²⁰³ the *cohors III Campestris* as late as the third or fourth of May in AD 114.²⁰⁴ It is conceivable that these two units, the *cohors I Montanorum* and the *cohors III Campestris*, were transferred back to Moesia Superior around the same time as the *cohors I Cretum*, perhaps early in the reign of Hadrian.

We have now only to examine the last set of changes in Moesia Inferior. A diploma dated to August 20, AD 127, lists the *ala I Pannoniorum et Gallorum*.²⁰⁵ This is

¹⁹⁷ The next diploma, *CIL* XVI.111 which dates to AD 159/160, lists the same units.

¹⁹⁸ *CIL* XVI.46.

¹⁹⁹ Cf. *CIL* XVI.163, which dates to July 2, AD 110.

²⁰⁰ *RMD* 226.

²⁰¹ *CIL* XVI.54.

²⁰² *RMD* 148.

²⁰³ *RMD* 225.

²⁰⁴ *RMD* 226.

²⁰⁵ *RMD* 241.

the first record of this unit. There are two principal questions surrounding this unit: when was it raised; and when, if ever, was it transferred to Dacia? Spaul suggested that this cavalry wing may have been raised around AD 109; however, in light of this new evidence it seems that it may have been raised instead sometime between the end of the first Dacian war of Trajan and the beginning of the second.²⁰⁶ In fact, if we assume that this diploma records the first recruit who was eligible for discharge, then we might conjecture that this unit was raised in preparation for the second of Trajan's Dacian wars. The next problem rises because there is an *ala Pannoniorum et Gallorum* based in Dacia Porolissensis, perhaps as early as September 27, AD 154.²⁰⁷ In this instance it is recorded as "...GALL ET PANN..." with the two ethnic names inverted. The same abbreviations are found in *CIL* XVI.110, dated to September 27, AD 159. In a later diploma from Dacia Porolissensis dated to July 21, AD 164, we find the *ala* "...II GALLOR ET PANNO..." with the name again inverted.²⁰⁸ What the inscriptional evidence for Dacia implies is that the *ala I Pannoniorum et Gallorum* from Moesia Inferior, in which the Gallic ethnic name is listed first, never left the province long enough to be listed in Dacia Porolissensis. In that first Moesian diploma it is recorded as follows: "...I PANN ET GALL...".²⁰⁹ If there was only one Gallic and Pannonian unit in a province, such as Dacia Porolissensis, then there would probably be no need to specify the unit number in any official documentation. Thus, we might well wonder why the confusion arose concerning the two units when the Dacian unit listed in all of the diplomas is clearly the

²⁰⁶ Spaul 1994: 83.

²⁰⁷ *RMD* 47.

²⁰⁸ *RMD* 64.

²⁰⁹ *RMD* 241.

ala II Gallorum et Pannoniorum.²¹⁰ It remained in Moesia Inferior at least as late as AD 157.²¹¹ The same diploma dated to August 20, AD 127 also lists a *cohors I Germanorum*. This is the first attestation of that unit, which remained in the province through the reign of Marcus Aurelius.²¹²

We must now return to the *cohors II Bracaraugustanorum*. Above we saw that the unit was posted in Moesia Inferior at the end of the first century, perhaps after a transfer from Thrace, where it had returned by AD 114. The next problem to tackle is when the unit returned to Moesia Inferior, which is where it was based in AD 157.²¹³ Part of the problem with tracking down the location of this unit is the confusion surrounding the correct unit lists from two fragmentary diplomas.²¹⁴ A diploma from AD 145 found in Moesia recorded two Bracaraugustani units, the one believed to be the *cohors I Bracaraugustanorum*, the second the *cohors II Bracaraugustanorum*. In *RMD* 270 we find two *cohortes I Bracaraugustanorum*. This listing prompted Weiß, who had originally published the diploma, to conjecture that we should read two *cohortes I Bracaraugustanorum* in *RMD* 165.²¹⁵ From this, Weiß then conjectured that the *cohors II Bracaraugustanorum* did not leave Thrace for Moesia Inferior until around AD 150. A new diploma from Dacia Inferior confirms the existence of two distinct *cohortes I Bracaraugustanorum*; but it also disproves Weiß' original theory that a second first cohort of Bracaraugustani had not arrived in Moesia before AD 150 as it recorded a

²¹⁰ Spaul 1994: 83. The fact that the Gallic and Pannonian elements of the name are often reversed has no bearing on either view, that is, that the singular unit moved to Dacia, or that it never left.

²¹¹ *RMD* 50.

²¹² It is recorded in *RMD* 165 dated to AD 145, *RMD* 270 dated to AD 146, and from *RMD* 50 dated to AD 157.

²¹³ *RMD* 50.

²¹⁴ *RMD* 165, which dates to AD 145, and *RMD* 270, which dates to AD 146.

²¹⁵ Weiß 1999: 283-284. Weiß, however, was not the first to propose two distinct units. In fact, Beneš (1978: 18-19) suggested that there were two units, one of which was transferred to Dacia Inferior during the reign of Hadrian.

cohors I Bracaraugustanorum.²¹⁶ This Dacian diploma shows that both first units of Bracaraugustani cannot have been in Moesia Inferior in AD 146, as one had been transferred to Dacia Inferior. Thus, although *RMD* 270 lists two *cohortes I Bracaraugustanorum*, one of those listed must be a scribal error and should in fact read II, not I.²¹⁷ As a result, we can conclude that the *cohors II Bracaraugustanorum* had returned to Moesia Inferior by AD 145, if not earlier.²¹⁸

This diploma, which dates to August 20, AD 127, also lists the *cohors II Lucensium*.²¹⁹ That cohort no longer appears, however, on diplomas from Moesia Inferior that postdate this one. Moreover, a diploma from Thrace that dates to some point between September and December of AD 138, lists the Second cohort of Lucenses.²²⁰ The cohort then appears on three subsequent diplomas from the province of Thrace. It seems that at some point between the 20th of August, AD 127, and September of AD 138, the unit moved south. Velkov has argued quite convincingly for AD 136 as the date for the transfer of the cohort to Thrace.²²¹ There is an inscription from the modern Kabyle in Thrace that lists a prefect of the cohort and it is dated to AD 136.²²² What is more, Velkov notes that the administrative boundary between the two provinces of Moesia Inferior and Thrace was changed in AD 136.²²³ As such, we have every reason to believe Velkov's suggestion.

²¹⁶ Cf. *RMD* 269, which dates to July 19, AD 146.

²¹⁷ Cf. Roxan and Holder 2003: 516-517, n. 3.

²¹⁸ This is the original theory of Paunov and Roxan (1997, 275-276) and Spaul (2000, 91). Weiß, in a more recent publication (2001, 261-266), acknowledged that the new Dacian diploma proves that the second cohort had been transferred by AD 145, if not earlier under Hadrian.

²¹⁹ *RMD* 241.

²²⁰ *RMD* 260.

²²¹ Velkov 1990: 250. Cf. Spaul 2000: 83-84.

²²² For the inscription see Velkov 1990: 250.

²²³ Velkov 1990: 250.

Troop Emplacement from Domitian through Antoninus Pius

LEGIONS:

We shall begin our discussion of legionary emplacement with Ptolemy's *Geography*.²²⁴ Ptolemy was writing between about AD 146 and AD 170. Ptolemy lists Singidunum in Moesia Superior along with the *legio IV Flavia*, and so by the middle of the second century, the legion was based in that city. The lingering question, however, is when did the legion arrive? On the one hand, Ritterling thinks that when the legion initially arrived in Upper Moesia that it was probably based at Viminacium, the winter quarters of the *Legio VII Claudia*.²²⁵ With its sojourn in Dacia after Trajan's Dacian wars, Ritterling posits that the unit then moved to Singidunum during the reign of Hadrian.²²⁶ Mocsy also suggests Viminacium as the possible first base of the legion, but does not rule out the possibility that the legion was based initially at Singidunum, or even Ratiaria.²²⁷ On the other hand, Strobel, Bojović, Campbell, and Le Bohec and Wolff say rather unequivocally that the legion spent the duration of its time in Moesia Superior at Singidunum.²²⁸ Part of the problem with trying to identify the legion's original Moesian station is the disjointed picture presented by the high number of inscriptions from both Singidunum and Viminacium, and the difficulty in dating most of the inscriptions from both sites.²²⁹ With no definitive evidence for Viminacium as its base, it would be best to maintain that the legion spent its first years in Moesia at Singidunum, which is where it returned after its time in Dacia.

²²⁴ The edition of Ptolemy's *Geography* used for this paper is Muller's (1883).

²²⁵ Ritterling 1925: 1543.

²²⁶ Ritterling 1925: 1543.

²²⁷ Mocsy 1974: 82-83. In Ptolemy's city list for Moesia Superior he does mention Ratiaria. Significantly, he does not associate a legion with that city, although he does call it a *colonia*.

²²⁸ Strobel 1984: 88; Bojović 1996: 53-68; Campbell 1996a: 840; Le Bohec and Wolff 2000: 239.

²²⁹ For a brief discussion of the epigraphic habits of the legion see Le Bohec and Wolff (2000: 239-240). Cf. Mirković and Dušanić 1976: 28-29.

When we return to Ptolemy's description and subsequently to Viminacium, we again find that he has noted the presence of a legion; however, he does not identify that legion, but merely records *λεγιων*.²³⁰ Fortunately for us, identifying this legion is not difficult. Scholarly opinion favours the *legio VII Claudia* as the occupying legion.²³¹ There are scores of inscriptions that attest the legion's presence in this centre.

The first city that Ptolemy mentions in Moesia Inferior with a legion is Durostoron (Durostorum) with the *legio I Italica*.²³² However, Ptolemy was mistaken, and the legion had not changed its station. Scholars agree that in fact it was still based at Novae, to which Ptolemy does not assign a legion.²³³ Troesmis is the next major centre assigned a legion by Ptolemy. Ptolemy claims that the *legio V Macedonica* was in Troesmis.²³⁴ It seems that the legion had moved from its earlier base at Oescus, which is where it had been based since its return to Moesia from the east during the reign of Vespasian.²³⁵ Then, at some point during or after the second Dacian war of Trajan, the *legio V Macedonica* moved to a new base at Troesmis.²³⁶

Unfortunately, Ptolemy does not list any other towns with garrisons; yet, we know that the *legio XI Claudia* had moved to the province by this period. As it turns out he had mentioned the city that housed the legion, namely Durostorum; however, he improperly

²³⁰ Ptol. *Geog.* 3.9.3.

²³¹ Filow 1963: 62-63; Mocsy 1974: 82; Campbell 1996a: 841; Le Bohec and Wolff 2000: 242.

²³² Ptol. *Geog.* 3.10.5.

²³³ For the assigning of the *legio I Italica* to a base at Novae see Filow (1963: 63), Campbell (1996a: 839), Zahariade and Gudea (1997: 43-45), and Absil (2000: 228-232). Although this legion does not seem to have been quite as prolific as some other legions, there are at least a handful of inscriptions that attest its presence at Novae at this time: *AE* 1999, 1332; *ILBulGR* 301; *ILBulGR* 306; *ILBulGR* 307; *ILBulGR* 329.

²³⁴ Ptol. *Geog.* 3.10.5.

²³⁵ *CIL* III.12348; *CIL* III.14415. For the legion's tenure at Oescus see Ritterling (1925: 1575-1576), Filow (1963: 64), and Zahariade and Gudea (1997: 44).

²³⁶ Ritterling 1925: 1576-1578; Filow 1963: 64; Campbell 1996a: 840; Zahariade and Gudea 1997: 44. See also *CIL* III.6166; *CIL* III.6168; and *CIL* III.6169.

assigned the *legio I Italica* to the city.²³⁷ In fact, since the legion's arrival in the province its base had been Durostorum, which is where it remained for the duration of its time in Moesia Inferior.²³⁸

AUXILIA:

We shall begin with the interior of Moesia Superior. There, we have some scattered evidence in regard to the postings of auxiliary units. Petrović says that when the *cohors I Thracum Syriaca* arrived in the province it garrisoned Timacum Minus.²³⁹ It stayed there until it was transferred to Transmarisca.²⁴⁰ Following the *cohors I Thracum Syriaca*'s transfer, the *cohors II Aurelia Dardanorum* replaced it at Timacum Minus.²⁴¹ The *cohors I Montanorum* was also briefly at Timacum Minus.²⁴² Towards the end of the first century the *cohors I Cilicum* and the *cohors I Cretum* were both based at Naissus.²⁴³ By AD 134, however, the *cohors I Cilicum* had moved to Moesia Inferior.²⁴⁴

Several auxiliary units were also active in the vicinity of the two main legionary bases, Viminacium and Singidunum. We have evidence that the *cohors III Campestris*, the *cohors VII Breucorum*, and the *cohors I Flavia Hispanorum* were all active in the area around Viminacium at the end of the first century and beginning of the second.²⁴⁵

By the reign of Hadrian the *cohors III Campestris* was still based in the region at

²³⁷ Zahariade and Gudea (1997: 44).

²³⁸ *CIL* III.7474. See also Ritterling 1925: 1698; Filow 1963: 65; Campbell 1996a: 841; Zahariade and Gudea 1997: 44; Fellman 2000: 130.

²³⁹ Petrović 1995: 44. Cf. Mocsy 1974: 81; Spaul 2000: 366.

²⁴⁰ Petrović 1995: 44.

²⁴¹ See chapter 3 below for a discussion of this unit.

²⁴² Petrović 1995: 44. Cf. *AE* 1903, 289, which is a funerary stone.

²⁴³ Petrović 1979: 31. For the *cohors I Cretum* see *AE* 1963, 262 (a funerary stone); for the *cohors I Cilicum* see *CIL* III.8250 (funerary stone).

²⁴⁴ Petrović 1979: 31.

²⁴⁵ Mirković 1986: 38.

Cuppae.²⁴⁶ The *cohors I Montanorum*, which had been based in the interior, was now based at Novae while the *cohors V Gallorum* was based at Transdierna.²⁴⁷ When it returned to Moesia Superior in the second century from Dacia, it may have been based in the modern city of Pojejena.²⁴⁸ Karavas believes that the *cohors IX voluntariorum*, which is not mentioned in any diplomas, was based at Transdierna in the first half of the second century.²⁴⁹

Tricornium may have been a base for the *cohors I Flavia Bessorum* from AD 100 to AD 120.²⁵⁰ Later in the second century, Tricornium seems to have been the headquarters for the *cohors I Pannoniorum*.²⁵¹ The *cohors V Hispanorum* may have been based at Cuppae.²⁵² Karavas suspects that in the last decade of the first century the *cohors IV Thracum* was based in Diana.²⁵³ The *ala Praetoria* may have been based at Teutoburgium while in the Balkans. Spaul bases this supposition on the provinces where the unit is known to have served, namely Pannonia Inferior, Moesia Superior, and then Pannonia Inferior.²⁵⁴ His suggestion is that the unit only changed provinces with the corresponding changes in the provincial boundaries. The *cohors I Hispanorum* was likely based at Stobi when it was based in Moesia Superior in AD 105. This assumption is based on the internal evidence from the papyrus that documents some of its soldiers'

²⁴⁶ Mirković 1986: 38. Cf. Radnoti 1959: 142ff.

²⁴⁷ Strobel 1984: 131; Strobel 1984: 140. Mirković 1986: 38; Karavas 2001: 79 (Novae), 90 (Cuppae). For the *cohors V Gallorum* see *AE* 1963, 165 (altar) *AE* 1972, 490 (altar). The *cohors I Montanorum* seems to have been based at Novae while it was in Moesia Superior at the end of the first century and beginning of the second century. It returned to Novae when it came back to Moesia Superior during Hadrian's reign.

²⁴⁸ Strobel 1984: 131.

²⁴⁹ Karavas 2001: 90. Cf. Beneš 1978: 56; Strobel 1984: 146; Spaul 2000: 38; *AE* 1977, 740 (brick).

²⁵⁰ Karavas 2001: 71.

²⁵¹ Karavas 2001: 71. Karavas' suggestion is based on the presence of brick stamps naming the unit and a fragmentary diploma.

²⁵² Karavas 2001: 84-85. Karavas bases his suggestion on the presence of brick stamps.

²⁵³ Karavas 2001: 93.

²⁵⁴ Spaul 1994: 188.

movements.²⁵⁵ The *cohors I Cisipadensium* may have been stationed in the modern Lomec during its tenure in Moesia Superior.²⁵⁶

The *cohors III Brittonum veterana* was possibly at Pontes at the end of the first century and into the second century.²⁵⁷ The *cohors IV Cypria cR* may have been based, or at least launched its campaigns during Trajan's Dacian wars from Drobeta prior to its move to Dacia.²⁵⁸ It seems that the *cohors II Hispanorum Scutata Cyrenaica equitata* was probably at Translelerata during the first Dacian war.²⁵⁹ This cohort may have been involved with bridgework at Drobeta.²⁶⁰ Then, prior to its move to Dacia, it was possibly stationed at Virset.²⁶¹

We now turn to the auxiliary units of Moesia Inferior. The *cohors II Mattiacorum* garrisoned Barbosi in the middle of the second century and beyond.²⁶² The *cohors I Sugambrorum equitata veterana* was based at Sucidava, though perhaps only briefly.²⁶³ That same unit seems to have been based at Montana by some point in the first quarter of the second century.²⁶⁴ Sacidava, not to be confused with Sucidava, was probably the home of two cohorts in the second century: the *cohors I Cilicum equitata milliaria* was there for about 150 years beginning in the early second century; the *cohors II Gallorum*

²⁵⁵ RMR 63.

²⁵⁶ Spaul 2000: 464. Cf. *CIL* III.14429.

²⁵⁷ Strobel 1984: 125.

²⁵⁸ Strobel 1984: 129. Cf. *IDR* II.179

²⁵⁹ Strobel 1984: 135. Cf. *IDR* III.1,7.

²⁶⁰ *CIL* III.1703.

²⁶¹ Strobel 1984: 135.

²⁶² Radnoti 1959: 149; Zahariade and Gudea 1997: 46; Karavas 2001: 121. Karavas says that the cohort garrisoned the site sometime after AD 145. Cf. *ISM* V.308; *CIL* III.7620.

²⁶³ Zahariade and Gudea 1997: 46.

²⁶⁴ Rankov 1983: 42; Strobel 1984: 143.

seems to have been there from AD 99-112.²⁶⁵ The *cohors II Flavia Brittonum* replaced the *cohors II Mattiacorum* at Sexaginta Prista between AD 145 and AD 151.²⁶⁶

Both Spaul and Karavas allege that the *ala II Hispanorum et Aravacorum* was based at Carsium when it came to Moesia Inferior late in the first century.²⁶⁷ This assertion was based on two building dedications found at Carsium, one of which is dated to AD 102-103 but is fragmentary.²⁶⁸ There are also a couple of other inscriptions from Carsium,²⁶⁹ and a handful of other inscriptions naming the unit from other sites in Moesia Inferior, but no archaeological evidence. Therefore, Carsium was likely the unit's base.²⁷⁰

Spaul and Velkov have argued that the *cohors II Lucensium* was based at Montana at the start of the reign of Domitian before its transfer to Abritus around AD 86.²⁷¹ The *ala Gallorum Flaviana* may have been based at Tomi when it was in Moesia Inferior.²⁷² Spaul suggests that the *cohors I Bracaraugustanorum* may have been stationed at the modern town of Slaveni when it was in Moesia Inferior, though perhaps only briefly.²⁷³

The *cohors I Lusitanorum Cyrenaica* may have been at Cius in the first half of the second century.²⁷⁴ Karavas suspects that the *ala I Vespasiana Dardanorum* was at

²⁶⁵ Zahariade and Gudea 1997: 46.

²⁶⁶ Zahariade and Gudea 1997: 47; Karavas 2001: 131.

²⁶⁷ Spaul 1994: 35; Karavas 2001: 126.

²⁶⁸ The partial inscription is *AE* 1980, 814 whereas the inscription that names the unit is *CIL* III.7603a. The second inscription, however, dates to AD 200.

²⁶⁹ *AE* 1980, 815 and *AE* 1960, 333. The second inscription names a veteran.

²⁷⁰ Strobel (1984: 112, 188-189) merely states that the unit was involved in construction at Carsium around the end of the 1st Dacian war. Cf. Radnoti 1959: 146.

²⁷¹ Spaul 2000: 83-84; Velkov 1990: 247-256.

²⁷² Spaul 1994: 115. Cf. *CIL* III.7557 (fragmentary inscription).

²⁷³ Spaul 2000: 89. Cf. *AE* 1966, 317 (stamped brick).

²⁷⁴ Karavas 2001: 125.

Arrubium in the second century.²⁷⁵ When the *cohors I Thracum Syriaca* returned to Moesia Inferior, it was probably based at Tutrakan.²⁷⁶ The *ala I Pannoniorum* may have been based at Troesmis, though only briefly around AD 101/102.²⁷⁷ The *cohors I Ubiorum* was likely at Capidava in the first half of the second century, at least until around AD 143.²⁷⁸ Thereafter, the *cohors I Germanorum cR* was probably based at Capidava during its stay in Moesia Inferior.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁵ Karavas 2001: 123-124. This supposition is based on the lack of evidence for the unit anywhere else.

²⁷⁶ Radnoti 1959: 149; Eck and Roxan 1997: 197. Cf. *AE* 1939, 101 (an altar).

²⁷⁷ Strobel 1984: 113.

²⁷⁸ Karavas 2001: 126.

²⁷⁹ Radnoti 1959: 149; Spaul 2000: 256; Karavas 2001: 126. See *AE* 1939, 87 (altar); and *AE* 1950, 76 (funerary stone).

CHAPTER 3:

THE SITUATION IN THE MOESIAS FROM AD 161 TO AD 235

MARCUS AURELIUS:

The writer of the *Historia Augusta*, henceforth referred to as Scriptor,¹ refers to the Marcommanic War as one “which surpassed any in the memory of man”.² Fortunately for the inhabitants of the provinces of Lower and Upper Moesia, the focal point for this horrific war was around the upper and middle Danube; in fact, indirectly or otherwise, the sources do not tell us whether any conflict from the wars spilled over into the Moesias.³ There are, however, signs of some activity in Dacia and in Moesia Inferior.⁴

At some point in AD 169 or AD 170 some tribes crossed into Dacia and were demanding money and threatening war, though this need not have occasioned assistance from the Lower or Upper Moesian administration.⁵ There is a vague reference by Scriptor to Avidius Cassius severely punishing a group of auxiliaries under his command, who had slaughtered 3000 Sarmatians.⁶ This reference is in the midst of Scriptor’s discussion of Avidius’ reputation as a strict disciplinarian; moreover, it is reminiscent of

¹ I am borrowing the name adopted by Honoré (1987) in his article on the formerly so-called writers of the *Historia Augusta*.

² HA *Marc.* 17.2. trans. Magie.

³ A great summary of the war and many of its problems is found in Birley’s (1993: 249-255) biography of Marcus Aurelius. He goes into more detail about the war on pp 159-183.

⁴ The comment above does not mean that the Moesian armies were not active in the wars, or that there was no activity in the area. Mocsy (1974: 187), for example, suggests that Verus was active in both Dacia and the Moesias. At the same time, Birley (1993: 160-161) has said that in the opening phase, that is around AD 169, much of the fighting was confined to the Hungarian plain, which was part of the barbarian territory bordered by Lower Pannonia in the west, Upper Moesia in the south, and Dacia in the east. What is more, later during the war (c. AD 170) the Costoboci passed through Thrace and Macedonia before reaching as far as Eleusis in Greece. Unless they traveled by sea, they presumably would have passed through Moesia Inferior on their way south and west. Moesia Superior (Birley 1993: 164ff) may have had its fair share of activity from AD 170 onwards.

⁵ Cass. Dio 72.11.1-2.

⁶ HA *Avid. Cass.* 4.6.

Tacitus' descriptions of Corbulo during the eastern campaign under Nero. Scriptor also does not provide us with any clue as to where this may have happened, or when, although it does fall before Avidius became the commander of the Syrian army. Thus, if it is authentic it may fall sometime early in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, though quite possibly earlier.⁷ The last possible instance of warfare occurred around AD 178 when, "the Scythian situation again called for him [Marcus Aurelius]".⁸ However, that is all we learn about this.

COMMODUS:

There are more hints of trouble in the vicinity of the Moesias in the beginning of Commodus' reign. Dio's excerpter refers to some problems with 12,000 neighbouring Dacians. They were apparently on the point of attack when they were dissuaded by a certain Sabinianus, who promised them land in Roman Dacia.⁹ There are also reports of a war with barbarians purported to have been from the region beyond Dacia and on the Roman side led by both Albinus and Niger.¹⁰ We know, that is assuming the validity of the report, that those two later pretenders to the throne "won fame"¹¹ in those encounters. Scriptor may be referring to the same event when he says that, "at this time in Sarmatia the noteworthy accomplishments belonging to the two other generals were attributed by Perennis to his son."¹² Herodian tells us that, at least at first, Commodus was sensible enough, "allocating the control of the Danube campaign to trustworthy commanders, with

⁷ Assuming that Marcus Aurelius' Parthian war started in AD 162, that would put Avidius' command to some time before then. Regrettably, Scriptor also does not give us any idea as to what army he may have been leading: "*cum exercitum duceret*" (HA *Avid. Cass.* 4.6).

⁸ Cass. Dio 72.33.1.

⁹ Cass. Dio 73.3.3.

¹⁰ Cass. Dio 73.8.1.

¹¹ Cass Dio 73.8.1. trans. Cary.

¹² HA *Comm.* 6.1.

orders to check the incursions of barbarians".¹³ While the sparseness of the detail provided by these three authors to some degree reflects their interests, it must also reflect the minor nature of these events: these were not major operations.¹⁴

SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS TO SEVERUS ALEXANDER:

Generally, following the reign of Commodus and prior to the chaos of the middle of the third century, there was very little in the way of known military operations that took place in the Moesias. The region was almost beset with war in AD 196. Dio's excerpter alleges that, "the Scythians were in a mood for fighting at this time".¹⁵ Mother Nature, however, managed to kill their desire to act upon this.¹⁶

During the reign of Caracalla in about AD 214, Scriptor alleges that Caracalla conquered some Goths on his way east.¹⁷ Scriptor, however, may have based this story on his knowledge that Caracalla had murdered his brother Geta, and the similarity between the names Geta and Getae. For he says: " 'Add besides, please, Geticus Maximus,' because he had killed his brother Geta, and the Goths are called Getae".¹⁸ Around AD 218, the Dacians ravaged portions of Dacia; after getting back hostages the raiding stopped.¹⁹

¹³ Hdn. 1.6.8. trans. Whittaker.

¹⁴ Unfortunately, all three authors provide us with three different and equally vague descriptions of the location of the operation: Dio's excerpter says that it was beyond Dacia; Scriptor claims that it was in Sarmatia; and Herodian alleges that it was on the Danube. It could very well be that this operation was little more than a cleanup expedition following Roman success in the Second Marcomannic war. It is also possible that these three authors are referring to three different events.

¹⁵ Cass. Dio 75.3.1. trans. Cary.

¹⁶ The excerpter reports: "The Scythians were in a mood for fighting at this time; but while they were consulting together, thunders and lightnings, accompanied by rain, suddenly broke over them, and thunderbolts fell, killing their three chief men, and this restrained them" (75.3.1, trans. Cary).

¹⁷ HA *M. Ant.* 10.6.

¹⁸ HA *M. Ant.* 10.6.

¹⁹ Cass. Dio 79.27.5.

Towards the end of Severus Alexander's reign, perhaps between AD 231 and AD 235, Herodian tells us that, "the Germans were on the march across the Rhine and Danube, devastating the Roman Empire, over-running the garrisons on the river banks, and also the cities and villages".²⁰ Herodian is likely referring to the Upper Danube,²¹ though that does not rule out the possibility of problems along other stretches of the Danube.

Troop Movements from Marcus Aurelius to Severus Alexander

LEGIONS:

As noted in chapter 2, we have the legionary inscription list from Rome at our disposal.²² The legions given in that list match the deployment that we constructed for the end of the reign of Antoninus Pius, or the beginning of the reign of Marcus Aurelius. The *legio I Italica*, the *legio V Macedonica*, and the *legio XI Claudia* were in Moesia Inferior; and the *legio IIII Flavia* and the *legio VII Claudia* were in Moesia Superior. From this, we might assume then that the legions remained stationary at least through the year that the inscription was inscribed.

In book 55 following a discussion in which Livia consults with Augustus about how to rule, Dio includes a discussion of the legions and their financing. This passage is important because Dio flat out says, "Twenty-three, or, as others say, twenty-five legions of citizen soldiers were being supported at this time. At present only nineteen of them

²⁰ Herodian. 6.7.2. trans. Whittaker.

²¹ This is suggested by his choice of the term "Germans", and by his later claim that, "[the Germans were] putting the Illyrians who bordered Italy as neighbours in considerable risk" (6.7.2, trans. Whittaker).

²² *ILS* 2288.

still exist, as follows”.²³ Based on what we know about Dio’s life, we can safely assume that when Dio says “now”, or “at present” (*ννν*), he is referring to some point between the years of AD 211 and AD 229.²⁴ After Dio notes that nineteen legions still exist, he then provides the names of the legions and their provinces. For our sake, the pertinent legions are as follows: “the Fifth Macedonica in Dacia”²⁵...and the Seventh which is in Upper Moesia, and which is most certainly called Claudia²⁶...the Eleventh in Lower Moesia, the Claudian; for two legions were thus named after Claudius because they did not wage war against him in the revolt of Camillus”.²⁷ After listing the remaining legions which had existed since the days of Augustus, Dio goes on to say: “I shall speak of the other legions also which exist today and tell of their enlistment by emperors subsequent to Augustus”.²⁸ Among this supplementary list are two legions relevant to this discussion, namely the *legio I Italica*, and the *legio IIII Flavia*. Dio has this to say: “For Nero named the first one the Italika and it winters in Lower Moesia”²⁹...Vespasian...the Fourth Flavian in Upper Moesia”.³⁰ Thus, on the basis of Dio’s comments the legionary disposition of the two Moesias at the time that he wrote was as follows: the *legio I Italica* and the *legio XI Claudia* were based in Moesia Inferior; and the *legio IIII Flavia* and the *legio VII Claudia* were based in Moesia Superior. There is a discrepancy between this list and our previous list: the *legio V Macedonica* is no longer in Moesia

²³ Cass. Dio 50.23.2. trans. Cary.

²⁴ These are the years when Cassius Dio is believed to have been writing.

²⁵ Cass. Dio 55.23.3.

²⁶ Cass. Dio 55.23.3.

²⁷ Cass. Dio 55.23.4.

²⁸ Cass. Dio 55.24.1. trans. Cary.

²⁹ Cass. Dio 55.24.1. The text reads: “Vespasian [organised] the Second Adiutrix which is in Lower Pannonia and the Fourth Flavian in Upper Moesia”.

³⁰ Cass. Dio 55.24.3.

Inferior, but is instead now in Dacia.³¹ We need to try and determine when the legion left Moesia Inferior for Dacia.

There is considerable debate surrounding the date of the transfer of the Fifth Macedonian legion. At the date that the legionary inscription from Rome was inscribed, the legion was still based in Moesia Inferior. So, between the years AD 161 and AD 220,³² the Fifth Macedonian legion moved. Many scholars, such as Forni, Parker, Filow, Gudea, Campbell, and Piso favour a date of AD 167 or 168.³³ The last firmly dated inscriptions that name the legion that we have from Moesia Inferior are from no later than AD 167. These inscriptions, of which there are two, are both from Troesmis. This first one dates to AD 162 and records a centurion of the *legio V Macedonica*.³⁴ The second one dates to sometime between AD 162 and AD 167,³⁵ and records a Valerius Valens, a soldier of the Fifth Macedonian legion who died in the Parthian campaign.³⁶ The transfer likely took place after AD 167. Unfortunately, the only Dacian inscription that dates to sometime between AD 167 and AD 220 and refers to the legion dates to AD 195.³⁷ We can probably narrow down the time of the transfer to some point between the years AD 167 and AD 195.

There is one further inscription which might help us pin down the date even further. This inscription, which probably dates to AD 170, records a Tiberius Valerius, a

³¹ Cass. Dio 55.23.3.

³² The latter date is arbitrary: I picked it since it represents the midway point between the years that Dio is known to have been writing, AD 211 and AD 235.

³³ Forni 1958: 202 – AD 167; Parker, 1958: 167-168 – he does not specify the date; Filow 1963: 77-78 – AD 167 or AD 168; Gudea 1979: 84 – AD 167; Campbell 1996a: 840 – AD 167 or AD 168; Piso 2000: 215 – AD 168. Gudea (1979: 84) notes that “few units were transferred to Dacia after 120; such arrivals are recorded in Dacia Inferior only.” In fact, the two major waves of troop movement in Dacia are in the years immediately following the conquest, and between the years of AD 110 and AD 120 (Gudea 1979: 84).

³⁴ *CIL* III.6169.

³⁵ These are the dates for the Parthian campaign led by Lucius Verus.

³⁶ *CIL* III.6189.

³⁷ *CIL* III.905.

veteran of the *legio V Macedonica*.³⁸ This man served in the Parthian (or Oriental as it is called here) and the German (that is Marcomannic) campaigns during Marcus Aurelius' reign. What is significant for us is that this Valerius was honourably discharged from Dacia, "H(ONESTA) MISSIONE IN DACIA", and not Moesia Inferior; this is despite the fact that the inscription itself was found at Troesmis. Thus, as we know that neither campaign took place in Dacia,³⁹ we can assume that the legion was likely based in Dacia at the time that the inscription was inscribed. The date of the transfer was between the years AD 167 and AD 170. If we take a look at some the details of the Marcommanic wars, we might be able to get a more precise date for the legionary change.⁴⁰ We know that the first incursion was in AD 167. The Roman counter-offensive, however, did not begin before AD 168; it was cut short thanks in no small part to the death of Lucius Verus in AD 169.⁴¹ There was an offensive in the spring of AD 170 and by AD 171 the Romans had expelled the invaders. But, there was another offensive again in AD 172. Still, based on the date of *CIL* III.7505 it is the offensive of AD 170 that should be equated with the *expeditio Germanica*.

There is one further clue that might help us pin down the date of the legion's transfer. We have a rather lengthy inscription that preserves the names of soldiers enlisted in AD 169 for the *legio VII Claudia* and discharged in AD 195.⁴² Mirković has

³⁸ *CIL* III.7505. Part of the inscription reads (lines 4-9): ...ex[[pedi]t(ione) Orientali sub St[[at(io) Pri]sco, Iul(io) Severo, M[art(io)] Vero] c[on]sularissimis v[ir]is, item Germ(anica) sub[[Cal]pur(nio) Agricola, Cl(audio) Fronto[[n]e c[on]sularissimis v[ir]is)... Cf. Ritterling 1925: 1579; Parker 1958: 167-168; Filow 1963: 77-78; and Piso 2000: 214-215; *ISM* V.160.

³⁹ This is not to say that the province of Dacia did not feel the effects of the war: in AD 167 (Birley 1987: 252) the gold-mines in Dacia were attacked.

⁴⁰ For the dates and events of the Marcommanic wars I am relying on the reconstruction of Birley (1987: 249-255).

⁴¹ The plague also hampered Roman efforts in AD 168.

⁴² *CIL* III.14507 (from Viminacium).

recently published a new fragment that belonged to this military roster.⁴³ There were around 270 names of soldiers on this roster ready for discharge in AD 195. Although we have at least two other military rosters that list a greater number of soldiers,⁴⁴ we have another inscription that names soldiers recruited around the same time (AD 168) from Egypt for the *legio II Traiana*.⁴⁵ By comparison, there are only c. 120 soldiers named on the Egyptian list. Also, we have another roster for the *legio VII Claudia*.⁴⁶ In this case the soldiers were enlisted in AD 134 or 135, and they were discharged around AD 160. Significantly, while there are still several soldiers listed, 239 to be exact, this number is still lower than the inscription of AD 195.⁴⁷ There is still a demonstrable increase in recruits that we might well attribute to the severity of the Marcommanic wars.⁴⁸

If we have extra soldiers called into service at the dawn of counterattacks in the Marcomannic wars enlisting in the *legio VII Claudia*, we might wonder whether a similar recruiting drive took place in the other legions concerned. Tiberius Valerius and the rest of his comrades in the *legio V Macedonica* were certainly called into action by AD 170 at the latest for the second major Roman offensive; it follows that by that time the legion was based in Dacia.⁴⁹ Therefore, we might surmise that once news of the invasion had reached the Roman forces in the east and the dust had settled from that conflict, the Danubian troops were sent back post-haste. As a result, the legion had been transferred

⁴³ Mirković 2004.

⁴⁴ See the chart on p 24 of Mirković's article. There, an inscription from Troesmis (*ISM* V.137) and one from Lambaesis (*CIL* VIII.18068) both list around 300 soldiers.

⁴⁵ *CIL* III.6580.

⁴⁶ *IMS* II.52.

⁴⁷ All in all, the number of military rosters that we have is paltry. Thus, any conclusions are strictly hypothetical.

⁴⁸ The *legio II Traiana* did not participate in the conflict.

⁴⁹ The Romans were not ignorant of the problems that their tribal neighbours, such as the Sarmatians, could pose. Conversely, the Sarmatians and Rome's other neighbours were generally well aware of Rome's affairs as the first Sarmatian incursion seems to have occurred towards the end of the Parthian war or at least, before the Roman troops from the Danube had returned. Yet, the transfer does not seem to have been in regard to any perceived threat, as the Sarmatian invasion seems to have caught the Romans unawares.

by the end of AD 167, or before the first Roman attack in AD 168. And so, by AD 168 the *legio III Flavia* and the *legio VII Claudia* were in Moesia Superior; the *legio I Italica* and *legion XI Claudia* were in Moesia Inferior.

AUXILIA:

We now turn to the auxiliary units posted in the two provinces during this last period. Unfortunately, our last diploma that gives us a list of units dates to February 8, AD 161,⁵⁰ which is about a month before Marcus Aurelius took the throne. What is more, the ancient authors are if anything, worse than they were previously as regards the auxiliary units. Thus, we are almost totally dependent on what stone inscriptions we have for the period from AD 161 to AD 235.

Of the seventeen units that were based in Moesia Inferior at Marcus Aurelius' ascension, only eight units have left a datable inscription recording their presence during the reigns of Commodus and the Severan emperors. A soldier from the *cohors I Cilicum sagittaria* left his mark at Chersonesos at some point at the end of the second century or beginning of the third century.⁵¹ We have a decurion of the *ala Gallorum Aetectorigiana* at Tomis during the reign of Caracalla.⁵² A prefect of the *cohors II Mattiacorum* was recorded in the modern village of Lometz in AD 198.⁵³ A veteran of the *cohors I Claudia Sugambrorum veterana* was in the Chersonesos at the end of the second century or beginning of the third century.⁵⁴ The *ala II Hispanorum Aravacorum* left the greatest mark in this period in Moesia Inferior. We have a number of inscriptions that record its

⁵⁰ Marcus Aurelius ascended to the throne on March 7, AD 161 (Birley 1996: 220).

⁵¹ *CIL* III.13751.

⁵² *ISM* II.93.

⁵³ *CIL* III.14428.

⁵⁴ *AE* 2000, 1276.

presence, the earliest of which dates between AD 161 and AD 169,⁵⁵ the latest of which dates to the beginning of the third century.⁵⁶ The *ala I Vespasiana Dardanorum* was found in the modern town of Cerna at the beginning of the third century.⁵⁷ We have a prefect of the *ala I Flavia Gaetulorum* at Tomis between AD 238 and AD 244.⁵⁸ Finally, soldiers of the *cohors II Flavia Brittonum* were recorded working on the bathhouse at the modern town of Rousse in AD 230.⁵⁹

In the previous chapter we demonstrated that the *ala I Pannoniorum et Gallorum* was never transferred to any part of Dacia, despite the earlier contention of scholars.⁶⁰ In fact, it is not recorded on any Dacian diploma that falls within the chronological limits of this chapter.⁶¹ As a result, the unit likely remained in Moesia Inferior during this period. The *cohors I Lusitanorum* presumably remained in the province through the third century.⁶² The *cohors I Flavia Numidarum* left the province of Lower Moesia sometime after the ascension of Marcus Aurelius. It is listed on a diploma from Lycia and Pamphylia dated to August 23, AD 167,⁶³ and on another diploma from the same province dated to March 23, AD 178.⁶⁴

The *cohors I Thracum Syriaca* likely stayed in the province through the duration of its existence. Beneš has suggested that towards the end of the second century the unit,

⁵⁵ *ISM* V.23.

⁵⁶ *CIL* III.14214-22.

⁵⁷ *ISM* V.218.

⁵⁸ *ISM* II.106.

⁵⁹ *CIL* III.7473.

⁶⁰ Cichorius 1893: 1245-1246; Wagner 1938: 38-39; Spaul 1994: 83.

⁶¹ We have at least seven, one of which is from Dacia Superior while the other six are from Dacia Porolissensis. Significantly, Dacia Porolissensis is the province that was purported to have been the new home of this *ala*. The latest dated diplomas, however, record the *ala II Gallorum et Pannoniorum* (*CIL* XVI.185 and *RMD* 116).

⁶² Beneš 1978: 44-45; Spaul 2000: 60. Cf. Wagner 1938: 163-164.

⁶³ *RMD* 67.

⁶⁴ *CIL* XVI.128. It is conceivable that this Numidian cohort marched east with Lucius Verus as he set out against the Parthians.

or a vexillation of the unit, served in the Chersonesos.⁶⁵ This is entirely possible, but without further evidence it must remain speculation. The *cohors I Germanorum* presumably remained in Moesia Inferior into the third century.⁶⁶ Both units of Bracaraugustani, the *cohors I Bracaraugustanorum* and the *cohors II Bracaraugustanorum*, also probably stayed in Moesia Inferior well into the third century.⁶⁷ Spaul suspects that the *cohors I Lepidiana* was transferred to Arabia at some point in the second century because it was active at Melik Cherif on the Euphrates under Septimius Severus.⁶⁸ The inscription naming the *I Lepidiana* includes the titles *equitata* and *bis torquata*, neither of which have appeared in other inscriptions. At present Spaul's suspicion must remain conjecture.⁶⁹ We bring our discussion of the auxiliary units of Moesia Inferior to a close with the *cohors II Chalcidenorum*. Yet again, the evidence is lacking and thus we can assume that the unit remained in Moesia Inferior in the third century.

The situation in Moesia Superior from the reign of Marcus Aurelius on seems to have been markedly different from that of Moesia Inferior. Scriptor, in a discussion of the extreme measures taken by Marcus Aurelius in light of the eastern plague and the troubles with the Marcomanni, among others, includes the following statement: "He

⁶⁵ Beneš 1978: 53.

⁶⁶ In the words of Spaul (2000: 256): "Its service seems to have been based at Capidava on the banks of the Danube west of Constantza. There is little else to say." Regrettably, Spaul's last statement can be applied to most auxiliary units.

⁶⁷ There is some speculation that all or some part (a vexillation) of the *cohors I Bracaraugustanorum* was stationed in the Crimea during the middle of the second century. See Wagner 1938: 99. Cf. *ILS* 9160.

⁶⁸ Spaul (2000: 156) on the basis of *AE* 1908, 22. I am ignoring the fact that the Euphrates does not flow through Arabia.

⁶⁹ If the unit did head east, it was probably during Verus' campaign.

even made the bandits of Dalmatia and Dardania soldiers.”⁷⁰ The three geographical authors whose works are relevant for this paper agree on the location of Dardania.⁷¹ From the list of known auxiliary units in Moesia Superior before Marcus Aurelius, there do not seem to be any that had a specifically Dardanian origin.⁷² There was a cavalry wing, namely the *ala I Vespasiana Dardanorum*, which was based in Moesia Inferior. This unit was never part of the army of Moesia Superior. Regardless, if we turn to the stone inscriptions which we can date from Moesia Superior, we find a few new units. Both the *cohors I Aurelia Dardanorum* and the *cohors II Aurelia Dardanorum* first appear during the reign of Marcus Aurelius; moreover, the imperial cognomen of the two units suggests a connection with that emperor. What is also significant is the ethnic name of these units. Thus, on the basis of the imperial cognomen and the ethnic component of the names of both these units, we see that, at least as regards the recruitment of these units, Scriptor does not appear to be fallacious.

There is one more matter to discuss in regard to the Dardanian units. Cichorius, somewhat uncertain, dated the formation of the *cohors I Aurelia Dardanorum* to the reigns of either Antoninus Pius or Marcus Aurelius.⁷³ He correctly limits its emplacement to the province of Moesia Superior. Wagner and Kraft, however, do not. Wagner erroneously suggests that the unit was first stationed in Dalmatia in the first half of the second century.⁷⁴ Kraft rightly dates its foundation to the reign of Marcus Aurelius, though he suggests that the unit may have been in Dalmatia before moving to

⁷⁰ HA *Marc.* 21.7.

⁷¹ See Strabo 7.5.7; Plin. *HN* 3.26.149; and Ptol. *Geog* 3.9.1-4.

⁷² The units are listed in *RMD* 247, which dates to September 9, AD 132; *CIL* XVI.111, which dates to AD 159/160; and *RMD* 55, which dates to February 8, AD 161 – that is about a month before the ascension of Marcus Aurelius.

⁷³ Cichorius 1900: 280.

⁷⁴ Wagner 1938: 130-131.

Naissus in Moesia Superior.⁷⁵ Their argument is based on an inscription from Dalmatia. However, the existence of that inscription does not necessarily mean that the unit was ever based in Dalmatia.⁷⁶ We know that the Dardanian region of Moesia Superior was in close proximity to Dalmatia. Although the sources do not suggest that Dardania spilled over into Dalmatia, that does not mean Dardanians themselves would not have moved back and forth between the two provinces. Like some parts of the frontier between the Roman Empire and *barbaricum*, the provincial border was not a fixed line across which there was no cultural interaction. Beneš and Spaul correctly restrict its emplacement to Moesia Superior.⁷⁷ Both the *cohors I Aurelia Dardanorum* and the *cohors II Aurelia Dardanorum*⁷⁸ remained in Moesia Superior well into the third century.⁷⁹ These two units, however, may not have been the only units raised by Marcus Aurelius.

There may have been a handful of other Moesian units raised by Marcus Aurelius. Mirković lists four additional units raised by Marcus in AD 169: the *cohors II Aurelia nova*, the *cohors II Aurelia nova milliaria civium Romanorum*, the *cohors I Aurelia Pasinatum civium Romanorum milliaria*, and the *cohors II Aurelia nova Sacorum*.⁸⁰ Not all scholars agree with Mirković as regards the number of units raised by Marcus Aurelius. Indeed, the names for these units are problematic.

⁷⁵ Kraft 1951: 175.

⁷⁶ *CIL* III.14700. This inscription records a Surus Victor, a soldier of the “COH I MIL AUREL”. There is no indication from those abbreviations that we should associate this particular cohort with the *cohors I Aurelia Dardanorum*. As we saw above and shall see below, there are a handful of cohorts that bear the imperial cognomen “Aurelia”.

⁷⁷ Beneš 1978: 30; Spaul 2000: 349.

⁷⁸ There are no such scholarly discrepancies surrounding the garrison of the *cohors II Aurelia Dardanorum*, although Cichorius (1900) was not aware of its existence.

⁷⁹ The *cohors II Aurelia Dardanorum* is recorded in Moesia Superior as late as AD 242 (*AE* 1952, 191). Unfortunately, the latest datable inscription for the *cohors I Aurelia Dardanorum* dates to sometime after the ascension of Septimius Severus (*CIL* III.8251).

⁸⁰ Mirković 1976: 104. Mirković’s conviction seems to be supported as regards the period of recruitment, as is the case with the Dardanian units, by the nomenclature of these units.

We shall begin with the seemingly multitudinous *cohortes II Aureliae novae*, which Mirković identified.⁸¹ The most noticeable feature of these units is their nomenclature. All three, for example, are numbered “II”, bear the imperial cognomen *Aurelia*, and are referred to as new, or reformed – *nova*. Thus, we might wonder whether Mirković was correct in identifying three distinct units. Of those three, it is the *cohors II Aurelia nova* and the *cohors II Aurelia nova milliaria civium Romanorum* that perhaps are the best candidates to be considered one unit. The epithet *milliaria* reflects the size of the unit: the standard unit was quingenary and would have had a paper-strength of about 500 soldiers whereas the larger milliary unit would have been about twice the paper-strength of the quingenary unit with around 1000 men.⁸² The epithet *milliaria* does indeed mark a unit out as larger than the standard quingenary unit, but there need not have been another similarly named quingenary unit to necessitate the use of this epithet. As noted above, the epithet *civium Romanorum* was bestowed on a unit for meritorious service, and was not usually a title given to a unit when it was created.⁸³ Based on this evidence alone, when the unit was created, it may have borne the title *cohors II Aurelia nova*.⁸⁴ The earliest securely dated inscription that we have dates to AD 179 and calls the unit as follows: the *cohors II Aurelia nova milliaria equitata*.⁸⁵ Thus, it seems that the unit was milliary from its inception, or shortly thereafter.⁸⁶ With the passage of time and following meritorious service the unit’s name was possibly expanded to include *civium*

⁸¹ Mirković 1976: 104.

⁸² See my conclusion in regard to unit sizes.

⁸³ See the discussion of the *cohors VII Breucorum civium Romanorum* in chapter 2.

⁸⁴ Whether the title *nova* was included in the original name of the unit is debatable; it depends on the translation accepted for this particular unit, that is ‘new’ or ‘reformed’.

⁸⁵ *CIL* III.14537. Wagner (1938: 91-92) believes that this was the unit’s official name.

⁸⁶ It may have increased in size with the needs of the Marcommanic wars.

Romanorum.⁸⁷ The unit likely remained in Moesia Superior past the chronological terminus of this paper.

We now turn to the *cohors II Aurelia nova Sacorum*. The existence of this unit rests on one solitary inscription.⁸⁸ That inscription records an Aurelius Victor, a soldier of the “C(OHORS) II AUR(ELIA) N(OVA) SACOR(UM)”. Although this unit contains the elements *II Aurelia nova* like the cohort mentioned above, the *SACOR* immediately marks it out as distinct. The question is, what are we to make of this abbreviated word, which may or may not be an epithet. Trying to track down a people with which we can equate the *SACOR* is a bit more problematic. On the one hand, Wagner wants to identify the *Saci* with a Dacian tribe that lived south of Apulum.⁸⁹ He denies the equation of these *Saci* with the Scythian *Sacae*.⁹⁰ On the other hand, Beneš believed that this cohort was recruited from the tribe of the *Saci*, but admits that we do not know anything about this tribe, or where they might have lived.⁹¹ He does suggest, however, that they may have been from somewhere around the Dobrudja where there was a city named *Sacidava*.⁹² Although the equating of the tribe with the city in the Dobrudja seems to be contentious, the Scythian connection and the possibility of equating them with the *Sacae* need to be explored further.

⁸⁷ Kraft (1951: 168) only identifies one unit, namely the *cohors II Aurelia nova milliaria equitata*. The same is true of Spaul (2000: 484). Nowhere do either Cichorius (1900) or Beneš (1978) discuss the possibility of one *cohors II Aurelia nova*, let alone two.

⁸⁸ *CIL* III.14217-6. I have been unable to find any other inscriptions from the Moesias that refer to this alleged unit.

⁸⁹ Wagner 1938: 182.

⁹⁰ From a linguistic perspective, Wagner’s decision to renounce the *Sacae* as a possibility has its merits. The genitive plural of *Sacae* is *Sacarum* and not *Sacorum*. Of course, if we are to equate the *SACOR* from this inscription with the *Sacae*, then this might be a mistake on the part of the stonecutter.

⁹¹ Beneš 1978: 50.

⁹² Beneš 1978: 50. Beneš’ hypothetical tribe from Dobrudja is probably the Scythian tribe referred to by Wagner.

Dio's excerpter tells us that around AD 175, the Iazyges came to terms with the Romans.⁹³ Among the terms discussed, which included the return of 100,000 captives, the excerpter also says: "they promptly furnished as their contribution to the alliance eight thousand cavalry, fifty-five hundred of whom he sent to Britain."⁹⁴ The Iazyges are a Sarmatian people who lived more or less between Pannonia Inferior and Roman Dacia.⁹⁵ Conversely, the Scythians inhabited an area that spanned from the expanse of the Hungarian plain and the foot of the Carpathians in the west, to Mongolia in the east.⁹⁶ The Sacae, or Sakas which they are sometimes called, were generally speaking, eastern Scythians.⁹⁷ They lived around the Caspian Sea in the region north of the Jaxartes River.⁹⁸ They were neighbours to the Alans,⁹⁹ whom Arrian, as governor of Cappadocia, came up against in the middle third of the second century AD. These Scythians were apparently able to hold sway over a vast area until things fell apart in the second or first century BC.¹⁰⁰ After this, McGovern says that they became scattered over a host of "various isolated regions", among which he includes the Crimean peninsula and the Dobrudja.¹⁰¹ Their recorded history, at least from a Greek and Persian perspective, stretches back to the sixth century BC.¹⁰² The Sacae are, however, still discussed at the

⁹³ Cass. Dio 72.16.1-2.

⁹⁴ Cass. Dio 72.16.2. trans. Cary.

⁹⁵ For a good overview see Wilkes 1983: 255-289. Cf. Rice 1981: 281-293.

⁹⁶ Rolle 1989: 16. This stretch spanned over 7000 km.

⁹⁷ Rolle 1989: 37.

⁹⁸ McGovern 1939: 40.

⁹⁹ McGovern 1939: 40.

¹⁰⁰ McGovern 1939: 38.

¹⁰¹ McGovern 1939: 38.

¹⁰² Rolle 1989: 47. Cf. McGovern 1939: 38; Hdt. 1.153, 6.113, 7.96, 7.184, 8.113, 9.31, 9.71, 9.113. At 3.93, Herodotus lumps the Sacae together with "the Caspians": he is discussing the tribute-paying peoples that are under the Persian yoke. At 7.64 Herodotus has a brief digression about the Sacae.

end of the first century BC,¹⁰³ and at some point in the second century.¹⁰⁴ Perhaps significantly, McGovern says that the Sacae were remarkable warriors.¹⁰⁵

We now have confirmation for a Scythian presence in the Dobrudja, and we know that the Sacae, at least from a Roman perspective, were active as late as the second century. Furthermore, McGovern says: “the decay and eventual downfall of the Scythians was due almost entirely to invasion by their distant kinsmen, the Sarmatians.”¹⁰⁶ Wilkes has also noted that the historical sources tended to confuse “the Sarmatians” and “Scythians”.¹⁰⁷ Thus, and this is certainly only a suggestion, we might identify the SACOR from the *cohors II Aurelia nova Sacorum* with the Sarmatians recruited as part of the treaty with the Iazyges. The Romans of Moesia Superior may have had some vague knowledge of the Sacae from Scythia Minor and confused them with the new Sarmatian recruits.¹⁰⁸

The last unit that we must turn to is the *cohors I Aurelia nova Pasinatum*. As regards the *cohors I Aurelia nova Pasinatum*, we have two distinct schools of thought. On the one hand we have one group, which includes Mirković, that acknowledges the existence of this unit. Wagner acknowledges that Marcus Aurelius raised the *cohors I Aurelia Pasinatum civium Romanorum*, but leaves open the possibility that it was raised either at the beginning of the Marcomannic wars, or in the year AD 175.¹⁰⁹ Curiously,

¹⁰³ Strabo 11.8.2.

¹⁰⁴ Ptol. *Geog.* 6.13.

¹⁰⁵ McGovern 1939: 40. “These Sakan regiments were among the most famed of all the fighting forces of Asia.”

¹⁰⁶ McGovern 1939: 40.

¹⁰⁷ Wilkes 1983: 255.

¹⁰⁸ If the learned Roman authors confused the two peoples, there is little reason to see why the same thing might not have happened among Roman soldiers with less “book smarts”. Still, the preceding argument is not without its problems. For example, why was the unit numbered “II” and not “I” when no other unit is known? Moreover, Xiphilinus refers to cavalry when he notes the Sarmatian military contribution.

¹⁰⁹ Wagner 1938: 179.

Kraft refers to both a *cohors I Aurelia nova Pasinatum civium Romanorum* and a *cohors II Aurelia nova Pasinatum civium Romanorum*,¹¹⁰ and does not explain the discrepancy. Beneš agrees that the unit was probably raised in the second century, though he does not specifically state that Marcus Aurelius raised the unit.¹¹¹ On the other hand, we have another group that does not acknowledge the unit's existence. Cichorius did not refer to the unit in his important history of the infantry cohorts, nor does Spaul in his recent follow-up to Cichorius' work. Mocsy seems to associate this unit with the *cohors II Aurelia nova*.¹¹² We need to look at the epigraphic evidence to determine which of those two possibilities, that is either in favour or against the unit's existence, is more probable.

At present that evidence is limited. All that we have is a lone inscription from *CIL* that names a veteran from the *cohors I Aurelia nova Pasinatum civium Romanorum milliaria*.¹¹³ Pliny does refer to a tribe called the Pasini, who had a city named Aenona on the northeast Adriatic.¹¹⁴ That is, however, all we hear about them. Given the limited evidence for the unit's existence, it is not hard to appreciate why Spaul excluded it from his study.¹¹⁵ With that said, if we return to Scriptor's statement that Marcus recruited *latrones* of both Dardania and Dalmatia, it becomes easier to explain the existence of this unit.¹¹⁶ Pliny's mention of the Pasini falls just before his discussion of Dalmatia. What is more, Dalmatia and Moesia Superior share a rather extensive common border (Moesia Superior's western border; Dalmatia's eastern border). Thus, this unit may very well

¹¹⁰ Kraft 1951: 101, n. 4; 183. It is possible, or rather probable that the reference to a *cohors II Aurelia nova Pasinatum civium Romanorum* is an editorial mistake.

¹¹¹ Beneš 1978: 48.

¹¹² Mocsy 1974: 195, n. 71.

¹¹³ *CIL* III.14545.

¹¹⁴ Plin. *HN* 3.21.140.

¹¹⁵ Spaul (1994 and 2000) tends to identify fewer units rather than more, and there certainly is much to be said for this tendency. In the words of Lendon (2004: 443), "Spaul is a pessimist about the accurate use of full unit names on inscriptions, and so a minimalist when it comes to counting units."

¹¹⁶ *HA Marc.* 21.7.

have been the Dalmatian unit recruited in light of the Marcomannic wars.¹¹⁷ If we accept the existence of this unit, it remained in Moesia Superior for the rest of its days.

We must now discuss the whereabouts of the remaining auxiliary units in Moesia Superior. Of the twelve units in the province in AD 161, only one is found on an inscription which we can firmly date to this period.¹¹⁸ That unit is the *cohors I Pannoniorum*.¹¹⁹ It is recorded in the province as late as February 18, AD 165,¹²⁰ and so probably stayed in the province well into the third century. However, that does not mean that we can negate the presence of the other units.

We begin with the two cavalry wings. The *ala I Claudia nova miscellanea*¹²¹ surely maintained its presence in Moesia Superior into the third century; the same can be said for the *ala I Gallorum Flaviana*.¹²² Now we turn to the cohorts.

The *cohors V Gallorum* remained in Moesia Superior at least until the beginning of Marcus' reign. By April 1, AD 179, the unit had been transferred to Dacia Superior.¹²³ At the same time, the *cohors III campestris* was in Upper Moesia as late as February 8, AD 161.¹²⁴ By April 1, AD 179, the *cohors III campestris* had moved to Upper Dacia.¹²⁵ Perhaps both units had moved to Dacia as part of the push to defeat the Marcomanni in

¹¹⁷ Such is the supposition of Wagner (1938: 180).

¹¹⁸ In fact, most of the datable inscriptions are for those "Aurelian" units raised by Marcus Aurelius.

¹¹⁹ *CIL* III.6302 records the cohort and is dated to some point between and including the years AD 161 and AD 180. *CIL* III.8162 records the cohort and is dated to late in the second century or early in the third century.

¹²⁰ *CIL* XVI.120.

¹²¹ See Cichorius 1893: 1238; Wagner 1938: 28-29; Kraft 1951: 144-145; Beneš 1978: 7; Spaul 1994: 90.

¹²² See Beneš 1978: 9; Spaul 1994: 115.

¹²³ *RMD* 123.

¹²⁴ *RMD* 55.

¹²⁵ *RMD* 123.

the last of the northern wars. The *cohors V Hispanorum* presumably spent the rest of its days in Moesia Superior: we have no further evidence of its activities.¹²⁶ The *cohors I Montanorum* likely remained in Moesia Superior; the same can probably be said for the *cohors I Cretum*.¹²⁷ The *cohors II Gallorum* likely stayed in Moesia Superior into the third century, as did the *cohors III Brittonum*. The *cohors I Lusitanorum* was in Moesia Superior at the ascension of Marcus Aurelius. Only six years later on May 5, AD 167, this particular cohort of Lusitanians is recorded in Pannonia Inferior.¹²⁸ Curiously, this seems to be a bit early to be considered part of the gathering of troops for the Marcomannic wars. As such, there must have been some other reason for its transfer.¹²⁹

We now come to the last known auxiliary unit from Moesia Superior. In the eyes of Spaul, there is a bit of uncertainty surrounding the *cohors I Antiochensium*.¹³⁰ Considering the lack of evidence for the unit in the latter part of the second century and third century, he wonders whether the unit was reorganised following the Marcomannic wars. In fact, Spaul suggests that the unit may have been renamed the *cohors I Hemesenorum*. Much like the Antiochenes, the Hemeseni are also from Syria.¹³¹ There was, however, a *cohors I Hemesenorum* that was based in the neighbouring province of Pannonia Inferior from at least AD 178 on.¹³² Yet, whether or not the unit moved, we

¹²⁶ Cf. Wagner 1938: 155-156; Spaul 2000: 135.

¹²⁷ Spaul (2000: 385) highlights some of the confusion surrounding the emplacement of this unit. He notes that the unit put up what was probably an official inscription in Dacia (*AE* 1968, 453), though it was recorded in a Moesian diploma (*RMD* 55). Indeed, provincial boundaries are known to have fluctuated and so while a unit might have stayed at the same base, the base itself may have flip-flopped between two neighbouring provinces.

¹²⁸ *CIL* XVI.123.

¹²⁹ This could be another instance of border shifting. Spaul (2000: 62) believes that this might have been the case.

¹³⁰ Spaul 2000: 424.

¹³¹ The Hemeseni are the people from the area around Emesa.

¹³² *CIL* XVI.131.

must wonder why the unit would make such a dramatic name change.¹³³ Spaul's suggestion must remain speculation.

VEXILLATIONS:¹³⁴

With the propensity for the various legionary and auxiliary units to remain increasingly stationary throughout the latter half of the second century and into the third, when there was a need for reinforcements for an embattled segment of the frontier, the Romans increasingly turned to vexillations. The *vexillum*, which was a military standard employed by both legionary and auxiliary units, was also the standard that a *vexillatio* would rally around, and from where a vexillation drew its name.¹³⁵ These vexillations could be sent both to different parts of a province, or to different parts of the empire. The scholarly consensus is that these vexillations were used increasingly in the second half of the second century and into the third century because it became difficult to transfer entire legions.¹³⁶ As soldiers became settled in the province in which they were based, and as recruits became increasingly local, finances and stability both became issues. The cost of moving entire legions, and auxiliary units for that matter might have been prohibitively expensive. At the same time, it is unlikely that soldiers with families would be willing to uproot and abandon that family behind for a few years, or longer, to serve the state in a

¹³³ Even if, by chance, the Antiochene cohort found itself in Pannonia Inferior as a result of a boundary change, there seems to be no real justification for such a dramatic name change: there was at the time no other Antiochene unit based in Pannonia Inferior (or anywhere else for that matter). Had there been another such unit, it would have been extremely unusual for the incoming unit, or the pre-existing one for that matter, to make such drastic changes in its nomenclature. For example, earlier we saw that when there were two distinct units of Sugambrians in Moesia Inferior, the Moesian command-structure opted for the names, the *cohors I Sugambriorum [f]ironum*, and the *cohors I Sugambriorum veterana*.

¹³⁴ My discussion of vexillations could easily have been spread throughout chapters 1, 2, and 3; however, because many of the inscriptions that record the presence of vexillations date to the time frame allotted to this chapter, I thought it best to save the discussion for this chapter.

¹³⁵ Campbell 1996b: 1594; Webster 1998: 138; Le Bohec 2000: 30.

¹³⁶ Such an explanation can be found in any survey of the Roman army such as Luttwak 1976, Holder 1982, Keppie 1998, and Le Bohec 2000.

foreign land. Thus, it is thought that the Romans increasingly sent those soldiers with few ties in the belief that they would have less to keep them back, whereas the remaining soldiers would fight better while at home if put to the test while their comrades were away. In truth, we may never know the real reason for the change, though what was just described above is certainly plausible.

Trying to pin down the size of a vexillation is difficult.¹³⁷ It is probably safe to assume that the size of the detachment depended upon the exigency of the moment. The size may also have been dictated by the situation in the province which was supplying the troops; thus, a province in which stability was quite fragile would be hesitant to send too many soldiers to another theatre of war. Saxer also stressed that the number of units detached depended on the size of the provincial army.¹³⁸ Still, scholars have looked for some uniformity. On the one hand, two of the numbers often thrown into the fray are 1000 and 2000; this is because Tacitus, Suetonius, and Josephus, when discussing the size of detachments, tend to give figures in units of 1000.¹³⁹ Luttwak, Holder, Keppie, and Le Bohec all use 1000 or 2000 as the typical size of a legionary vexillation.¹⁴⁰ Saxer identified the references which claim sizes of 1000 and 2000.¹⁴¹ On the other hand, Tully recently argued for about 500 (or 480) as the standard size of the quingenary legionary

¹³⁷ In our discussion of the sizes of vexillations, we shall be sticking with those that were deployed for combat situations and legionary vexillations at that, for they are the best attested in the Moesias. These are the ones best attested in the sources. The inscriptions generally do not give the size of a vexillation. Thus, when we come to examine the history of vexillations in the Moesias, we shall use the proviso that the minimum size of a vexillation was probably reasonably close to the standard minimum size suggested below. The reader may notice that I have not given the same attention to the sizes of both the legions and the auxiliary units. That is because there is less contention regarding their size. For sizes of the legions and for the auxiliary units see my conclusion.

¹³⁸ Saxer 1967: 118-119.

¹³⁹ See, for example: Tac. *Ann.* 6.41, Tac. *Ann.* 15.10, Tac. *Hist.* 2.18; ; Suet. *Vesp.* 6; Joseph. *BJ.* 2.18.9, Joseph. *BJ.* 2.16.4.

¹⁴⁰ Luttwak 1979: 124; Holder 1982: 40; Keppie 1998: 197; Le Bohec 2000: 30.

¹⁴¹ Saxer 1967: 1000, n. 6, 10, 12, 25, 36, 47; 2000, 12, 17, 26, 29.

vexillation.¹⁴² His argument is based on Pseudo-Hyginus' treatise on camps.¹⁴³ Tully is quick to point out that this was not always the case. Although about 500 was a standard size, that did not mean that combat vexillations were necessarily created from pre-existing legionary cohorts as the evidence does not support such an assertion.¹⁴⁴

Vexillations had been in use before Marcus Aurelius: the earliest account that we have of a vexillation comes from Velleius' description of the Pannonian uprising from AD 6 to AD 9.¹⁴⁵ Indeed, we have a few references to the use of vexillations that date to the first century; however, that need not mean that they were frequently used. What follows is a discussion of the vexillations that pertain to Moesia. Unlike the discussion in both previous chapters and that part of this chapter that focuses on the legions and auxiliary units, we shall not be using a strictly chronological approach.¹⁴⁶ Instead, we shall be looking at vexillations from a geographical perspective.

VEXILLATIONS IN USE IN THE LOWER DANUBE REGION:

We have some scattered evidence of detachments from the Moesian army as early as the reign of Claudius. There is an inscription, which dates to the reign of Claudius and is from Castulo in Hispania Tarraconensis, that says the following: "...PRAEF

VEXILLARIORUM IN TRACHIA [- - -] DONICA A LEG VIII...".¹⁴⁷ The "Trachia"

¹⁴² Tully 2002: 133-134.

¹⁴³ Le Bohec (2000: 30) does in fact allude to the same figure when he states that: "A provincial army could send to the scene of operations a whole legion and a detachment from each of its legions, or only send the equivalent of two or four cohorts per unit, i.e. 1000 or 2000 men each time."

¹⁴⁴ Tully 2002: 133. Indeed, the nature of vexillations is such that they were created from soldiers from many different legions and auxiliary units. Tully (2002: 134) also concludes that the cohorts of combat vexillations were probably organised just as a regular legionary cohort, that is, with six centuries of 80 men, or about 480 men at full strength.

¹⁴⁵ Vell. Pat. 110.6.

¹⁴⁶ This is because of the inherent problems when there is such limited evidence.

¹⁴⁷ *CIL* II.3272.

is presumably “Thracia”, or Thrace. What we should restore in the square brackets is anyone’s guess. Saxer, who also adds a “XV” following the “TRACHIA”, believes that it should be restored as followed: “[NUMERORUM HONOR A LEG IV SCYTHICA A LEG V MACE]”.¹⁴⁸ Domaszewski on the other hand, shows a little more caution in believing that it should read, “[A LEG V MACE]”.¹⁴⁹ We do know that the *VIII Augusta* and *V Macedonia* were both stationed in Moesia during the reign of Claudius, and as early as AD 46. The Fourth Scythian legion was also based in the province during that interval. But, we should hesitate to restore “A LEG IV SCYTHICA”, particularly when we do not know how many letters are missing. Just because the Fourth Scythian legion was contemporaneous with the other two legions for about twelve years, need not mean that an expeditionary force was composed of members of all three legions, however possible it may be. Regardless, the Fifth Macedonian legion had departed by AD 58, as had the Fourth Scythian legion, and so the vexillation presumably dates to sometime between AD 46 and AD 58. It is possible that this vexillation was sent to Thrace around the time of the creation of the province in AD 46.

In Zahariade and Gudea’s discussion of the province of Moesia Inferior as “a strategic zone of the Roman Empire”,¹⁵⁰ they discuss the inclusion of the northern-western shore of the Black Sea into the province of Moesia Inferior.¹⁵¹ Beginning with an inscription dated to AD 115, we have five inscriptions that list vexillations from Moesia Inferior operating in that region: three from Tyras, one from modern Kadikoi,

¹⁴⁸ Saxer 1967: 9.

¹⁴⁹ Domaszewski 1981: 200-201.

¹⁵⁰ Zahariade and Gudea 1997: 25.

¹⁵¹ Zahariade and Gudea 1997: 29.

and one from Olbia. That first inscription was erected, “per vexil(lationem) I[eg(ionis) V Mac(edonicae)]”.¹⁵²

The two other inscriptions from Tyras may be contemporaneous. One of those inscriptions lists the *legio I Italica*, the *legio V Macedonica*, and the *legio XI Claudia* along with an unknown unit of auxiliaries.¹⁵³ Saxer has dated the other inscription to AD 167/168.¹⁵⁴ It reads “FALCO[NI - - - - -] VEXIL[- - -] II[- - - - -] SUB CURA [- - -] LEG V MA[CEDONICAE]”. Although there is uncertainty surrounding what follows the “II”, the “SUB CURA ... LEG V MA”, does suggest that the vexillation was from Moesia Inferior.¹⁵⁵ We might be tempted to assume that the “II” is part of “IIII”, and thus the Fourth Flavian legion which was based in Moesia Superior during the start of Marcus Aurelius’ reign. The problem is that indubitably the “LEG” or “L” signifying *legio* precedes both the number of the legion and its cognomen. Ignoring a mistake on the part of the lapicide, there is no room for the “LEG” or “L” before the “II”. Moreover, it would be highly unusual for the stone cutter to have inscribed IIII LEG FF. For the sake of convenience, it would also be much easier to send vexillations from the same province, or neighbouring Dacia for that matter, rather than to have summoned a vexillation from a legion considerably further west in Moesia Superior.

Based on the information provided in inscription 266 from his corpus, Saxer conjectures that we should read, “VEXIL[ARII] II[I LEGIONUM?]”.¹⁵⁶ Yet, unlike the diplomas that routinely list the number of auxiliary units in a given province, there is

¹⁵² *AE* 1990, 868.

¹⁵³ Saxer 1967: 90, n. 266.

¹⁵⁴ *AE* 1934, 112.

¹⁵⁵ It could also have been from Dacia. The interpretation depends upon what year we accept both for this inscription and what year we accept for the *legio V Macedonica*’s transfer to Dacia.

¹⁵⁶ Saxer 1967: 90, n. 266.

little evidence to suggest that this was ever done with vexillation inscriptions. While keeping in mind that there does not seem to be an official format, and certainly inscriptions were prone to the preferences of the individual stonecutter and his patron, Saxer's restoration still seems dubious. Thus, we must leave the inscription as is unless further evidence comes to light.

One further inscription from the north-western Black Sea region is from Olbia. This inscription may be Severan in date, although it is unclear. This inscription records a vexillation comprised of the First Italian legion, the Fifth Macedonian legion, and the Eleventh Claudian legion.¹⁵⁷ There is one last inscription from the Black Sea region.¹⁵⁸ It may date to sometime during the Marcomannic wars and was found in the modern town of Kadikoi in Moesia Inferior. The inscription records a vexillation of the First Italian legion.

We have an inscription that dates to around AD 155 and that was found near Montana.¹⁵⁹ It records a vexillation of the Eleventh Claudian legion. During the civil war which followed the murder of Commodus, we have evidence of another vexillation from the Eleventh Claudian Legion. This evidence comes from two inscriptions, both of which are from Italy and list the same person, a Marcus Aquilius Felix.¹⁶⁰ This Aquilius Felix, who is attested at two different points in the *Historia Augusta* and who was apparently sent to assassinate Septimius Severus, was also the prefect of a vexillation active in Italy.¹⁶¹ The abbreviations "AGENTIUM IN ITAL" in *AE* 1945, 80 allow us to

¹⁵⁷ *AE* 1995, 1348.

¹⁵⁸ *CIL* III.14433.

¹⁵⁹ *CIL* III.7449.

¹⁶⁰ *CIL* X.6657 is from Antium in Italy; and *AE* 1945, 80 is from Cannes in Italy.

¹⁶¹ The two references from the *Historia Augusta*, which essentially say the same thing, are from the life of Didius Julianus (5.8) and the life of Pescennius Niger (2.6).

identify the Marcus Aquilius Felix in both inscriptions with the Aquilius mentioned in the lives of Didius Julianus and Pescennius in the *Historia Augusta*.¹⁶² Aquilius Felix was also a centurion of the *legio XI Claudia*, yet another clue that the two men are one in the same.¹⁶³

Finally, we have two inscriptions that date to the third century that originated from the Danube. The first lists a vexillation from the *legio VII Claudia*.¹⁶⁴ It was found at Lederata in Moesia Superior and dates to the early third century. The last inscription comes from Montana in Moesia Inferior. The pertinent part of this inscription reads: “VEXILL EQ LEG I ITAL GORDIANAE”. It is dated to sometime around or shortly after AD 238.¹⁶⁵

VEXILLATIONS SENT ABROAD AND VEXILLATIONS FROM ABROAD SENT TO MOESIA:

Suetonius says that: “Two thousand soldiers of the three legions that made up the army in Moesia had been sent to help Otho.”¹⁶⁶ In this case we have soldiers that were sent a considerable distance further afield than simply a neighbouring province, as opposed to the situation with the Spanish inscription just discussed.¹⁶⁷ There is also the case of Licinius Mucianus, whom we discussed in a previous chapter. Vespasian had sent this commander west from Berytus in the east. Mucianus marched westward with, “the Sixth legion and thirteen thousand soldiers from the vexillations were following

¹⁶² See Saxer 1967: 43. Cf. Pflaum 1960/1961: II.598.

¹⁶³ *HA. Did. Iul.* 5.8: “In addition he sent the centurion Aquilius, known as the killer of senators, to kill Severus.” *HA Pesc. Nig.* 2.6: “Finally he had sent even Aquilius the centurion known as the killer of commanders, as if so great an emperor could be killed by a centurion.”

¹⁶⁴ *CIL* III.1643 = 8099.

¹⁶⁵ *AE* 1957, 341.

¹⁶⁶ *Suet. Vesp.* 6. trans. Rolfe.

¹⁶⁷ *CIL* II.3272.

[Mucianus] in a huge column.”¹⁶⁸ These troops with Mucianus were only temporarily stationed in Moesia. They engaged the Dacians in battle, and then moved on.

Adams in his dissertation on the logistics of the Roman army in the east highlighted on more than one occasion the importance of the Danubian provinces as sources of reinforcements for eastern campaigns.¹⁶⁹ We do in fact have an inscription that dates to the reign of Trajan from Rome that suggests the usage of Moesian troops in his Parthian campaign.¹⁷⁰ A certain Lucius Paconius Proculus is listed in the inscription. Proculus was a military tribune in the *legio XI Claudia pia fidelis*. He was also a prefect of the, “VEXILLATION(EM) EQ(UITUM) MOESIAE INFER(IORIS) ET DACIAE EUNTI IN EXPEDITIONE PARTHIC(A)”. We have another inscription from Berytus that names a Caius Valerius Rufus who was sent, “CUM VEXILLO AB IMP(ERATORE) NERVA TRAIANO OPTUMO AUG(USTO) GERM(ANICO) DACICO PARTH(ICO) CYPRUM IN EXPEDITIONUM...”.¹⁷¹ This Rufus was also a military tribune of the *legio VII Claudia*, which was based in Moesia Superior during the reign of Trajan. Therefore, it is probably safe to assume that the vexillation referred to was at least partially composed of the Seventh Claudian legion.¹⁷²

Unfortunately, we do not have any further evidence of the use of vexillations from the Moesias that were sent east. We do, however, have a handful from the Pannonias and Dacia.¹⁷³ An examination of the situation with regard to the vexillations from the

¹⁶⁸ Tac. *Hist.* 2.83. Cf. Joseph. *BJ.* 4.11.1, 5.1.6.

¹⁶⁹ See, for example, Adams 1976: 16-17, 19, 21-23.

¹⁷⁰ *CIL* VI.32933. Saxer (1967: 26) rightly dates this inscription to AD 114-117, the dates of Trajan's Parthian war.

¹⁷¹ *ILS* 9491.

¹⁷² The full text of the inscription is as follows: C(aio) Valerio T(iti) f(ilio) Fab(ia) Rufo – praef(ecto) coh(ortis) VI praetor(iae) tr(ibunus) mil(itum) leg(ionis) VII Cl(audiae) p(iae) f(idelis) misso cum vexillo ab imp(eratore) Nerva Traiano optumo Aug(usto) Germ(anico) Dacico Parth(ico) Cyprum in expeditionem - .

¹⁷³ See Saxer 1967, nos. 48, 49, and 52.

Pannonias and Dacia that were sent to the east is outside of the scope of this essay. Nevertheless, a cursory glance at the evidence for those provinces from Saxer's monograph suggests no discernible preference for any of those five provinces – Moesia Inferior, Dacia, Moesia Superior, Pannonia Superior, and Pannonia Inferior – in the minds of Roman commanders preparing for eastern campaigns.¹⁷⁴ Still, some of the other vexillations mentioned by Saxer that pertain to the Parthian wars come from other provinces besides those around the Danube.¹⁷⁵ Another important consideration, as regards vexillations sent eastwards, is the tendency of inscriptions listing vexillations from the Danube to be restricted to the wars of Trajan and Antoninus Pius.

VEXILLATIONS IN THE CHERSONESOS:¹⁷⁶

Josephus, through the mouth of M. Julius Agrippa II in a speech meant to dissuade the Jews from further war that dates to AD 66, has this to say:

Do I have to speak of the Heniochi and the Colchians and the race of the Taurians, Bosporans and the nation dwelling around the Pontus and the Maeotis? According to them, before they knew no native master, but now [they] are placed under 3000 armed-soldiers (ὀπλίταις), and forty long ships keep the peace before the unapproachable and furious sea.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁴ In other words, troops from Lower Pannonia were not necessarily chosen over those from the four remaining provinces listed. The same is true for the soldiers from the other four provinces.

¹⁷⁵ See Saxer 1967: 25-35.

¹⁷⁶ In this instance, by referring to 'the Chersonesos', or 'Tauric Chersonese', I am referring to the Crimea. To confuse matters even further, 'Chersonesos' is also a town located in the Crimea. In addition, there is the 'Thracian Chersonese', or simply 'Chersonesos', which is in the Hellespont. For an overview of the region see Borza 1996: 320, Braund 1996b: 320-321, and Braund 1996c: 321.

¹⁷⁷ Joseph. *BJ* 2.16.4. Josephus' choice of the word ὀπλίταις is very problematic. On the one hand, the Roman army is known to have used phalangical formations on occasion (Wheeler 1979, Wheeler 2004a, Wheeler 2004b). This formation, however, was a tactical formation used when the situation called for a stronger defensive posture. Thus, when Arrian (*Acies contra Alanos*) was preparing to engage the Alans in eastern Cappadocia, known for their heavily armed cavalry, he deployed his troops in a phalangical formation as it was better suited to not only withstand, but repel the rush of the Alanic cavalry. The standard organisational units of the Roman army remained the *alae*, *cohortes*, *legiones*, and *numeri*: the phalanx was reserved for combat. On the other hand, the word could simply be a reflection of Josephus' desire to describe warfare and battles in the manner of his Greek forbearers (Thucydides and Xenophon in

From that statement alone, it is difficult to try and determine from where the troop allocation came. Although Josephus is clearly referring, at least in part, to the Chersonesos, he also refers to the Colchians and the Heniochi. It is possible that not all of these troops were from Moesia. Saxer suggests that some of the three thousand soldiers were in fact from Cappadocia.¹⁷⁸ He also holds that the region was garrisoned by troops from the Lower Moesian legions.¹⁷⁹ In order to determine whether or not we should consider part of that force noted by Josephus as part of the *exercitus Moesiacus*, we need to try and locate the “races” listed by Josephus. The Taurians must be the people who inhabit the Crimea, and the same can be said for the Bosporans.¹⁸⁰ The other two peoples, and in particular, the Heniochi are from the southeastern part of the Black Sea.¹⁸¹ Saxer’s suggestion that the force quoted by Josephus was in part supplied by the forces of Cappadocia, or some force based in northeastern Asia Minor now seems more plausible.¹⁸²

particular) as the case may have been with Herodian. As Josephus is not describing a particular battle here, I would tend to favour the latter suggestion.

¹⁷⁸ Saxer 1967: 91. Saxer calls these troops legionaries. As Josephus (*BJ* 2.16.4) runs through his list of the various kingdoms that have fallen under the Roman yoke, he uses a few different terms to identify the Roman soldiers in each respective kingdom. In the passage cited above, he refers to *τρισχίλοις όπλίταις*. When he discusses the Thracians, he says that they “obey the orders of *δισχιλίους φρουρους*.” When he discusses the Illyrians and the Danubian region, he says that they are kept in check “by no more than *δυσιν τάγμασιν*”. The Dalmatians, by contrast, are held by *ένι ταγματι*. Meanwhile the Gauls are held by *διακοσίους στρατιώταις*. The Rhine is held by *όκτω τάγμασιν*. At the same time, the Britons are held by *τέσσαρα τάγματα*. When Josephus is referring to legions, he generally uses the term *ταγμα*; however, he uses the three equally vague terms, *όπλιτης*, *φρουρος*, and *στρατιωτης* for all of the other soldiers, which may very well have included not just troops from auxiliary units, and the *numeri*, but also the legions. Thus, while Josephus may be referring to auxiliary units when he says *όπλίταις*, we need to delve into this problem a little deeper to try and uncover the truth of the matter.

¹⁷⁹ Saxer 1967: 91ff.

¹⁸⁰ This assumption is based on the names of the two tribes.

¹⁸¹ See *The Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World*, and map 87 in particular for the location of the Heniochi and Colchians.

¹⁸² Saxer 1967: 91.

We know that Ptolemy II's kingdom of Pontus was annexed by Nero in AD 64.¹⁸³ Furthermore, Rice suggests that at some point during the reign of Nero, perhaps around AD 62, the Chersonesos was besieged by the Scyths.¹⁸⁴ Rice refers to Nero's alleged desire to annex the Crimean kingdom so that it might be used as a bridgehead for an invasion of the Caucasus.¹⁸⁵ At the same time, she admits that this course of action, that is the plan to annex the Chersonesos, was not followed by any of Nero's successors.¹⁸⁶ However, instead it seems that the planned invasion route would have passed through Anatolia to the south, and not along the north shore of the Black Sea.¹⁸⁷ To the south, and a few years later, there seems to have been an expedition under the reign of Vespasian into Iberia led by one M. Hirrius Fronto Neratius.¹⁸⁸ The impression that all of this activity gives us is that the area was the scene of a considerable bit of military activity from the reign of Nero to Vespasian.

However, when the forces involved were Roman, it seems that they had to come from elsewhere. Tacitus refers to an uprising in Pontus that occurred at some point after the kingdom became a province during the reign of Vespasian.¹⁸⁹ This uprising was led by an Anicetus, who apparently was a freedman of Polemo II.¹⁹⁰ At the head of a band (*manus*), Anicetus attacked Trapezus and massacred a cohort, which had been supplied by the king (Polemo II).¹⁹¹ Tacitus also tells us that the sea was unpatrolled because the fleet had been at Byzantium at the time. Pliny, whose writings are somewhat

¹⁸³ Braund 1994: 175.

¹⁸⁴ Rice 1981: 290; *ILS* 986. Cf. the "military history" section of chapter 1 above for some other references.

¹⁸⁵ Rice 1981: 290.

¹⁸⁶ Rice 1981: 290.

¹⁸⁷ See Braund 1994: 175-176. Cf. Suet. *Ner.* 18-1. Plin. *HN* 6.159.

¹⁸⁸ Mitchell 1993: 119.

¹⁸⁹ Tac. *Hist.* 3.47.

¹⁹⁰ Tac. *Hist.* 3.47.

¹⁹¹ Tac. *Hist.* 3.47 (*caesa ibi cohors, regium auxilium olim*).

contemporaneous with Josephus', ¹⁹² refers to a number of *castella* along the southern and eastern shore of the Black Sea, ¹⁹³ although he does not go into detail about the size of their garrisons or who supplied them. ¹⁹⁴ Braund believes that they were garrisoned by Roman troops. ¹⁹⁵ At the time that both Josephus and Pliny were writing, Pontus and Cappadocia were two separate entities: it was not until the reign of Trajan that the two provinces were united. ¹⁹⁶ What is more, from a military standpoint, the Cappadocian component of the eastern frontier did not begin to become developed until the reign of Vespasian. ¹⁹⁷ Thus, it seems that garrisons of the south and eastern shores of the Black Sea were probably not immense. There were no individual legions based in the region when Josephus was writing, or later when Arrian was. ¹⁹⁸ The only known presence of legionaries were members of a vexillation of the *legio XV Apollinaris*, who were there at least from the reign of Hadrian. ¹⁹⁹ The *legio XV Apollinaris* was based at Satala which is

¹⁹² That is, the events that he describes are contemporaneous with the last years of Pliny the Elder. The *History of the Jewish War* was probably written during the reign of Domitian, if not at least begun during the reign of Vespasian.

¹⁹³ Plin. HN 6.4: ...*Tripolis castellum et fluvius, item Philocalia et sine fluvio item Liviopolis...flumen Absarrum cum castello cognomina...castellum Sebastopolis a Phaside...* The first three *castella* are fairly close together (Pliny, perhaps significantly, does not specify the distance, which he does frequently before and after listing these *castella*). Absarrus (or Apsaros) is 240 Roman miles from Liviopolis, while Sebastopolis is another 100 Roman miles from the city of Phasis (Pliny does not specify the distance from Phasis to Absarrus, or even Trapezus). The first three fortress sites lie roughly within the ancient boundaries of Pontus, whereas the other two, Absarrus and Sebastopolis, lie roughly within the boundaries of ancient Colchis. Arrian (Arr. *Peripl. M. Eux* 6.1-2) tells us that in his day, perhaps around AD 132, Apsaros (Absarrus) had five cohorts (*πεντε σπειραι*) stationed there. Arrian (Arr. *Peripl. M. Eux* 9.2) also tells us that in his day "400 select troops (*τετρακοσιοι στρατιωται επιλεκτοι*) were quartered at Phasis. In regard to Sebastopolis, Arrian (Arr. *Peripl. M. Eux* 10.3) does not specify the type of troops that are there, nor does he give us any indication of their numbers.

¹⁹⁴ I do not hold much faith in trying to determine the type, or at least the size of a unit from the remains of a fort.

¹⁹⁵ Braund 1994: 178.

¹⁹⁶ Broughton and Spawforth 1996: 288.

¹⁹⁷ Broughton and Spawforth 1996: 289; Mitchell 1993: 118-119. Cf. Suet. *Vesp.* 8.4: *Cappadociae propter adsidios barbarorum incursus legiones addidit consularemque rectorem imposuit pro eq. R.* "Because of the persistent incursions of barbarians he added legions to Cappadocia and placed it under a consular governor instead of a Roman knight."

¹⁹⁸ See Braund 1994: 181ff.

¹⁹⁹ Braund 1994: 198

between 200km and 300km north of the Euphrates frontier in eastern Anatolia;²⁰⁰ furthermore, the legion did not arrive at Satala before the reign of Trajan.²⁰¹ Thus, the troops mentioned by Josephus that were based around Colchis were not from Cappadocia.²⁰² The troops in the Caucasus could have been from mixed legionary and/or auxiliary vexillations; they also may have been provided by allied kingdoms.²⁰³ At the same time, there was no whole legion based out of the Chersonesos: the troops there that made up the vexillation could have been auxiliary or legionary.²⁰⁴ Therefore, a significant percentage of the *τρισχιλιοις ὀπλιταις* must have been based along the southern and eastern shore of the Black Sea, and those troops were likely a combination of auxiliary Roman troops, and troops supplied by Rome's allies.

Our next piece of evidence that records a vexillation operating in the Crimea is an inscription that dates to the reign of Antoninus Pius. It was found in the modern town of Balaklava. The inscription records a military tribune of a vexillation of an army, "EXERC(ITUS)", that is unidentified.²⁰⁵ The editor of the inscription suggests that we should read some sort of abbreviation of Moesia Inferior following the *exercitus*. We

²⁰⁰ For a survey of the frontier of Anatolia see Mitchell 1993: 118-142.

²⁰¹ The date of its departure from Carnuntum to Satala is in fact a controversial point. It was there by AD 135 (Wheeler 2000: 259-308). Wheeler convincingly argues that there is no evidence for the presence of the *legio XV Apollinaris* in Pannonia after AD 106.

²⁰² Contra Saxer 1967: 91.

²⁰³ See Speidel (1985: 97-102) on the role of Bythinian troops in the Bosporan Kingdom.

²⁰⁴ The problem that remains is trying to determine whether these troops based in the Chersonesos were either legionary or auxiliary. It seems likely that the troops referred by Josephus along the southern and eastern shore of the Black Sea were auxiliary, whether Roman or otherwise. Moreover, Josephus does not distinguish between the troops based there and those based in the Chersonesos. Thus, we might well guess that the troops based in the Chersonesos at this point were auxiliary as well. By contrast, those troops that later garrisoned the area were undoubtedly legionary: we have no evidence, inscriptional or otherwise, that might suggest that auxiliary troops were used.

²⁰⁵ *AE* 1998, 1155.

have another inscription from the Crimea, only this one was found in Chersonesos.²⁰⁶ It records a vexillation of the *legio I Italica*.²⁰⁷ Regrettably, we cannot pin down the precise date of this inscription. It probably dates to at least the second century, and perhaps the second half at that.²⁰⁸

We have a career inscription that dates to sometime between the Marcomannic wars and the reign of Commodus and that seems to refer to a Crimean vexillation.²⁰⁹ This inscription, which comes from Mactar in Numidia, lists the various offices of a Tiberius Plautius Felix Ferruntianus who was a *praepositus* of a vexillation of Pontus near Scythia and Taurica.²¹⁰ The next inscription which comes from the Crimea probably dates to the reign of Commodus, and more precisely, the years AD 185/186.²¹¹ This lengthy inscription does not provide us with any indication of the units from which the vexillation may be drawing. Instead, it records a “VEXILLATIONE CHERSONESSITANA”. The last inscription can be dated more accurately than the previous two. Originating from Chersonesos, it dates to some point between AD 222 and

²⁰⁶ *AE* 1984, 805.

²⁰⁷ It is conceivable that with the aid of this second Crimean inscription from Chersonesos, we can identify the unknown unit from the Balaklavan inscription with the First Italian legion recorded here. That is, however, conjecture.

²⁰⁸ By the third century most legionary inscriptions would simply provide the abbreviation “L” (although *LEG* recurs), followed by the number of the unit, and then a one or two letter abbreviation such as “M” for “Macedonica”, and “CL” for “Claudia”. Generally, the longer and more complete the abbreviation, at least as regards the legions of Moesia, the earlier the inscription.

²⁰⁹ *CIL* VIII.619. Cf. Saxer 1967: 42-43. Tiberius Plautius Felix Ferruntianus was also a *praepositus* of the Third Augustan legion among the Marcomanni (APUT MARCOMMAN(N)OS), or rather, during the Marcomannic war.

²¹⁰ It reads: “PRAEPOSITUS VEXILLATIONIBUS PONTICIS APUT SCYTHIA ET TAURICAM”. Taurica is frequently found in conjunction with the Chersonesos of the Crimea in order to distinguish it from the Thracian Chersonesos. Scythia in this period is generally the eastern portion of Moesia Inferior along the Black Sea that also runs northwards into the Dobrudja and beyond, and perhaps as far as the Don (Braund 1996b: 1374). Thus, we might assume that when “APUT SCYTHIA ET TAURICAM” was inscribed for Felix Ferruntianus, what we should understand it to mean is perhaps Tyras or Olbia, both cities along the northwest coast of the Black Sea, which of course is the Pontus referred to in the inscription.

²¹¹ *CIL* III.13750. Cf. Saxer 1967: 91-92.

AD 234.²¹² This fragmentary inscription records a vexillation of the *legio XI Claudia Severiana*.

From the preceding discussion we learn that there were a significant number of vexillations operating in the Crimea from the last third of the first century through at least the first third of the third century. From this information we might wonder, what should we make of the Crimea? In fact, scholars still puzzle over its official designation. Was it a client kingdom throughout its existence, or was it ever included in the province of Moesia Inferior? Those select inscriptions which identify the specific legion/s that made up a vexillation all record a legion which was known to have been based in Moesia Inferior. We have, for example, the inscription just discussed that lists the *legio XI Claudia*. As it turns out, we have another inscription from Chersonesos - the point of origin for the fragmentary inscription with the vexillation - that records a centurion of the *legio XI Claudia*.²¹³ Thus, it is not hard to see why there is still some confusion. On the one hand David Braund is of the opinion that the Bosporan kingdom, which occupied part of the Chersonesos, remained a client kingdom throughout its interactions with the Romans, regardless of the presence of Roman troops.²¹⁴ On the other hand, Zaharidae and Gudea believe that when the region around Tyras and Olbia became incorporated into the province of Moesia Inferior,²¹⁵ so was the Chersonesos.²¹⁶ There is in fact a third

²¹² *AE* 2000, 1274.

²¹³ The legion with a vexillation is *AE* 2000, 1274. The inscription listing the centurion is *AE* 1998, 1161. This second inscription dates to the end of the second century or beginning of the third century.

²¹⁴ Braund 1996a: 254. Rice (2001: 289), like Braund, also believes that the Romans garrisoned the Chersonesos. She does not, however, tell us whether she thinks that the Chersonesos was a client kingdom while it was garrisoned by Roman troops.

²¹⁵ It is quite possible that these areas may have fallen under the control of the commander-in-chief of the Moesian army. In that sense, the *provincia* of that commander would have been reminiscent of a *provincia* of the late Republic. During the imperial period a *provincia* was a fairly formal entity that entailed various administrative responsibilities and generally had fixed borders. By contrast, the late republican *provincia*

possibility. The Cimmerian Bosphorus also refers to the strait that runs through the eastern half of the Crimea and the Taman' peninsula.²¹⁷ It might not be unreasonable to conjecture that the Romans "owned" the western half of the Crimea, while the Bosporan kingdom kept the eastern half.²¹⁸ In this scenario, the army of the region may in fact have been made up of both Bosporan and Roman troops working in conjunction.²¹⁹

Troop Emplacement from Marcus Aurelius to Severus Alexander²²⁰

LEGIONS:

In AD 161 the legions were emplaced in the following camps: the *legio IIII Flavia* was at Singidunum, the *legio VII Claudia* was at Viminacium;²²¹ the *legio I Italica* was at Novae, the *legio V Macedonica* was at Troesmis, and the *legio XI Claudia* was at Durostorum.²²² As regards the Moesias, the *Antonine Itinerary* has the following legions

referred more generally to the sphere of operations of the legate, and so did not necessarily include fixed boundaries.

²¹⁶ Zahariade and Gudea 1997: 29. If we look at the Crimea in isolation, regardless of its relationship with the rest of Moesia Inferior, it is not hard to see why the Romans may have wanted some sort of association with the region. It was known for its fertility in antiquity, and would have given the Romans another base for their Pontic fleet. Thus, for both economic and strategic reasons it would have been beneficial. In fact, the region remained important to Rome, and in particular its later capital of Constantinople, well into Late Antiquity.

²¹⁷ Braund 1996a: 254.

²¹⁸ A potential problem with this possibility is the loyalty of the kings of the Bosphorus. Braund (1996a: 254) notes that they "were unusual among Rome's client kings in the explicit fervour with which they proclaimed their Roman citizenship through their nomenclature and in their overt enthusiasm for the imperial cult."

²¹⁹ Personally, I am tempted to follow Braund's assertion, though Zahariade's and Gudea's conjecture is not without merit. Zosimus (Zos. 1.31.2-3) tells us that the kings of the Bosporans were able to keep the Scyths in check thanks to the gifts given to them by the Romans. This passage is given in light of the raids that crippled the region beginning in AD 254 (Paschoud 2003: 154, n. 59, from the Budé edition of Zosimus). While we do not know what those gifts were - they could have been anything from money to troops - the statement does suggest that the Romans were not formally involved in Bosporan affairs at that point. Of course, there is no way of checking the validity of Zosimus' statement. For more on the relationship between Rome and client kingdoms, and in particular their military significance, see Braund (1984, specifically pp 91-105) and Luttwak (1976, specifically pp 7-50).

²²⁰ As in the previous two chapters, we cannot always identify the headquarters of the many auxiliary units, and in many cases where a base is listed, it is mere conjecture.

²²¹ Both sites are in Moesia Superior.

²²² All three sites are in Moesia Inferior.

and camps listed: the *legio XIII Gemina* at Ratiaria,²²³ the *legio V Macedonica* at Oescus,²²⁴ the *legio I Italica* at Novae,²²⁵ the *legio XI Claudia* at Durostorum,²²⁶ the *legio I Iovia* at Troesmis,²²⁷ and the *legio II Herculia* at Noviodunum.²²⁸ Of those legions mentioned, it is the First Italian and Eleventh Claudian legions that remained stationary. The Fifth Macedonian legion had moved to Dacia around AD 168 and by somewhere between AD 211 and AD 229, it had not yet returned. The legion likely returned to the Moesias following the abandonment of Dacia in AD 271. When it did return to Moesia Inferior, however, it did not go back to its former base at Troesmis, but rather to its initial Moesian base at Oescus.²²⁹

The Fourth Flavian legion and the Seventh Claudian legion are not found in the *Antonine Itinerary* in the section pertaining to the Moesias. What is more, the writer/s does not attach any special significance to the two Upper Moesian legionary sites of Singidunum²³⁰ and Viminacium. Bojović has demonstrated, however, that the *legio IIII Flavia* was based at Singidunum at least until the reign of the emperor Constantine the Great.²³¹ As regards Viminacium, we have a few inscriptions that name soldiers of the legion that date to the end of the second century and beginning of the third century.²³² As

²²³ *It. Ant.* 219.3. The legion was not transferred to the province before AD 271.

²²⁴ *It. Ant.* 220.5.

²²⁵ *It. Ant.* 221.4.

²²⁶ *It. Ant.* 223.4.

²²⁷ *It. Ant.* 225.2. We do not know when this legion was raised, though presumably it was in the second half of the third century. The same is true for the *legio II Herculia*.

²²⁸ *It. Ant.* 226.1.

²²⁹ This suggests that the *legio I Iovia* was created before AD 271; the same is probably true for the *legio II Herculia*.

²³⁰ In fact, Singidunum is conspicuously absent.

²³¹ Bojović 1996: 66ff.

²³² *IMS* II.12, dated to c. AD 204; *IMS* IV.44, probably dated to c. AD 193; *CIL* III.14507, AD 195; *CIL* III.14509, probably post AD 211 (after the death of Septimius Severus). We have a mass of other inscriptions from Viminacium that name the Seventh Claudian legion, but we cannot date them with any precision.

such, there is little reason to believe that the *legio VII Claudia* left its base at Viminacium before the end of Severus Alexander's reign.

AUXILIA:

As with Ptolemy in the previous chapter, the author/s of the *Antonine Itinerary* is no help in trying to pin down the location of any of the auxiliary units. Thus, we must look elsewhere. Beginning with Moesia Superior, Mirković claims that the *cohors II Aurelia nova* garrisoned the modern city of Kosmaj after AD 169.²³³ Dušanić says that the *cohors I Aurelia Dardanorum* was probably stationed at Naissus, whereas the *cohors II Aurelia Dardanorum* was stationed at Timacum Minus.²³⁴ The *cohors II Aurelia nova* was also located in the north of Moesia Superior at the fort in the modern town of Stojnik.²³⁵ Karavas also thinks that a vexillation of the *cohors I Ulpia Pannoniorum* was based at Stojnik.²³⁶ The whereabouts of the *cohors I Aurelia nova Pasinatum* and the *cohors II Aurelia nova Sacorum*, both poorly documented as it is, remain unknown.²³⁷ Mirković has noted the presence of the *cohors I Montanorum* at Novae, where it probably remained in the third century.²³⁸ The *cohors III Campestris* probably remained at Cuppae before its transfer under Marcus Aurelius; the *cohors V Gallorum* probably remained at Transdierna before its transfer. Spaul suggests that the *ala I Claudia nova*

²³³ Mirković 1976: 104-105. Kosmaj is in the northwest of the province just south of Singidunum.

²³⁴ Dušanić 2000: 349. Cf. Petrović 1995: 44. This supposition is supported by the inscriptional evidence: we have several inscriptions recording the unit's presence in these towns, particularly for the second cohort. For Naissus, see for example *CIL* III.8251 and *IMS* IV.94. For Timacum Minus see for example *AE* 1904, 92, *AE* 1952, 191, and *AE* 1976, 610.

²³⁵ Dušanić 2000: 349.

²³⁶ Karavas 2001: 103.

²³⁷ Karavas (2001: 103) suspects that the *cohors II Aurelia nova Sacorum* may have been based around the modern town of Stojnik.

²³⁸ Mirković 1986: 38.

miscellanea may have been stationed at a fort near the colony of Ratiaria.²³⁹ The *ala I Gallorum Flaviana* may have been stationed near Sirmium, which may have been part of Moesia Superior.²⁴⁰ The *cohors III Brittonum* was at Pontes from the reign of Marcus Aurelius onwards.²⁴¹

We now turn to Moesia Inferior. Early in the third century the *cohors I Lusitanorum* may have moved to Niginiana from Cius.²⁴² By AD 198 the *cohors II Mattiacorum* had moved its headquarters from Barbosi to Troianhissar.²⁴³ The *cohors II Flavia Brittonum* presumably remained at Sexaginta Prista into the third century. The *cohors I Cilicum* remained at Sacidava into the third century.²⁴⁴ The *ala I Vespasiana Dardanorum* may have been at Cerna at the beginning of the third century.²⁴⁵ The *ala Gallorum Aetorigiana* may have been based at Tomi around AD 224, and possibly before then.²⁴⁶ But, the decurion who set up the career inscription alluded to in the previous sentence may have done it at the patron's hometown, and not necessarily the unit's station.²⁴⁷

²³⁹ Spaul 1994: 90. Spaul notes that the funerary stone (*CIL* III.14500) found at Ratiaria does not mean that the unit was there, although he notes that there are instances of forts attached to colonies in Britain. From this, he suggests that there may have been a fort in the vicinity of Ratiaria. It is only speculation however.

²⁴⁰ Spaul (1994: 115) conjectures that the town may have been part of Moesia Superior at one point, even though the site (ancient Sirmium) is usually considered to be part of Pannonia Inferior. There is an inscription which lists a P. Helvius Pertinax from the unit from Sirmium. As the unit was never based in the Pannonias, Spaul's suggestion must remain a possibility, however remote.

²⁴¹ Karavas 2001: 94.

²⁴² Zahariade and Gudea 1997: 47.

²⁴³ Zahariade and Gudea 1997: 47. Cf. *CIL* III.14428.

²⁴⁴ Zahariade and Gudea 1997: 46. Cf. Scorpan (1980: 98-102) who cites some inscriptions naming the unit found during excavations in 1979.

²⁴⁵ *ISM* V.218.

²⁴⁶ Spaul 1994: 49. Cf. *CIL* III.6154.

²⁴⁷ This is the assertion of Spaul.

The *cohors I Thracum Syriaca* may have stayed at modern Tutrakan.²⁴⁸ The *cohors I Germanorum* was conceivably still at Capidava during this period.²⁴⁹ The *cohors I Lusitanorum* seems to have been based at the fort at the town of Malak Preslavec during the reign of Maximinus Thrax.²⁵⁰ This cohort may very well have used that fort as its headquarters before then.

²⁴⁸ Eck and Roxan 1997: 197. This suggestion is based on the presence of an altar set up by a prefect of the unit (*AE* 1939, 101).

²⁴⁹ Spaul 2000: 256. The period is of course, AD 161 to AD 235.

²⁵⁰ Spaul 2000: 60. Cf. *AE* 1963, 180, which is a votive stone set up by the unit.

CONCLUSION:

We now know the names of the various units that made up the garrison of the province of Moesia, and later Moesia Inferior and Moesia Superior. In addition, we have, where possible, elucidated the movements of those various units into, out of, and between those two provinces. Thus, now that we have reached the end of this essay, it is time to take stock of what we have found, particularly in regard to the strength and size of the army, the troop emplacement, and the army's strategy.

THE STRENGTH AND SIZE OF THE MOESIAN ARMY:¹

Beginning in AD 40, there were between 16448 and 17440 soldiers based in Moesia.² Towards the end of Vespasian's reign in AD 78, the number of troops had risen dramatically to between 27824 and 27944 soldiers, which is an increase of around 65%.³ In the years following Domitian's Dacian campaigns, the number of soldiers present in the former province of Moesia was around 38080 soldiers, an increase of around 37%. Of that total for AD 93, approximately 57% of those soldiers were based in Moesia Inferior. The total number of troops in the former province increased again in the years leading up to Trajan's Dacian campaigns. There were now between 43928 and 44968

¹ Here I have used the sizes as set out by Roth. In regard to the legions, Roth (1994: 361) postulated that there were about 6600 persons in each, which included about 5280 soldiers. In regard to the auxiliary units, Roth postulated that there were 512 men in the quingenarian *ala* (Roth 1999: 336), 1024 in the milliarian *ala* (1999: 337), 480 men in the quingenarian *cohors* (1999: 337), 960 in the milliarian *cohors* (1999: 337), 600 in the quingenarian mounted cohort (1999: 338), and 1040 in the milliarian mounted cohort (1999: 338). This information was used to calculate the size of the Moesian army from Augustus to Severus Alexander.

² The sizes given in this chapter are paper strengths and in all likelihood, do not represent the actual size of the army at any given time in the province. We cannot hope to calculate the fluctuations due to death, new recruitment and so forth. For the specific units used for these calculations, see the discussion above in chapters 1 through 3. Moreover, the dates selected, though somewhat arbitrary, represent a time before or after major changes in the province's garrison. The number of units used in the calculations is based upon both what was determined above in the first three chapters, and the diplomas.

³ The percentages, like the troop numbers, are merely an approximation.

soldiers in the former province of Moesia, an increase of about 17%. At that time, around AD 100, the balance between the two provinces had shifted somewhat as the army of Moesia Inferior now made up about 47% of the total. At the end of Trajan's reign, there were some more substantial changes in the garrison of the two Moesias. By the end of Hadrian's reign, the provincial garrison had shrunk. There were now between 41864 and 42104 soldiers in the former province of Moesia, a decrease of about 6%. In AD 138, approximately 60% of the Moesian army was based in Moesia Inferior. Finally we come to the last period when there was any notable changes, AD 170. There were between 37144 and 37324 soldiers located in the former province of Moesia at this time, a drop of around 11%. Approximately 53% of the soldiers were based in Moesia Inferior.

TROOP EMPLACEMENT:⁴

During the first period under discussion, that is from the years 29 BC through AD 81, the majority of the known military bases were located on, or at least pretty close to the Danube. And, of those bases, most of them were clustered together. The same seems to be true of the fortifications.⁵ There were a handful of units in the westernmost limit of Moesia around Viminacium and Singidunum; there were a few more around Novae (Moesia Superior in the Banat) and Taliata; there were units at Ratiaria, west of there at

⁴ The number of known bases for both the legions and auxiliary units limits this discussion. There are dozens of fortresses whose garrison we do not know. At the same time, there are several units whose bases we do not know. New discoveries could dramatically alter the conclusions made here. Thus all the conclusions are quite tentative. There are some very useful diagrams in Karavas' (2001) dissertation that illustrate both the unit emplacement and the positioning of the fortifications for the Moesias (see Maps 8 – 19).

⁵ For the fortifications see Karavas 2001: pp 104-110; and pp 138-141. The differentiation that I am making between fortifications and bases is that with bases we know what unit/s were in garrison, whereas with the fortifications, in many instances we do not.

Timacum Minus, southwest of Timacum Minus at Naissus, and southeast of Ratiaria at Montana; a few more units were around Novae (Moesia Inferior), Oescus, and the modern town of Nikopol; finally there were some in the Dobrodja around Troesmis. The Roman forces seem to have been more evenly distributed in the period from AD 81 to AD 161; the same is again true for the fortifications.⁶ There were a few more units centred around Viminacium and Singidunum at Lederata and Cuppae for example. Just to the west of Cuppae there were units at Novae, Transdierna, and Pontes: the Iron Gate region was a greater focus of Roman policy in this period. Naissus and Timacum Minus continued to be occupied. As we move along the Danube eastwards, we find that the units are fairly distributed at sites like Oescus, Novae, Sexaginta Prista, Transmarisca, Durostorum, Sucidava, Sacidava, Capidava, Carsium, and Troesmis. Tomi on the coast of the Black Sea and Abritus inland from there were both occupied. All in all, the troops were fairly evenly spread along the Danube, which despite the creation of the province of Dacia, still garnered the attention of the Roman forces. The final period under discussion runs from AD 161 through to AD 235. Over this interval we are a little less certain about the deployment of as many units as we were for the previous interval. At the same time, by this point most units had become stationary, and the majority of the fortification construction had been carried out between the reigns of Vespasian and Hadrian. Thus, the dispositions of the numerous units were fairly similar to those of the previous period.

STRATEGY AND TACTICS IN MOESIA:

Around AD 40, the auxiliary units made up around 38% of the total garrison of the province. By AD 78, that number had increased to about 43%. In AD 93, following

⁶ For the fortifications see Karavas 2001: pp 110-117; and pp 141-149.

the division of the province and the Dacian wars of Domitian, 51% of the garrison of the new province of Moesia Inferior was auxiliary, and 36% of the garrison of Moesia Superior was auxiliary. By AD 100 these figures had changed again so that about 48% of the garrison of Moesia Inferior was auxiliary, whereas about 53% of the garrison of Moesia Superior was auxiliary. By AD 138, long after the Dacian wars were over and Dacia had been organised into a province, the proportion of auxiliaries had dropped considerably. About 38% of the garrison of Moesia Inferior was now auxiliary, compared with 37% for Moesia Superior.⁷ Finally, from AD 170 onwards about 46% of the garrison of Moesia Inferior was auxiliary, whereas about 40% of the garrison of Moesia Superior was auxiliary.

With the exception of major wars, and in particular those of Domitian and Trajan, legionaries made up the bulk of the Moesian forces. Generally, the legions were better suited for fighting in open areas. And so, when first deployed in the province we find legions based in areas where the terrain would not be a hindrance to their performance in battle. As the Roman forces began to spread out over the Moesian frontier, vexillations were increasingly used; vexillations would have been better suited for fighting on uneven terrain due to their smaller size and greater maneuverability. At the same time, the legions were concentrated around single bases during the early empire, a period when the army was still for the most part offensively-minded.⁸ Conversely, by the time that

⁷ Significantly, however, Moesia Inferior had one 'extra' legion over this period to bring its total to three legions, which is the reason for the lower proportion of auxiliaries.

⁸ Thus, in the words of Karavas (2001: 140), "the main purpose behind the concentration of Roman military forces in the Oescus region [for example], was to act primarily as a spearhead and supply base designed to facilitate and sustain future offensive operations across the Danube, especially given the suitability of the terrain."

campaigns in the area had ground to a halt, the legions became more widely dispersed into smaller vexillations.

At times of war, there were significant changes in the auxiliary composition of the two provinces. There was a substantial increase in auxiliary units around the time of the Dacian wars of Domitian; in this instance, the proportion of auxiliaries in Moesia Inferior, as well as the number, was much greater than that of Moesia Superior. This must reflect the importance of the province in those wars. Conversely, during the Dacian wars of Trajan, there were more auxiliary units in Moesia Superior than there were in Moesia Inferior; and they made up a greater proportion of the total. Presumably this reflects the importance of Moesia Superior as a launching pad for the military operation into what would become the Roman province of Dacia.

Overall, it seems that throughout this period the auxiliary units played a greater role in Moesia Inferior than they did in Moesia Superior. With the lone exception of Trajan's Dacian wars, there were always more auxiliary soldiers in Moesia Inferior than Superior. What is more, as regards their total numbers, the legionaries seemed to be fairly evenly distributed between the two provinces. The exception was the years from Hadrian to AD 167 when there were three legions in Moesia Inferior to Moesia Superior's two. Clearly, the Romans felt that the frontier of Moesia Inferior required additional troops, and elected to use auxiliaries.⁹ We cannot say why the Romans felt the need for more troops along this frontier, though it was markedly longer than that of Moesia Superior.¹⁰ At the same time, even with the creation of the province of Dacia, the

⁹ More often than not there were more soldiers in Moesia Inferior than in Moesia Superior.

¹⁰ What is more, Moesia Superior remained for the most part a frontier province, with the westernmost border of Dacia not reaching the Danube, whereas most of Moesia Inferior, with the exception of the Dobrudja, became to a certain extent an interior province.

Romans may have felt that the Danube still needed to be kept under close surveillance.¹¹ While it is tempting to suggest that this may have been because the auxiliaries might have been marginally cheaper to maintain than legionaries, we should not underestimate the capabilities of the auxiliaries.¹² What is more, Karavas has demonstrated that the threats facing the Romans on the lower Danube were all low intensity: the soldiers and their fortifications were there to protect the province from small-scale raids rather than large-scale invasions.¹³ Thus, smaller and more mobile auxiliary units – and we must not forget about the numerous vexillations – would have been better suited to respond quickly to threats on the scale most often experienced by Rome on the lower Danube.¹⁴ At the same time, the auxiliary units, better suited for the terrain of Roman Dacia, could be sent to reinforce the Dacian army if need be, and rather quickly.

One last point that we need to discuss is the increased positioning of troops in the interior of Moesia Superior, and in particular mounted troops. This largely occurred in the Antonine period, and more specifically during the reign of Marcus Aurelius when we saw the raising of several new units. What is more, these units were by and large based around known mines in the province. Thus, their role was probably connected with surveillance around and the protection of the mines.¹⁵

¹¹ We might be tempted to guess that this was to guard against a sea-borne invasion. However, prior to the arrival of the Goths in the middle of the third century, an invasion by 'sea' so to speak, was never a real possibility. Rome's neighbours at the time lacked the naval knowledge to carry out such an expedition. Karavas demonstrated that the Romans tended to load their forces and fortifications around the major crossing points of the Danube, which suggests that they were more concerned with land-based incursions; there was no change in this pattern following the creation of Dacia.

¹² In this light see Gilliver (1996: 54-67).

¹³ Karavas 2001: 255ff.

¹⁴ See Goldsworthy's (1996: 26-28) brief discussion of the importance of vexillations in combat and their increasing implementation by Rome, in addition to my discussion above. Obviously, the cavalry units would be the first units to respond to any situation owing to their quickness.

¹⁵ Cf. Davies 1989: 141-152; Dušanić 2000: 343-363; Karavas 2001: 116-117.

APPENDIX 1: THE LEGIONS AND AUXILIARY UNITS OF THE MOESIAS

MOESIA				
Year:		Legionaries		Auxiliaries
78		I Italica, V Macedonica, VII Claudia		ala Asturum, ala Herculiana, ala Aetorigiana, ala I Gallorum, ala Gallorum Flaviana, ala I Vespasiana, ala Dardanorum, ala Claudia nova, cohors Antiochensium, cohors I Cantabrorum, cohors I Thracum Syriaca, cohors I Sugamborum tironum, cohors II Lucensium, cohors III Gallorum, cohors IV Gallorum, cohors V Gallorum, cohors VII Gallorum, cohors VIII Gallorum, cohors Cilicum, cohors Mattiacorum
MOESIA INFERIOR			MOESIA SUPERIOR	
Legionaries	Auxiliaries	Year:	Legionaries	Auxiliaries
I Italica, V Macedonica, XI Claudia	ala I Pannoniorum et Gallorum, ala Gallorum Aetorigiana, ala I Vespasiana Dardanorum, I Flavia Gaetulorum, ala II Hispanorum Aravacorum, cohors I Lusitanorum, I Flavia Numidarum, cohors I Germanorum, cohors I Bracaraugustanorum, cohors I Lepidiana, cohors II Flavia Brittonum, cohors II Chalcidenorum, cohors II Mattiacorum, cohors	138	III Flavia, VII Claudia	ala I Claudia nova miscellanea, ala I Gallorum Flaviana, cohors V Gallorum, cohors V Hispanorum, cohors I Montanorum, cohors I Antiochensium, cohors I Cretum, cohors III campestris, cohors II Gallorum, cohors III Brittonum, cohors I Lusitanorum,

	II Bracaraugustanorum, cohors I Cilicum sagittaria, cohors I Thracum Syriaca, cohors I Claudia Sugambrorum veterana			cohors I Pannoniorum
I Italica, XI Claudia	ala I Pannoniorum et Gallorum, ala Gallorum Atectorigiana, ala I Vespasiana Dardanorum, I Flavia Gaetulorum, ala II Hispanorum Aravacorum, cohors I Lusitanorum, cohors I Germanorum, cohors I Bracaraugustanorum, cohors I Lepidiana, cohors II Flavia Brittonum, cohors II Chalcidenorum, cohors II Mattiacorum, cohors II Bracaraugustanorum, cohors I Cilicum sagittaria, cohors I Thracum Syriaca, cohors I Claudia Sugambrorum veterana	170	III Flavia, VII Claudia	ala I Claudia nova miscellanea, ala I Gallorum Flaviana, cohors II Aurelia nova Sacorum, cohors I Aurelia nova Pasinatum, cohors II Aurelia nova milliaria equitata, cohors I Aurelia Dardanorum, cohors II Aurelia Dardanorum, cohors V Hispanorum, cohors I Montanorum, cohors I Antiochensium, cohors I Cretum, cohors II Gallorum, cohors III Brittonum, cohors I Pannoniorum

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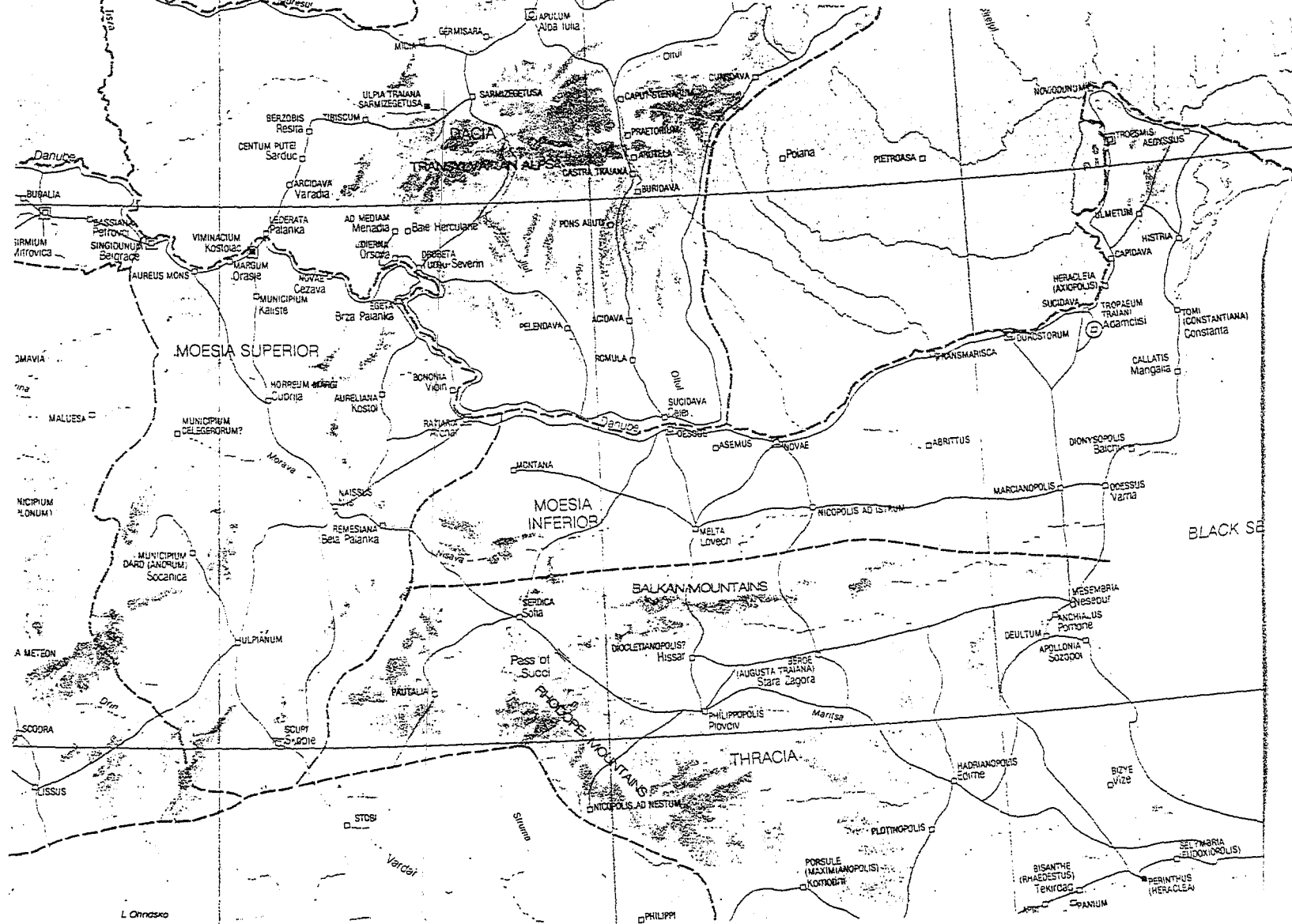
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MAP OF THE MOESIAS

This map of the Moesiās is taken from: Cornell, T. and J. Matthews. 1982. *Atlas of the Roman World*. New York. p. 141.