

ADLOCUTIONES: IMPERIAL ADDRESSES TO THE ROMAN ARMY

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(27 B.C. – A.D. 235)

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Abstract

Despite the large corpus of scholarly writing about the Roman army, the military address to the troops, or *adlocutio*, has not been studied at length. In an age lacking means of mass communication, the ceremony of *adlocutio* served as an important tool of the emperors, providing them with the opportunity to convey messages directly to large groups of army personnel in a single speech. The first chapter focuses on the setting, audience, and occasions for the speeches, as well as the important concept of the emperor as *commilito* or fellow-soldier. In order to better discuss the only substantial surviving text of an imperial speech to the army, chapter two examines Hadrian's early military career before looking at the setting for the address at Lambaesis and then the content of the emperor's speech. The conventions of the *adlocutio* including the use of gestures and body language, major themes, and common trends in vocabulary are explored in chapter three. Conclusions about the importance, frequency, and common features of the *adlocutio* complete this study of the imperial speeches to the Roman army.

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Table of Contents

| | | |
|--------------|---|----|
| Introduction | | 1 |
| Chapter 1 | <i>A Bond between the Emperor and the Army</i> | 6 |
| Chapter 2 | <i>Hadrian's African Adlocutio</i> | 29 |
| Chapter 3 | <i>Conventions of the Adlocutio</i> | 45 |
| Conclusion | | 64 |
| Appendix | <i>Text and Translation of Hadrian's Address at Lambaesis</i> | 68 |
| Bibliography | | 81 |

Introduction

Over the past century, studies of the Roman army have benefitted greatly from increasingly available archaeological evidence from sites spread across the Europe, Asia, and North Africa. Few studies, however, look beyond the strategy and tactics of warfare, past the battle successes and failures of the Roman war machine, to the traditions and beliefs affecting the soldiers. While the oath of allegiance, or *sacramentum*, was administered as a reminder of the soldier's duty to his state, it was up to the individual general to actually enforce discipline among the ranks.

In the late Republic, legions were raised by individual generals and owed all of their loyalty to them. To many soldiers, their general was the patron and protector on whom their own fortunes depended. Soldiers not only depended on their general for their daily wage, but also for their livelihood after their term of service had ended, since it was often the place of the general to find suitable land on which to settle his veterans. Most importantly, the general was trusted not to waste unnecessarily the lives of his men, and the men were trusted not to disobey orders or mutiny. Due to the very personal nature of the soldier-general relationship in the late Republic, the general in turn sometimes demanded that the soldiers respect their vow of loyalty to him before that of the state.¹

In his biography of Marius, Plutarch highlights the need for a personal association

¹ Graham Webster, *The Roman Imperial Army of the First and Second Centuries A.D.* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1969), 41; Jacques Harmand, *L'armée et le soldat à Rome: de 107 à 50 avant notre ère*, (Paris: Éditions A. et J. Picard et C^{ie}, 1967), 442 and 451-2.

between the soldier and the commander as being even more important than money.² The fact that Plutarch thinks that this type of relationship was still relevant to mention in his time is significant. For Marius, the easiest way to maintain discipline, enforce training regimes and earn the loyalty of the troops was to lead by example. Since it was custom for a Roman general to direct the course of a battle without actually taking part, the fact that Marius made attempts to share the soldier's way of life and took part in the menial tasks of the camp contributed greatly to his reputation among the troops. For this, the soldiers looked upon him as not simply their leader, but as a soldier like themselves.³ In the following decades, leading by example was slowly viewed as a necessary quality of a good general. It was also customary for the general to conduct parade inspections and drill reviews during peace time to encourage discipline and to boost morale. On these occasions when all the troops had been assembled the general would often address them all together in a prepared speech. Such a speech was also expected immediately prior to a battle to explain important tactical decisions or deployments, to raise morale, or to encourage the troops to acts of bravery.⁴

By the time of Julius Caesar, men are being recruited from all ranks of Roman society. Since the men were no longer of a similar economic and educational background a change occurred in the collective mentality of the troops. As a result, the manner of

² Plutarch, *Marius* 7.4-5.

³ J. B. Campbell, *The Emperor and the Roman Army* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 59; Webster, 38. For the usual practice of a general conducting a campaign, see Caesar, *De Bello Gallico* 2.20-2.

⁴ Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita* 21.40; 25.38.

addressing an army required a different approach. Caesar in particular had the ability to promote an ideology that treated the accountability and responsibility of the individual soldier as a key factor in the welfare of the army as a whole. In this way, Caesar's orations to the army had the effect of establishing the soldier's social role within the context of the growing empire.⁵

In the period of the principate, the problem for each emperor was to combine the traditional role of the *imperator* with a close relationship with the common soldiers. As the head of state, the emperor was also the commander-in-chief of the Roman army. In this capacity, after the early principate, when either the emperor himself or a member of the imperial family were present in the field during campaigns, the emperor needed to find ways of gaining and of keeping the support of the legions knowing that few soldiers would ever actually meet him.

As such, the traditional harangue of the commanding general was appropriated by the emperor as a means of strengthening his bond with the troops. Many emperors saw this personal relationship as essential to their survival, as the potential political power of the army (and especially of the Praetorian Guard) grew steadily in importance during the first century A.D. By the end of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, the ceremony of *adlocutio* was reserved exclusively for the emperor or select members of the imperial family in an attempt to translate the symbolic terms of the oath of allegiance into an opportunity for the creation of a true bond with the soldiers of the empire.⁶

⁵ Harmand, 303-13.

⁶ Campbell (1984), 17-8.

Evidence for imperial speeches to the Roman army can be found primarily in numismatic and iconographic representations of the emperors, especially on the coins of the *adlocutio* type and on monuments such as the columns of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius. Few speeches of any length are recorded in the ancient texts, and while it must be assumed that their content is mostly fictional, the events and circumstances surrounding these *adlocutiones* are more trustworthy. Reports of imperial speeches can be found in such diverse authors as Cassius Dio, Herodian, Josephus, Plutarch, Suetonius, the *SHA*, and Tacitus. However, the most impressive piece of evidence for an imperial speech is the series of inscriptions from a monument in the training ground at the military base at Lambaesis in North Africa recording an address by the Emperor Hadrian in A.D. 128.

In an age devoid of means of mass communication, the ceremony of *adlocutio* served as an important tool of the military leader, providing him with the opportunity to convey messages directly to large groups of army personnel in a single speech.⁷ While many modern sources allude to the importance of the *adlocutio* ceremony, little else is mentioned.⁸ Several questions need to be answered: What is an *adlocutio*? Where and when did the speech occur? What was said on these occasions? This thesis seeks to fill this void in the study of the Roman army.

⁷ Campbell (1984), 69.

⁸ See for example Yann Le Bohec, *The Imperial Roman Army* (London: Routledge, 1994), 60 and 159; M. C. Bishop, "On Parade: Status, Display, and Morale in the Roman Army," in H. Vetter and M. Kandler, eds., *Akten des 14 Internationalen Limeskongresses 1986 in Carnuntum* (1990): 21.

The first chapter focuses on the setting, audience, and occasions for the speeches, as well as the important concept of the emperor as *commilito* or fellow-soldier. Chapter two examines Hadrian's early military career before looking at the setting for the address at Lambaesis and then the content of the emperor's speech. The conventions of the *adlocutio* including the use of gestures and body language, common vocabulary, and themes are discussed in chapter three. Conclusions about the importance, frequency, and common features of the *adlocutio* complete this study of the imperial speeches to the Roman army.

Chapter 1

A Bond between the Emperor and the Army

During the principate, the traditional purpose of the *adlocutio* began to change. Not simply an exhortation to encourage performance in battle, the speech to the troops played an increasingly important role in establishing a stable relationship between the emperor and the army. Through his speeches, the emperor could reaffirm his command over the troops and their obligations both to himself and to the state.

Part 1 - Setting and Audience

The setting for the formal *adlocutio* was solemn and highly ritualized, and displayed both of the greatness of the emperor and of military *esprit-de-corps*. The speaker normally stood on a raised platform or tribunal, built from either blocks of stone or wood planks expressly set aside for that purpose.¹ According to Hyginus, such materials were included in the mandatory equipment of a marching camp and remained dismantled when not in use.² Rarely, the platform would be elaborately carved or decorated for the occasion.³ It is likely that such platforms were permanent fixtures in the camps and parade grounds, but when on campaign a more rudimentary construction of

¹ In his description of a speech by Pompey, Plutarch implies that it was normal for such speeches not to be given from some sort of raised platform. Plutarch, *Pompey* 41.2.

² Hyginus, *De Munitionibus Castrorum* 11.

³ Herodian, *History of the Roman Empire since the Death of Marcus Aurelius* 8.7.3.

lumps of turf could be acceptable.⁴ Indeed, the existence of permanent tribunals in the camps suggests that these platforms were not simply decorations, but were highly functional additions and often put to use. Sometimes, the buildings or spaces that formed the background were themselves loaded with symbolic meanings or associations due to the history of the site or its décor.⁵

As evidence from arches, columns, and coins shows, when speaking in a formal military setting, the emperor usually donned his military dress uniform, including cuirass, cloak, and boots. And, while the wearing of armour was expected on such an occasion, it seems to be the custom that weapons should not be carried. In comparison, when an address was made to the Praetorian Guard while in the city of Rome, it was customary for the emperor to wear only his toga.⁶ The origins of this practice can most likely be linked to Augustus who often emphasized his policy to appear less militaristic while inside the city. This attitude may have changed by the reign of Hadrian, however, as the emperor can be seen addressing the Praetorians in full military dress on a coin dated to A.D. 119.⁷ In addition, there is one curious scene on the Column of Trajan that shows the emperor addressing the troops clad only in his toga, with the troops also depicted as being out of uniform. Campbell interprets this scene to symbolize the announcement of the

⁴ Herodian 1.5.2; Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 62.2.3.

⁵ Gregory Aldrete, *Gestures and Acclamations in Ancient Rome*, (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 18-9.

⁶ See for example *BMC I*, p. 151 no. 33; *II*, p. 128 no. 122.

⁷ *BMC III*, p. 497 nos. *, +, and ++.

conclusion of the 1st Dacian war.⁸ The emperor was often joined on the tribunal by other important persons. On the columns of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius, bystanders positioned near the emperor can be seen, and most likely include the senior commanders, friends of the emperor, or advisors. For example, after the death of Marcus Aurelius, Commodus addressed the Praetorian Guard joined on the tribunal by his father's chief advisors.⁹ The presence of other key political figures would only serve to highlight the importance of the occasion in the minds of the audience.

The nature of the audience of imperial *adlocutiones* is an important factor in determining both the type of speech given as well as its contents. Most often the troops are shown, both on coins and in depictions on arches and columns, in full armour crowded around the emperor listening to his words. Sometimes there are standards visible either placed prominently on the raised platform or positioned among the front row of troops, just as Tacitus describes when Germanicus addresses the troops on the Rhine.¹⁰ Unless the content of the speech is known, it is difficult to determine what sort of reaction, if any, was expected of the audience. Obviously, as with any public speaking, the audience is required to stand quietly in order to hear properly, but also out of respect for the speaker. As for the military *adlocutio*, it was probably the duty of the officers to ensure that the men kept quiet, such as when Drusus is first greeted by a great roar of

⁸ Trajan's Column scene 57; Campbell (1984), 74.

⁹ Herodian 1.5.2.

¹⁰ Tacitus, *Annales* 1.34-5.

appreciation and then a respectful silence.¹¹ However, if the speech was meant to rouse the troops before a battle, it was surely expected that they respond vigorously with shouts or cheers. The troops could also cry out to voice their support for a proposal or plea made by the emperor. Such was the case when Claudius entreated the Praetorians to take action on his behalf against his wife Messalina and her lover Gaius Silius.¹² On the other hand, a failure to applaud or cry out after an *adlocutio* might be a sign that the troops disapproved of the course of action being described, as when only some of the guard accepted Licinianus Piso's adoption by Galba in A.D. 69.¹³ It was even worse still if the troops interrupted with negative or hostile remarks. This type of adverse behaviour is attributed to the soldiers towards both Drusus and Germanicus on separate occasions during the attempted mutinies along the Rhine.¹⁴ On another occasion, Narcissus, the freedman of the emperor Claudius, was openly mocked by the troops when he attempted to deliver a message from the emperor.¹⁵ These last situations are not typical, however, and should not be considered common occurrences. All in all, the *adlocutio* was a demonstration both on the part of the speaker and on the part of the audience of strict military discipline, with all parties adhering to standardized protocols.

Adlocutiones need not always be formal occasions; in fact, it is likely that the number of formal speeches to the army were restricted so as to maintain the degree of

¹¹ Tac., *Ann.* 1.25.

¹² *Ibid.*, 11.35.

¹³ Tacitus, *Historiae* 1.18.

¹⁴ Tac., *Ann.* 1.26; 1.35.

¹⁵ Dio 60.19.2.

formality and its extraordinary atmosphere. When on campaign the emperor would often address the army in the hopes of influencing their conduct with his speeches and by making his presence known. According to Josephus, during the siege of Jerusalem, Titus gave several speeches to his troops filled with encouragements and promises of rewards in order to make the men forget the dangers they faced.¹⁶ Given upon the conclusion of a campaign, an *adlocutio* could serve to congratulate the troops on a job well done and to praise them for enduring great hardships. Despite its ridiculousness, an example of this type of oration is the speech given by Caligula after he successfully ‘conquered’ the sea by having a bridge of boats stretched across the Bay of Naples.¹⁷ A speech might also be used to encourage the continuation of and adherence to the tedious daily tasks and routines during times of peace such as drills, building fortifications, and patrols. Hadrian’s address at Lambaesis, which will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, is a prime example of the emperor promoting military discipline in these areas.

In these types of politically charged speeches, the response of the audience was again of paramount importance. The roar of approval from the Praetorians after Claudius unveiled the treachery of Messalina resulted in the immediate death of Gaius Silius.¹⁸ In contrast, the subdued reaction and half-hearted support of the guard after the speeches of Galba and Piso were early indications of their eventual fall from power.¹⁹ Even a minor

¹⁶ Josephus, *Jewish Wars* 3.472ff; 6.33ff; 7.2ff.

¹⁷ Dio 59.17.6.

¹⁸ Tac., *Ann.* 11.35.

¹⁹ Tac., *Hist.* 1.17-18; 31.

misstep in an address could prove fatal, as in the case of Pertinax. Dio comments that Pertinax roused the suspicions of the Praetorians and was later killed by them, after hinting at the possible removal of some of their privileges in a speech.²⁰ On the other hand, a well-delivered oration was an important step in gaining the support of the troops, especially for the challenger to the imperial throne. In A.D. 193, just such a speech resulted in the enthusiastic elevation of Pescennius Niger by the Syrian legions.²¹ Septimius Severus also benefited from a similar situation at the beginning of his campaign for the throne.²²

While it is sometimes easy to determine the feelings of the audience during a speech by the emperor, there is little evidence about how the emperor himself felt giving the address. Campbell argues that it would have been difficult for the emperor to give speeches before the troops due to their lack of education. In these situations, the emperor may have needed to alter his use of language in the speech itself from the type of language that he customarily employed in other political situations (i.e. the Senate), although this study has found little evidence to prove the validity of Campbell's argument. The frequency with which *adlocutiones* were delivered suggests something about the responsibilities of being an emperor, but perhaps, more importantly, it demonstrates the fundamental reliance of the emperor on the military to confirm his power over the state. The emperor was not an absolute ruler, but was dependent at a very

²⁰ Dio 74.1.3.

²¹ Herodian 2.8.6.

²² *Ibid.*, 2.10.9.

basic level on the continued support of the common soldier. As a result, nearly all emperors thought it necessary to make at least one address to the troops (if only to the garrison at Rome upon his accession) as a means of strengthening his relationship with the army.²³ In addition, the more an emperor appeared before the troops to confirm their loyalty through the conventions of the address, the less likely that a usurper would be able to gather and sustain any support of his own. In fact, any unauthorized speeches to the army could be considered treasonous. Under Vespasian, the consul Aulus Caecina was executed for making attempts at corrupting the soldiers after a copy of a speech that he had prepared to deliver was discovered.²⁴

Unfortunately, although we have evidence for the responses of the troops on several specific occasions, their general attitude towards *adlocutiones* remains unknown. Although it is possible that they may have found these speeches uninteresting or unimportant, the limited number of formal addresses indicates that a rare appearance of the emperor would have made a strong impact on them. It is precisely for this reason that the formal *adlocutio* was such a prestigious affair, with all of the pomp that could be mustered for the occasion. To judge from the reaction of the *Legio III Augusta* at Lambaesis – the dedication of a monument to celebrate not only the presence of the Emperor Hadrian in A.D. 128, but also the actual content of his address – formal *adlocutiones* were surely considered by the troops to be meaningful events.

²³ Campbell (1984), 87.

²⁴ Suetonius, *Titus* 6.2; Dio 65.16.3.

Part 2 - Context

Not to be confused with the *hortatio*, or call to battle in the field, an *adlocutio* could sometimes encompass similar functions. Before a campaign or battle the emperor might address the troops to describe the tactical situation, and to describe the nature of the enemy, emphasizing the legions' own natural superiority and weaknesses of the barbarians.²⁵ Depending on the circumstances, an emperor might also choose to frighten his troops by reminding them of the consequences of defeat.²⁶ Sometimes, in potentially mutinous situations, a commander might even threaten discharges or executions as punishments for noncompliance or dissent.²⁷ An address at the close of a campaign or battle would usually serve to praise the fallen (in a *laudatio*) and reward meritorious behaviour with promotions or *dona militaria*.²⁸

Adlocutiones occurred most often upon the accession of a new emperor. The tradition of the emperor's address to the Praetorian Guard probably began with Caligula, when he inspected the guard and awarded them a donative in A.D. 37.²⁹ Following this precedent, it became standard practice by the reign of Commodus for the new emperor to award a monetary incentive to the troops upon his accession.³⁰ Claudius, too, is known to

²⁵ See the encouragements of Germanicus as described in Tac., *Ann.* 2.14.

²⁶ Suetonius, *Claudius*, 10; *Otho* 6; Tac., *Ann.* 12.69; 15.72; *Hist.* 1.18; Josephus 6.33ff; Dio 71.24.1; 25.1; 26.1; Herodian 1.6.

²⁷ Compare the actions of Caesar in Appian, *B. Civ.* 2.7.47.

²⁸ Josephus 7.5ff.

²⁹ Dio 59.2; cf. *BMC I*, p. 151 no. 33.

³⁰ Herodian 1.5.1.

have addressed the guard and awarded a donative; according to Suetonius, this occurred shortly after the death of Caligula, when the Praetorians found him hiding behind some curtains in the imperial household and immediately carted him off to their camp where he was hailed as emperor. Suetonius states that Claudius then became the first of the emperors to win the loyalty of the soldiers with bribery.³¹ In his turn, Nero apparently gave a speech written by Seneca after being escorted to the *Castra Praetoria* by the prefect.³² By the end of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, the tradition of an *adlocutio* to the Praetorian Guard, and by implication to the whole of the army, had become an important step for the emperor in gaining the support and approval of the military.³³

Another important function of the *adlocutio* was to make an official introduction of a dynastic heir to the troops, or to announce the adoption of an heir. In A.D. 69, Galba decided to adopt Licinianus Piso to gain the support of the legions and chose to make the announcement in the *Castra Praetoria*. The choice of venue for the speech was significant in that by choosing this location instead of the *curia* or the *rostra*, Galba was attempting to gain the favour of the guard for his choice of successor through flattery. Interestingly, according to Tacitus, the speech might have been successful if Galba had awarded a donative, as was now the custom, to commemorate the occasion.³⁴ In A.D. 171/2, when Marcus Aurelius introduced his son Commodus to the troops, the affair was

³¹ Suet., *Claud.* 10.4: "... *primus Caesarum fidem militis etiam praemio pigneratus.*"

³² Tac., *Ann.* 12.69; Suetonius, *Nero* 8; Dio 61.3.1.

³³ Campbell (1984), 82.

³⁴ Tac., *Hist.* 1.17-18.

commemorated on a series of coins featuring the legend '*providentia*' to demonstrate that the dynastic succession was secure.³⁵ A similar theme is evident on a coin of Septimius Severus that shows the emperor presenting his two sons to the troops in A.D. 210. Campbell suggests that this coin probably depicts a speech given prior to the emperor's departure for Britain in case his health should take a turn for the worse while away from Rome.³⁶ In this case, too, the emperor makes it clear to the troops that the succession is protected from controversy. Thus, by the second century A.D., it is likely that an *adlocutio* to the troops had become the standard venue for the introduction of the imperial heir to the public.

In very rare cases, an *adlocutio* could even have the force of an official act such as an edict or rescript. One example of this occurred in A.D. 168, when Marcus Aurelius addressed the Praetorian Guard regarding a clarification of the rights and privileges of discharged veterans.³⁷

In times of conflict or political disturbance, it was advisable for the emperor to ensure the loyalty of the troops through his personal attention. The occasion of an *adlocutio* gave the emperor the necessary access to a large group of soldiers (usually the Praetorian Guard). After he had discovered the seriousness of the threat posed by his wife Messalina, Claudius went directly to the guard to appeal for their support.³⁸ Even

³⁵ *BMC IV*, p. 624 nos. 1425-6.

³⁶ *BMC V*, p. 395 no. 192; Campbell (1984), 84.

³⁷ *Fragmenta Vaticana* 195.

³⁸ Tac., *Ann.* 11.35.

Nero, although his situation was more precarious, approached the guard in A.D. 68 and attempted to regain their support by shaming them through his tears.³⁹ During the revolt of Cassius, Marcus Aurelius addressed the troops on the Danube in order to put their fears to rest and to encourage them by his own composure.⁴⁰ In A.D. 185/6 a series of coins of Commodus bearing the legend '*fides exerc(itum)*' appeared, celebrating the loyalty of those troops who did not participate in the rebellion of Perennis in Britain the year before.⁴¹ Immediately after the murder of his brother Geta, Caracalla addressed the guard to secure his own rule.⁴²

While the content of the speeches made on these occasions is difficult to ascertain from literary sources, who invent much of this material, it is probable that they at least express the tone, mood, and general essence of the emperor's words, following in the tradition of the Greek historian Thucydides.⁴³ In his speech to the Praetorian Guard after his adoption in A.D. 69 Licinianus Piso attempts to gain the support of the troops in his political campaign against Otho. He appeals to them concerning the validity of his cause and points out the shortcomings of his opponent. Piso then continues by highlighting his own widespread support and the previous loyalty of the troops to the senate and the state. Most importantly, he emphasizes to them that the fate of the empire is tied directly to

³⁹ Suet., *Nero* 43.2.

⁴⁰ Dio 71.24.1ff.

⁴¹ *BMC IV*, p. 725 no. 199.

⁴² Dio 77.3.1.

⁴³ For instance, when comparing Thucydides and Herodotus to the Roman historians Sallust and Livy, Quintilian commends Livy for his adaptations of what was said in a manner consistent with the character of the speaker. *Institutio Oratoria* 10.1.101. Cf. Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War*, 1.22.

their own, and that if one of the two should fall, the other will suffer in the same way.⁴⁴ In an altogether different set of circumstances, but on a similar subject, Marcus Aurelius spoke to the Danubian legions during the Cassian revolt of A.D. 175. In his address, the emperor also criticizes his opponent, praises his audience, and emphasizes the effect of this plot upon the empire as a whole and the need for military solidarity.⁴⁵ It is interesting that the content of both speeches is kept to matters that would have been understood by the majority of the soldiers and away from the weighty political issues at their root.

Part 3 – The emperor as *commilito*

One important way in which the emperor would appeal to the loyalty of the troops during an address was by claiming to be a *commilito* or fellow soldier in the army. In spite of the actual gap in the standard of living and responsibilities between the emperor and the common soldier, it was common for the emperor to make attempts either in words or sometimes in deeds to bridge that gap in order to give an impression of commonality. The practice of a commander of likening himself to the body of the troops harkens back at least to the time of the Civil Wars where allegiances and loyalties were more important than usual.⁴⁶ The motivations behind this practice were, however, largely dependent on the personality of the commander and his willingness to appear ‘lower’ in status in order to create a bond with the troops. It is possibly for this reason that Augustus refused to

⁴⁴ Tac., *Hist.* 1.29-30.

⁴⁵ Dio 71.24-5.

⁴⁶ See Appian, *B. Civ.* 2.72; 3.65; 4.90; 4.117; 5.39.

address the soldiers as *commilitones* and forbade the members of his family in regular contact with the military from doing the same.⁴⁷ Following this example, Tiberius preferred instead to advertise his position as a successful *imperator*.⁴⁸ During the mutinies on the Rhine, Germanicus resorts to appeals to military fellowship and their loyalty to his own father and to an emperor (Tiberius) under whom they had previously served prior to his elevation to the throne by asking of them if this was how they wished to thank their old commander.⁴⁹ Other than these oblique appeals, there is no clear evidence that the term *commilito* was ever employed by Tiberius or his generals.

The use of the term does seem to have resurfaced under Caligula, who made no secret of calling himself a *castrorum filius* ‘son of the camp’ and *pater exercituum* ‘father of the armies.’ The first emperor in over 50 years to take personal command of an army, Caligula also promoted himself as a vigorous and energetic commander, a true leader by example.⁵⁰ It is also under Caligula that the first representations of imperial *adlocutiones* to the army appear on coinage.⁵¹ These measures are without doubt clear attempts to make a deliberate connection between the emperor and the troops. Claudius too claimed a close relationship with the army (specifically the Praetorian Guard) for its role in his

⁴⁷ Suetonius, *Augustus* 25.1.

⁴⁸ Dio 57.8.2.

⁴⁹ Tac., *Ann.* 1.25; 42.

⁵⁰ Suetonius, *Caligula* 22.1; 43-47.

⁵¹ *BMC I*, p. 151 no. 33.

own accession and paid tribute to them on two distinct series of coins.⁵² And while there is little evidence for Claudius in terms of formal speeches to the guard, Suetonius reports that he was even comfortable discussing his marriage woes in their midst – albeit to ensure that their support for him had not waned on account of the disgrace of his wife’s affair.⁵³

During the time of the civil wars of A.D. 68/9, the term *commilito* was in common use. Both Tacitus and Plutarch make use of the term in speeches by the emperors.⁵⁴ And significantly, in the speeches to their would-be killers, both Galba and Otho are reported to have appealed to them as fellow-soldiers.⁵⁵ Thus, it is clear that in times of political turmoil it was considered quite important for the emperor to establish a close relationship with the army. On the other hand, there is no evidence for the use of the term during the Flavian dynasty, although it is likely that they continued to emphasize their connections with the military according to the established tradition. The term next appears during the reign of Trajan, who uses it frequently in both official and unofficial contexts. In a *mandatum* to provincial governors, Trajan refers to the soldiers as his most brave and most loyal fellow-soldiers.⁵⁶ This is the first occurrence of the term in a public document. In a letter to Pliny the Younger, the emperor even employs the terms *commilitones* and

⁵² *BMC I*, p. 165-6 nos. 5 and 8.

⁵³ Suet., *Claud.* 26.2.

⁵⁴ Tac., *Hist.* 1.29-30; 37-38; 83; Plutarch, *Galba* 27.3; *Otho* 15.3. In Plutarch, the term used in both cases is *συστρατιῶται*.

⁵⁵ Suetonius, *Galba* 20.1; Plut., *Otho* 15.3.

⁵⁶ *Digest* 29.1.1: “*optimos et fidelissimosque commilitones.*”

milites interchangeably.⁵⁷ In his *Panegyric*, Pliny refers to the emperor himself as a good fellow-soldier; the first known instance of the term *commilito* being attributed to an emperor.⁵⁸ Thus, by the second century A.D. the idea that even the emperor could be a *commilito* was clearly acceptable to the Romans. During the second and third centuries A.D., the use of the term *commilitones* in formal speeches was widespread and could be considered a synonym for *milites*.⁵⁹ In fact, in an invented speech by Marcus Aurelius, Dio employs the term *συστρατίωται* three times to mean fellow-soldier.⁶⁰ Due to the frequency with which the term occurs in formal speeches to the Praetorian Guard or the legions, it is likely that the use of this term was restricted to special occasions in order to flatter the troops.

Notwithstanding their verbal attempts to endear themselves to the troops, some emperors also tried to live up to the traditional image of the ideal military commander. This goal was accomplished to varying degrees by sharing in the daily toils of the common soldiers, by personally leading the troops into battle, or by some other extraordinary deed. So strong was the motivation to prove oneself to the soldiers, that even Octavian was prepared to risk his own life in battle while campaigning in Illyricum in 35-33 B.C.⁶¹ Once he had consolidated his power and taken up the name Augustus, the

⁵⁷ Pliny the Younger, *Epistulae* 10.20.

⁵⁸ Pliny the Younger, *Panegyricus* 15.5; 19.3.

⁵⁹ See Dio 71.24.1; 72.9.3; Herodian 1.5.1; 2.11.2; 4.7.6; 4.14.4; 6.3.3.

⁶⁰ Dio 71.24.1; 25.1; 26.1.

⁶¹ Florus, *Epitome* 2.23.

emperor was much more cautious, but still took personal command of his legions in Spain in 26/5 B.C.⁶² Tiberius went even further by spending the night in the open air, riding on horseback instead of a carriage, sitting down to eat instead of reclining, tending to the sick and wounded, and avoiding whenever possible unnecessary losses in battle.⁶³ For these reasons he was known to his troops as a dedicated and hard-working commander and was well respected in this capacity. The general Germanicus ingratiated himself with the troops by dressing his young son Caligula in a scaled-down military uniform and by raising him in the camps as a fellow-soldier.⁶⁴ When it came his turn, Caligula continued to earn the title of fellow-soldier by sharing the rigours of campaigning with his troops.⁶⁵ Perhaps even more indicative of the desire of the emperor to earn the loyalty and respect of the soldiers is the fact that at an advanced age and with many health concerns, Claudius still went along on the invasion of Britain. He even instructed the legate Aulus Plautius to call him forward so that he might be present for any major engagement.⁶⁶ Such a desire indicates the increasing need for all emperors, especially those who had little or no practical military experience, to, at the very least, seem to have martial abilities.

By the crisis of A.D. 69 it had become painfully evident that any emperor who did not make an attempt to gain the loyalty of the army was open to dissent and revolt. The

⁶² Florus 2.33; Orosius, *Historiarum Adversum Paganos* 6.21.1-11.

⁶³ Velleius Paterculus, *Historiae Romanae* 2.104.3-4.

⁶⁴ Tac., *Ann.* 1.41.

⁶⁵ Suet., *Cal.* 43-7.

⁶⁶ Suet., *Claud.* 17.1; Dio 60.21.

fact that Nero was deposed by a branch of the military was a warning to future emperors that they had to depend on the support of the military to enjoy any success in their position.⁶⁷ In addition, as Tacitus reveals, the secret of empire was out: anyone with the backing of a large enough section of the military could be made emperor.⁶⁸ It became an unspoken requirement from this point on that the emperor must have some kind of practical military experience. Once again, the need to demonstrate bravery and leadership skills in person became paramount. Thus, we see Otho leading his troops to war against Vitellius at Bedriacum wearing an iron breastplate and marching on foot ahead of the standards. While it is likely that he did not personally take part in the fighting, the fact that he himself led the soldiers into battle wearing armour is significant.⁶⁹ Vespasian and Titus earned the support of their troops by sharing in the hardships of war while in Judea. Vespasian is said to have selected camp sites, ate whatever food was available, and in some cases he even led the battle line in person and engaged in combat. For his part, Titus displayed qualities that, according to Tacitus, allowed him to find the perfect balance between acting as a fellow-soldier and a general.⁷⁰ Domitian too was known for taking personal control of his campaigns, which he did against the Chatti in A.D. 83, the Dacians in 85/6, during the rebellion of Saturninus in 89, and against the Sarmatians in

⁶⁷ Campbell (1984), 43.

⁶⁸ Tac., *Hist.* 1.4.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 2.11.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 2.5.

92. This personal attention is reflected in Domitian's representations on coinage shaking hands with the troops.⁷¹

In the person of Trajan, the troops could behold the perfect example of the emperor as *commilito*. Trajan too was able to find a balance between fellow-soldier and commander by tending the sick and by taking part in the training exercises of the legions.⁷² The emperor also marched at the head of his army on foot, arranged the disposition of the troops, and even ripped up his own clothing to make bandages for fallen soldiers, not to mention that he knew many of the soldiers by name and took great care to honour the dead.⁷³ In this way, not only Trajan set an example for his fellow-soldiers and earned their respect, but was able to better maintain discipline and readiness for war. And while they are not entirely accurate, it is reasonable to consider that the Romans wanted to believe in the fictional depictions of the Dacian Wars on Trajan's Column. The depictions clearly show the emperor in his position as commander leading the troops in person, overseeing the building of fortifications, directing formations in battles, conducting sacrifices, and addressing the troops. These exceptional qualities set a very high standard for future emperors who wished to be seen as good fellow-soldiers, who took an active role in the military aspects of their position.

After the death of Trajan, in order to address issues of military discipline and to establish a new standard for training, Hadrian embarked on several tours of the provinces.

⁷¹ *BMC II*, p. 365 no. 304; p. 380-1 nos. 372-9 and 381.

⁷² See Pliny, *Paneg.* 13.1; 15.3-5; 19.3.

⁷³ Dio 68.8.2; Pliny, *Paneg.* 15.5.

During these visits, the emperor conducted inspections of all aspects of the daily administration of the army: the condition of camps, forts, and living quarters, weapons, and even the personal records of the soldiers. He supervised drills and training regimens and offered constructive criticism on their execution. Hadrian, too, took great pride in setting an example for the soldiers by his own behaviour: walking 20 miles in armour, bare-headed in cold or heat, wearing simple military dress, visiting the sick or wounded, eating simple camp food, and drinking coarse wine.⁷⁴ In direct opposition, Hadrian's successor Antoninus Pius had little interest in military affairs, and never even left Italy after his adoption in A.D. 138. For this reason, Campbell argues that Antoninus Pius "cannot have presented himself to the army as an active *commilito*."⁷⁵ Nevertheless, Pius does appear on coins in military dress and leading soldiers, perpetuating the traditional view of the emperor as commander.⁷⁶

Prior to their adoption by Antoninus Pius, Lucius Verus and Marcus Aurelius had little military experience. However, in A.D. 162-6 during his campaign against the Parthians, Verus had fully accepted the need to portray himself as a *commilito* and is described as marching bare-headed, eating camp food, tending to the sick, and being the last to take to his bed at night.⁷⁷ For his part, Marcus Aurelius also made an attempt to earn the respect of the troops, but his ill-health hindered him in this respect and limited

⁷⁴ Dio 69.9.1ff; *Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Hadrian* 10.2.

⁷⁵ Campbell (1984), 48.

⁷⁶ *BMC IV*, p. 270 no. 1675.

⁷⁷ Fronto, *Ad Verum imperatorem Aurelium Caesarem* 13-14.

him to simply being in the field in person. Despite these limitations, Dio is clearly impressed by the emperor's leadership, courage and endurance while on campaign.⁷⁸ In order to be a good fellow-soldier, it was arguably more important for the emperor to appear to actively embrace his military duties rather than simply to participate in them. Like the coins of Antoninus Pius, it is important to note that on the Column of Marcus Aurelius, the emperor is depicted several times in military dress to emphasize his fulfillment of the traditional role of the *imperator*. That Marcus Aurelius was also aware of the need to preserve military discipline is evident from his visit to the legions in Syria and Egypt after the revolt of Avidius Cassius in A.D. 175. Benefiting from campaigning with his father along the Danube in A.D. 177-80, Commodus had become popular with the troops before he was even made emperor. In his address to the troops upon his accession, Commodus emphasized that he was raised among the armies as a *commilito* and that his father had treated him the same as every other soldier.⁷⁹ Commodus identifies the troops as his *commilitones* once again when speaking to a delegation from Britain.⁸⁰

By A.D. 193, the issue of the loyalty of the armies was again pushed to the forefront, with all of the contenders depending on their personal relations with the troops for their political successes. In the person of Septimius Severus, the soldiers found another emperor sympathetic to their cause. Throughout his career, Severus was active in

⁷⁸ Dio 71.6.3; 24.4.

⁷⁹ Herodian 1.5.3ff.

⁸⁰ Dio 72.9.3.

three wars on foreign soil and two civil wars. On his campaign in Pannonia, the emperor shared all of the hardships of the men, slept in a cheap tent, ate the common camp fare, and avoided any displays of luxury.⁸¹ In his march against Clodius Albinus, Severus marched at the front of his men, bare-headed in the rain and snow, and set an example of determination and bravery.⁸² There is even an anecdote reported by Dio that Severus once drank dirty water from a well to encourage his troops to drink to avoid dehydration.⁸³ For all of these reasons, Septimius Severus was very popular among the troops and respected as a *commilito*.

Following the example set by his father, Caracalla took the concept of the *commilito* to new lengths.⁸⁴ It seems that unlike the majority of emperors before him, Caracalla held no reservations about sharing the daily menial tasks of the common soldier. He is reported to have used wooden utensils to eat, baked his own bread, and used only the cheapest equipment available to the army. The emperor also avoided any luxuries, including bathing, and occasionally carried the same equipment as the troops. He even took up the standards despite his small stature.⁸⁵ Such proofs of his dedication to the army enabled Caracalla to address the troops as his *commilitones* with confidence. Even more significant is the fact that Caracalla went so far as to ask the soldiers to

⁸¹ Dio 74.15.3; Herodian 2.11.2; 3.6.10.

⁸² Herodian 3.6.10.

⁸³ Dio 75.2.2.

⁸⁴ Campbell (1984), 52.

⁸⁵ Dio 77.13.1-2; Herodian 4.7.4-7; 12.2.

address him as their *commilito* instead of as their emperor.⁸⁶ After the death of his brother Geta in A.D. 211, Caracalla again reiterated his position as *commilito* in an address to the Praetorian Guard.⁸⁷ In addition to all of the positive associations listed above, there exists also an inscription calling Caracalla the “Father of the soldiers.”⁸⁸ Despite all of his dedication and camaraderie, Caracalla was still murdered by the soldiers. During the following years, the state was unable to exercise much control over the troops, resulting in the murders of Macrinus and Elagabalus. When he assumed power at the age of 13, Severus Alexander was faced with a growing discontent among the troops that put a strain on the relationship between the emperor and the army. According to Herodian, the morale of the army was low on account of the personal losses of the soldiers whose homes were destroyed by raiders along the Rhine and Danube frontiers. Although the emperor rushed to the *limes* and took personal charge of the situation, he was unable to improve matters and was overthrown.⁸⁹

During the principate, emperors were highly aware of the need to earn the loyalty and respect of the army. Each emperor behaved according to his own personal experiences and strengths, and most took their responsibility to fulfill the traditional role of the *imperator* to heart. While it was not until the third century A.D. that the emperor was expected to fight in battles in person, the emperors of the principate found other

⁸⁶ Herodian 4.7.6.

⁸⁷ Dio 77.3.2ff.

⁸⁸ *ILS* 454.

⁸⁹ Herodian 6.6.3; 6.7.2-10.

means of proving their worth to the troops.⁹⁰ Campaigning in person was to a certain degree expected, with few emperors spending the whole of their reigns in the environs of Rome.⁹¹ The importance of maintaining a healthy relationship with the army is also seen in depictions of the emperor on coinage, with nearly every emperor after Caligula portrayed in some way with the troops (often simply in military dress). The increase in personal participation in military affairs after A.D. 69 was due largely to the changing nature of the emperor-army relationship, and the need for the emperor to prove himself to his troops and not the troops to the emperor. After this period, emperors made clear attempts to take part in the rigorous daily activities of the soldiers and campaigned alongside the troops whenever possible. In this way, the personal presence of the emperor among the troops on the march and during battles would have facilitated any attempts by the emperor to establish his role as an active *commilito* of the common soldier. Importantly, the portrayal of the emperor as fellow-soldier played a key role in orations delivered to the troops.

⁹⁰ Campbell (1984), 56.

⁹¹ Notable exceptions are Nerva and Antoninus Pius.

Chapter 2

Hadrian's African Adlocutio

Since its discovery in 1851, the speech of Emperor Hadrian at Lambaesis has prompted much scholarly discussion.¹ The epigraphic remains of the dedication by the *Legio III Augusta* and of the recorded *adlocutio* of the emperor are unique, constituting the only substantial physical evidence of an imperial address during the principate. On account of the importance of this evidence, the following chapter will examine Emperor Hadrian's early military career in order to better discuss the setting and content of his address to the African armies in A.D. 128.

Part 1 – Hadrian's military career

As we have seen, the impact and significance of an imperial speech to the army was almost entirely dependent on the relationship between the emperor and the individual soldiers. In order to fully appreciate the content of the *adlocutio* at Lambaesis in A.D. 128, the character and early career of the Emperor Hadrian must be taken into account.

Following his formal training in rhetoric under Quintilian, Hadrian began his military career following the example set by his cousin Trajan. Indeed, Hadrian's first posting as *tribunus laticlavus* of the *Legio II Adiutrix* in Pannonia in A.D. 95 was most likely achieved through Trajan's influence. The next year he held a second tribuneship with the *Legio V Macedonica* in Lower Moesia, and then a third term in A.D. 97 with the

¹ Michael Speidel, *Emperor Hadrian's speeches to the African Army – a new Text* (Mainz: Verlag des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums, 2006), 6.

Legio XXII Primigenia in Germany. Since it was unusual to be commissioned as tribune twice, let alone three times, it is likely that Hadrian benefitted from his cousin's patronage on a regular basis.

These tours along the Danube and Rhine Rivers allowed Hadrian to observe first hand the workings of the new frontier works constructed under Domitian.² Hadrian likely accompanied Trajan for a one year term as *quaestor* on the Dacian campaign of A.D. 101, and returned in A.D. 105 as tribune of the *Legio I Minervia*. While Hadrian's specific role in the campaign is unknown, he did receive military decorations for his contributions.³ At the end of the war, Hadrian was installed as the governor of Pannonia Inferior, and, as such, the nominal commander of the *Legio II Adiutrix*. As governor, a chief priority was to restore military discipline in the province, a sure sign of his future policies.⁴ By the time of Trajan's Parthian expedition in A.D. 114, Hadrian had been rewarded as a *legatus pro praetore* and *comes* of the emperor. Not long into the campaign, when one of Trajan's leading generals was transferred to Dacia, Hadrian was promoted to the post of governor of Syria.⁵

At the time of Trajan's death, Hadrian probably held the loyalties of the eastern armies and a significant portion of the German legions as well. Soon after news of the emperor's death had spread, Hadrian was acclaimed *Imperator* by his troops, whereupon

² SHA, *Hadr.* 2.2-6. The only other known case of a second term as *tribunus laticlavus* is attributed to L. Minicius Natalis (*PIR*² C 1412) in A.D. 121/2.

³ SHA, *Hadr.* 3.6-7; *ILS* 308; Anthony Birley, *Hadrian the Restless Emperor* (London: Routledge, 1997), 47.

⁴ SHA, *Hadr.* 3.9.

⁵ Birley, 68 and 75.

he immediately promised a generous double donative.⁶ Birley states that this largess was surely awarded to all of the legions and the Praetorian Guard, and not meant for only the Syrian armies.⁷ The loss of Trajan weakened the morale of the army and signaled an opportunity for Rome's enemies to take advantage of the empire's temporary disarray. Hadrian quickly ordered a complete withdrawal from Trajan's newly won provinces of Mesopotamia, Assyria, and Greater Armenia, territories that Birley argues were already being abandoned by Trajan.⁸ This tactical decision by Hadrian was not well received at Rome, especially after he ordered the dismantling of a portion of the Danubian bridge below the Iron Gates built by the famous architect Apollodorus of Damascus.⁹ In the spring of A.D. 118, before he left the Danube for Rome, Hadrian witnessed the exploits of the Batavian Horse Guards. This group of mounted troops not only impressed the new emperor with their tactical manoeuvres and fully armoured river crossing, but also the barbarian leaders who were present to negotiate with Hadrian.¹⁰ Such a display may have been organized by the emperor as a show of strength to dissuade the barbarians from any insurgent activity after his departure from the region. It would also have the effect of increasing the morale of the troops after a successful review before the emperor.

⁶ While legally only the senate could confer the *imperium*, some scholars argue that the acclamation in the field by the troops was an important part of legitimizing a claim by an aspiring emperor.

⁷ SHA, *Hadr.* 5.7.

⁸ Birley, 77-8.

⁹ Fronto 11; Eutropius, *Breviarum Historiae Romanae* 8.6.2; Dio 68.13.6.

¹⁰ Dio 69.9.6; *ILS* 2558.

While in Rome during the summer of A.D. 119, Hadrian issued an edict concerning the property rights of the sons of soldiers who had died while in the service. The edict confirmed the tradition that because soldiers were not allowed to marry all of their children must be considered illegitimate and thus were not allowed to be primary heirs. Hadrian did concede, however, that these children should be allowed some type of claim after the primary heir had been identified. This decision was made public and posted in at least one legionary camp (that of the *Legiones III Cyrenaica* and *XXII Deiotariana* in Egypt), not for the benefit of the emperor, but so that the soldiers might take advantage of the concession in their testaments. This ruling was surely not limited to troops stationed in Egypt, but would have applied to soldiers and veterans throughout the empire and is a clear example of Hadrian's personal attendance to and interest in even minor issues concerning the military.¹¹

In A.D. 121, Hadrian began his first tour of the empire with a visit to the German frontier and perhaps Raetia and Noricum as well. He conducted inspections and made significant changes to the *limes* established under Domitian and Trajan. In order to create a visual limit of the empire, Hadrian ordered a continuous wooden palisade to be built the length of the frontier of the region known as the *Agri Decumates*. The palisade may have reached up to 3m in height, but was arguably of limited defensive value, being more useful instead as a symbol of the extent of the empire. The construction of the palisade also effectively signalled a conclusion to the era of Roman expansionism and the end of

¹¹ E. Mary Smallwood, *Documents Illustrating the Principates of Nerva, Trajan and Hadrian* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 333; Birley 105-6.

the ethos commemorated by Vergil as that of an “*imperium sine fine*” or limitless empire. In addition, he continued the process begun by Trajan of converting all wooden forts and towers into ones made of stone. Since there was very little threat from the tribes on the East bank of the Rhine at this time, it is likely that these new constructions were at least in part make-work projects for the soldiers stationed in the region. During the same visit, Hadrian began to enforce a renewed focus on military discipline, leading by his own example and drilling the men as if war was imminent.¹²

Hadrian’s presence for military reasons in the other provinces of the empire is attested by various types of evidence. Visits to Raetia and Noricum are likely on account of the existence of *exercitus* coins showing the emperor haranguing the troops from a low platform and from horseback, respectively.¹³ A similar coin in the *exercitus* series, again depicting a mounted Hadrian, provides proof of the emperor’s presence in Germany.¹⁴ In A.D. 121, Hadrian travelled to Britain and began the construction of a frontier wall to separate the barbarians from the Romans.¹⁵ While the emperor’s presence is attested by coins in both the *adventus* and *exercitus* series, epigraphic evidence also indicates that Hadrian was indeed present in Northern Britain.

¹² SHA, *Hadr.* 10.2; Vergil, *Aeneid* 1.279; Birley, 113-7.

¹³ *BMC III*, p. 501 no. * and p. 502 no. 1683.

¹⁴ *BMC III*, p. 500 no. 1679.

¹⁵ SHA, *Hadr.* 11.2: “. . . *qui barbaros Romanosque divideret.*”

Upon leaving Britain, Hadrian likely went to inspect the *Legio VII Gemina*, then the only legion remaining in Spain, before returning to Rome.¹⁶ Then in A.D. 123, Hadrian began a sweep of the Mediterranean from West to East, with probable landfalls (as this portion of his travels is the least well documented) in Numidia, North Africa, Cyrenaica, Crete, Cyprus, and Syria.¹⁷

Throughout his travels, modelling his behaviour on the famous Roman generals P. Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus Africanus Numantinus (185 - 129 B.C.) and Q. Caecilius Metellus Numidicus (c. 160 B.C. – 91 B.C.), and, of course, his cousin Trajan, Hadrian actively promoted *disciplina maiorum* – a return to the old standards of discipline of the mid-late Republic. In his campaign at Numantia in 134 B.C., Scipio had demanded the strictest discipline from his troops, going so far as expelling merchants from the camps, selling all wagons and excess baggage, limiting the choice of food, banning beds (including his own), and insisting on the daily construction of new marching camps with ditches and walls. The consul of 109 B.C., Metellus, successfully turned the tide for Marius in the struggle against Jugurtha by enforcing similar measures. He too expelled merchants, banned the sale of bread, forbade the use of slaves and pack animals, and set strict limits on other things as well.¹⁸

Hadrian's revival of ancient military standards was in direct response to the steady decline in discipline since the time of Augustus, a decline due to the negligence of the

¹⁶ *BMC III*, p. 500 no. 1680.

¹⁷ Birley, 151-4.

¹⁸ SHA, *Hadr.* 10.2; Appian, *Iberica* 85-6; Sallust, *Bellum Iugurthinum* 44-5.

early emperors.¹⁹ The previous century and a half had seen lapses in the daily administration of the army, especially with regard to the recording of monetary transactions. Hadrian made changes to the way that accounts were managed, enforced the rules regarding leave without proper authorization, and made sure that officers were rewarded for their conduct and not out of popularity. He purged the camps of all sorts of luxuries: dining rooms, porticoes, and gardens were removed, fancy uniforms were banned, and officers were forbidden from accepting gifts from their subordinates. On the other hand, Hadrian was not overwhelmingly harsh, but rewarded the soldiers enthusiastically when merit was due. He also made improvements to the standard weapons and equipment, and gave free equipment to those on commission. Under Hadrian, the rules of enlistment were changed to forbid the recruitment of any person too young or too old for military service. The requirements for entry into the centuriate or equestrian *militiae* were also strengthened, allowing only those at least 20 years of age and of good reputation to be accepted.²⁰

All of these changes were bolstered in many cases by the personal intervention of the emperor himself and especially by his insistence on leading by example. Hadrian is reported to have chosen camp sites for himself, to have made an effort to be familiar with the stores of the army, and to have never bought or maintained anything unusable. During his tours of the empire, he also performed inspections of all military installations, recommending the relocation of some, the abandonment of others, and the construction of

¹⁹ SHA, *Hadr.* 10.3: "*incuria superiorum principum*".

²⁰ SHA, *Hadr.* 10.2-8; 17.2; 20.10; 21.9.

altogether new ones. According to Dio, Hadrian also inspected the personal items and business of his officers. In terms of daily living, Hadrian comported himself just like the other soldiers: by walking or riding and never taking a carriage or being borne in a litter, by going about bare-headed. The regulations introduced by Hadrian caused so much of an impact that Dio points to his practices still being used in the early 3rd century, with the emphasis on regular training regimes as the key to the system.²¹ An anecdote from Fronto expresses this sentiment clearly when he recounts how Pontius Laelianus, a former tribune of the *Legio VI Victrix* under Hadrian, in his position forty years later as *comes* of Lucius Verus in Syria, ripped open the ornamental cuirasses and padded saddles of his troops to ridicule their preference for luxury and not practicality.²² In order to ensure that his policies were being followed, on his tours of the empire, Hadrian made time to visit main military installations and to conduct inspections.

Part 2 – Setting at Lambaesis

In A.D. 128, Hadrian visited the main legionary encampment of the province of Africa at Lambaesis. This fortress was the new home of the *Legio III Augusta* - the only legion stationed in Africa at this time and recently moved even further south from its previous base at Ammaedara. The remainder of the African army, consisting of three cavalry *alae* and several mixed cohorts, was spread throughout the province in outposts to patrol trade routes and to guard the new frontier barriers under construction to the south

²¹ SHA, *Hadr.* 10.6; 11.1; Dio 69.9.1-4.

²² Fronto, *Ad Ver. Imp.* 2.19.

of the Aurès Mountains. All told, the combined numerical strength of the auxiliary units nearly equalled that of the single legion at Lambaesis.²³

The *campus* or training ground at Lambaesis was approximately 220 metres square enclosed by a perimeter wall 60cm thick with only two gates. At each corner and in the middle of each side there were stone basins that may have served as troughs for the cavalry mounts. A tribunal or viewing platform was located in the centre of the *campus* surrounded by a narrow paved area. On the tribunal stood a single Corinthian column 9m high placed upon a 2m high base.²⁴ It is upon this base that the inscription recording the speeches of Hadrian to the African army was recorded.²⁵ It is likely that the addition of the column and its dedicatory base occurred prior to Hadrian's arrival in A.D. 128 and was approved by the emperor during his visit.²⁶ And it was only natural that the *adlocutio* ceremony should also take place on this training ground, since the campus was to the soldiers what the forum was to the civilians.²⁷ As many as 6000 men would have fit into the space, but with the majority of the auxiliaries spread amongst the desert outposts, a much lower number of men would have been present. From the remains of

²³ Birley, 209; Speidel (2006), 3.

²⁴ Speidel (2006), 4.

²⁵ *CIL VIII*, 2532 = 18042; *ILS* 2487 = 9133-5.

²⁶ Speidel (2006), 4; Yann Le Bohec, *La troisième légion Auguste* (Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1989), 369 and *Imperial Roman Army*, 114.

²⁷ Le Bohec, *Imperial Roman Army*, 115.

the inscriptions, we can infer that Hadrian actually spoke to at least six different groups of soldiers over a two week period.²⁸

In the years after Hadrian's visit, the *campus* at Lambaesis was used for training, parades, and ceremonies, with the inscription of the emperor's words serving as a monumental reminder of the successful review of A.D. 128 and the discipline and skill of the soldiers. The recuttings of the name of the *Legio III Augusta* on both the dedication and the foreword is proof that the inscription continued to be read and retained its symbolic importance into the mid-third century A.D.²⁹ Unfortunately, the monument eventually fell into disrepair and crumbled, and by the end of the nineteenth century, much of the marble had been plundered by thieves. Of the sixteen inscribed blocks, only four have been recovered as well as over one hundred smaller fragments, leaving us with approximately one third of the original text. Engraved in *scripta actuaria* (with the exception of the dedication which is *scripta capitalis quadrata*), the inscription consists of three parts: the dedication, the address to the legion, and the address to the auxiliaries. The dedication was located on the east side of the base facing the main road from the camp, with the speech to the legion on the east and north sides and those to the auxiliaries to the west and south. In this way, the speeches to the auxiliaries are presented in the order that they were given: to the *cohors II Hamiorum* shortly before the 1st of July, the unnamed cohort at Zarai between July 2-7, and the *ala I Pannoniorum* and the cavalry of

²⁸ Speidel (2006), 4.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 5. The *III Augusta* was briefly disbanded in A.D. 238 for its involvement in the deaths of Gordian I and II, but returned to Lambaesis after being recommissioned in A.D. 253.

the *cohors VI Commagenorum* on July 13th.³⁰ Despite the fact that Hadrian's speech to the legionary cavalry and senior centurions took place on July 1st, the primacy of the legion within the Roman military hierarchy necessitated the placement of the address to the legion directly following the dedication and as a result it is out of sync with the actual chronology. Other units who were recipients of an address by the emperor but whose relative position within both the chronology of the speeches and of the text itself is uncertain include: the *cohors II Flavia Afrorum*, the *cohors I Chalcidenorum*, and an unnamed mixed cohort.³¹

Part 3 – The Address

Hadrian's speech to the African troops begins with a comment to the *primi pilares* on the current state of the unit's manpower. Apprised of the situation by his legate Catullinus, Hadrian was quick to point out that he would have overlooked their lack of training caused by recent fluctuations in staffing and a change in location, but was impressed and pleased that he had found no need to do so. The emperor then commented briefly on the value of hard and disciplined training, making sure that the soldiers knew that constant vigilance and practice were the keys to success against the barbarian tribes to the south. Next, the emperor addressed the legionary cavalry. Hadrian praised the horsemen for increasing the difficulty of their manoeuvres, by throwing javelins while wearing a cuirass, but cautioned them not to make it so difficult that they become less

³⁰ Speidel (2006), 23. Speidel rejects the appellation *cohors II Hispanorum* of previous scholars, preferring instead the *cohors II Hamiorum*.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 15-6.

graceful. To the *principes*, Hadrian had nothing but praise for their alacrity and engineering skills during their drills involving the construction of a stone wall and the digging of a ditch. The emperor's words to the *hastati* are mostly lost, although the section does end with the comment that their unit commander had prepared and drilled them well.

The rest of the address concerns the auxiliary units, beginning with the *cohors II Hamiorum*. Hadrian offered some of the more critical remarks of his address to these men after observing their mock battle exercise. In the emperor's opinion, as mounted archers, they need not wait for a signal to release their arrows after the enemy is upon them, but should instead focus on releasing more often and with greater accuracy. He also pointed out that they needed to tighten their formations when surrounded to afford better opportunities for breaking through the massed enemy. To an unknown *ala*, Hadrian offered congratulations for their well-executed Cantabrian manoeuvre that resembled an actual battle and offered some of his own ideas on cavalry tactics. Hadrian's next commentary was directed at an unknown cohort at Zarai which is lost. The text resumes with a glowing report of the troopers of the *ala I Pannoniorum*, who performed their drills with such speed, grace, and accuracy that the emperor awards the unit a largess.

The fact that several of the cavalry units are awarded such high praise by Hadrian is a clear indication of the importance of battle ready troops, and, more importantly, his endorsement of the use of cavalry in combat situations. Cavalry *alae* were placed strategically on the *limes* in Upper Germany and North Africa, as well as near Hadrian's

Wall to check brigandage, barbarian raids, and to monitor trade.³² These frontier systems comprised strings of small fortlets and larger forts at intervals based on geography and connected by extensive roadways to facilitate troop movements. In many instances, these installations were garrisoned by mixed units wherein the cavalry outnumbered the infantry because of the need for greater mobility on patrol.³³

The last unit to be addressed was the *cohors VI Commagenorum*, which managed to distinguish itself despite its lower numerical strength, inferior weaponry, and lower pay grade. This cohort also performed the Cantabrian manoeuvre, though in a more cramped space. It should be noted that at the end of each unit's review, Hadrian always praised the unit commanders and his legate. The emperor was so pleased with the legate's performance that he later rewarded Catullinus by naming him the first *consul ordinarius* known to have advanced out of Numidia in A.D. 130.³⁴

Drawn from his own extensive military career, Hadrian's commentary is exceptional in its attention to detail and emphasis on the practical application of training manoeuvres in the field of battle. Throughout the address, Hadrian shows intimate knowledge of the various units and their capabilities and of military practices such as wall building, cavalry exercises, and missile throwing. The emperor also showed himself to be well informed about the recent history of the legion and its supporting units. The fact that

³² Karen Dixon and Pat Dixon, *The Roman Cavalry: From the First to the Third Century A.D.* (London: B. T. Batsford Limited, 1992), 135.

³³ Adrian Goldsworthy, *The Complete Roman Army* (London: Thames and Hudson Limited, 2003), 155-6. See also Edward Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 55-80 and 89-96.

³⁴ *PIR*² F 25.

the emperor knew what he was talking about would not have been lost on the soldiers, and would have added more authority to his statements of praise and boosted morale. In this way, the soldiers would have been inspired to see the possible rewards of such lengthy intensive training regimes and been led to strengthen their relationship with the emperor. The emperor gave credit where credit was due, but was not hesitant to criticise if he observed a failure to meet the expected standards. He spoke at length in a long-winded style, making frequent use of adverbs, action words, and technical military vocabulary that was sure to be understood by the common soldier.³⁵

The validity of Hadrian's commentary is even more poignant when compared to the contemporary evidence of his own governor of Cappadocia. Composed a few years after the address at Lambaesis in A.D. 136, Arrian's *Ars Tactica* is a handbook of military drills and exercises that reflects its author's own military experiences across the empire. According to Arrian, there were five phases to Roman cavalry manoeuvres: 1) Games of skill; 2) Shooting exercises using heavy spears and wearing cuirasses; 3) Drills with special weapons such as javelins, slings, *contus*-lances, and swords; 4) Exercises of jumping onto horses; and 5) Skills recently learned from locally recruited auxiliary units.³⁶

Notwithstanding the regular practice of throwing a weapon from a horse at a fixed object, most exercises involved multiple weapon releases against multiple moving targets in order to best simulate a true battle situation. In these drills, each trooper had to carry

³⁵ Campbell (1984), 78-80; Speidel (2006), 88. For more discussion of the vocabulary of Hadrian's address, see Chapter 3, Part 2 below.

³⁶ Speidel (2006), 89.

enough javelins to keep on throwing while riding the length of the training area. While the javelins used were strictly practice weapons without iron heads, they were still strong enough and thrown with enough velocity to pierce shields or cause injury. For these reasons, both horses and men were protected by special armour.³⁷ The troopers also practiced releasing as many javelins as possible in the course of one mock attack. This type of rapid-fire release would not be easy, although Arrian states that a good rider could release 15 javelins and an excellent rider up to 20.³⁸ Another javelin exercise was called the Cantabrian charge after the Spanish horsemen who were first seen using the manoeuvre. In this display, the troopers would split into two groups and then rush at each other in twin circle formations rotating in opposite directions so that at the point where the two circles met, the riders would discharge their javelins. Due to the speed involved and the real danger of injury (even though they were using practice weapons), the riders were instructed to cast very accurately at their opponent's shield.³⁹ This very manoeuvre as performed by at least two separate units was witnessed by Hadrian during his visit to Lambaesis.

What have been described above are, according to Arrian, the traditional exercises which the Roman cavalry had practiced since ancient times.⁴⁰ By Arrian's time, however, this training was changing under Hadrian's innovations. According to Speidel, imperial

³⁷ Arrian, *Ars Tactica* 34.8.

³⁸ Arrian, *Tact.* 36.4; 37.1; 40.9-10; Roy W. Davies, *Service in the Roman Army*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 83-6.

³⁹ Arrian, *Tact.* 40.1-6; Ann Hyland, *Training the Roman Cavalry: From Arrian's Ars Tactica* (Alan Sutton Publishing Limited, 1993), p.135 Fig. 1.

⁴⁰ Arrian, *Tact.* 44.1.

directives mandated only the first two phases described by Arrian, with the local commander responsible for choosing which Phase 3 and 4 skills to include in their regime.⁴¹ Hadrian also encouraged each race of horsemen to adapt their own native strategies and customs into these practices. In this way, “barbarian” customs such as war cries, an emphasis on horse archers, and advanced feigned retreat tactics were incorporated into the cavalry’s training regime. According to Arrian, by encouraging these changes the emperor hoped to improve the beauty, speed, the inspiring of terror, and the practical use of the Roman cavalry.⁴² In a similar show of prowess, witnessed by Hadrian ten years before the address at Lambaesis, a certain cavalryman of the *cohors III Batavorum* had performed special manoeuvres including swimming the Danube in full battle dress and hitting an arrow in mid-flight with a second arrow.⁴³ The fact that these types of changes are being promoted by the emperor shows the increasing need for the Roman cavalry to be aware and adaptable to any combat situation. Consequently, the content of the address not only confirms the accounts of Dio and the *SHA* of Hadrian’s personal attention to detail during inspections, but also his attitude towards military discipline and his desire for the armies to be in a constant state of readiness for war.

⁴¹ Speidel (2006), 90.

⁴² Arrian, *Tact.* 44.1-3.

⁴³ *CIL III.3676 = ILS 2558.*

Chapter 3

Conventions of the Adlocutio

This chapter will examine the use of gestures and body language during the physical delivery of an *adlocutio* and discuss the appearance of recurring vocabulary and themes. The importance for the emperor to have strong oratorical skills cannot be overestimated, as he was often called upon to deliver public speeches either in the Senate or at public meetings, and especially at key state events. In his advice to Marcus Aurelius, Fronto reminds the emperor that his primary duties involve public speaking and that it was essential to display a high degree of eloquence on these occasions. He also urges the emperor to speak plainly to increase comprehension and to avoid strange vocabulary and complex metaphors. This advice indicates that imperial speeches were meant to be heard not only by the elite members of Roman society, but also by the largely uneducated masses.¹

Part 1 – Gestures and Body Language

For the Roman orator, the use of gestures was an important complement to his rhetorical skills that helped to reinforce the meanings of his words. In the long tradition of public speaking at Rome, gestures took on meanings of their own, with certain movements associated to certain emotions. Within the range of socially acceptable gestures while speaking, gestures with the hands or arms were the most important and

¹ Fronto, *Ad M. Caesarem et invicem* 3.1.

versatile. It is for this reason that iconographic representations of orators in statues and on coinage all stress the position of the speaker's arms and hands in movement. If the speaker wished to make an exhortation, he would hold up his right hand with the fingers slightly cupped. For occasions when he wished to show grief or anger, the speaker would clench his right hand to his chest, usually over his heart. Another gesture to indicate exhortation, or perhaps reproach depending on the situation, involved touching the chest lightly with the fingertips of a cupped hand. This gesture, however, was only to be employed sparingly, according to Quintilian.² In most cases, the right hand was the hand most often associated with gestures while speaking, perhaps because the left would be holding the scroll which contained the text of the speech.³

From the period of the Republic into the Principate, the type of gestures commonly employed in public speaking increased in complexity. By the mid-first century A.D., the non-verbal complements available to orators became more elaborate and the limits of acceptable behaviour expanded so that orators were expected to employ gestures more often and with more enthusiasm. Despite the increase in gesticulation, it was always necessary that the audience could easily identify the particular gestures and their assumed significance with ease. According to Gregory Aldrete, on account of the lower degree of individual freedom enjoyed by orators under the emperors, the use of gestures and rhetorical speeches in public often increased in times of crisis.⁴ With the

² Aldrete, 6-9; cf. Quintilian 11.3.103-4 and 11.3.124.

³ Aldrete, 48.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 86 and 166-9.

increasingly unstable political climate of the late 2nd and early 3rd centuries A.D., the use of gestures would have increased, with the act of speaking in public now able to be likened to the performance of an actor. Increased gesticulation resulted in a much more theatrical performance that would appeal to larger audiences and make the speaker's words more effective and more memorable. Regardless of the political turmoil, the emperor maintained his monopoly on status, and remained the most important orator with the most power attached to his words.

During the period of the Julio-Claudians, for which our historical record is much clearer than the later periods, our knowledge of the rhetorical abilities of the emperors is fairly reliable. For instance, Augustus's meticulous planning of public events led him often to compose his speeches ahead of time and then to simply read them out rather than memorizing.⁵ Tiberius was a known student of rhetoric and is reported to have delivered the eulogy from the *rostra* upon the death of his father while only nine years old. In adulthood, he perfected his rhetorical skills and was accustomed to employ eloquent hand gestures to suit his style of speaking, although Suetonius does criticise Tiberius for the use of frequent ambiguous phrases and difficult syntax.⁶ Perhaps surprisingly, Caligula was also an accomplished student of the rhetorical schools, having learned to speak clearly and persuasively in both Latin and Greek. Tacitus was so appreciative of the emperor's oratorical skills that it led him to comment that while the emperor's mind

⁵ Suet., *Aug.* 84.

⁶ Suet., *Tib.* 6; 57; 68; 70.

slowly decayed over the years, his talents for oratory did not.⁷ For his part, even though he was a fair speaker if he had prepared the text before hand, Claudius was hampered by his health problems and sometimes had a reader recite his speeches.⁸ In comparison, despite gaining valuable experience under the tutelage of Seneca from age 11 onward, Nero never experienced the same degree of success. The fact that Seneca was also responsible for writing many of the emperor's speeches was still insufficient to counter Nero's unpopularity on the *rostra*.⁹

Iconographic depictions of the emperors on statues and coins frequently make use of the standard gestures of the orator. *Adlocutio* scenes were meant to define the status of the emperor through their graphic representations as opposed to the more obvious use of a textual legend. On this type, whether it is interpreted as the gesture of a speech or command, the outstretched arm of the emperor exudes power over his listeners and a necessary feeling of obedience from the intended audience. The traditional representation of the emperor's address is exemplified by a coin of Augustus. This early type is significant for its lack of audience, with the purpose of the pose determined solely by the gesture, although the fact that the emperor is shown in military dress does remove the possibility of a civilian address.¹⁰

⁷ Suet., *Calig.* 53; Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 19.2.5; Tac., *Ann.* 13.3.2.

⁸ Suet., *Claud.* 41-2; Tac., *Ann.* 13.3.2.

⁹ Suet., *Nero* 6-7; 52; Tac., *Ann.* 12.8.

¹⁰ Richard Brilliant, *Gesture and Rank in Roman Art* (Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1963), 57 and 85; *BMC I*, p. 100 no. 611.

Similar imagery occurs in an equestrian version of the pose, wherein the emperor appears to be giving an oration from horseback. The connection of this mounted pose with the emperor begins early on in the reign of Augustus after the battle of Actium, when the emperor can be seen on horseback raising his hand in what could be either a representation of a statue of the emperor or what is more likely a military *adlocutio*.¹¹ In a rare case, a coin of the Emperor Claudius not only shows the emperor making an address while mounted on horseback, but includes architectural detail in the background as a reference to the setting of the address. From these details, it is clear that this particular *adlocutio* refers to the dedication of the arch built to commemorate Claudius's British triumph.¹²

Not until coins of Caligula does an audience appear before the emperor, an innovation which was made possible by the larger area provided by new bronze coinage. The first complete scene of an *adlocutio* shows the emperor on a raised platform raising his hand over some soldiers in the typical gesture commanding silence during his oration. The audience is portrayed as a dense mass with standards protruding above, suggesting that an entire cohort or more of troops may be present. The emperor is highlighted by his position set apart from the audience, as well as by his relative size and his oratorical posture.¹³

¹¹ Brilliant, 57; *BMC I*, p. 98 no. 594.

¹² *BMC I*, p. 168 no. 29.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 151 no. 33.

Against a more cluttered assembly on a coin of Nero, the relative size of the architectural background forces the emperor into closer proximity to his soldiers. The troops, on the other hand, are no longer massed together, but appear individually (three soldiers standing in for a larger number of men) under a roof shared with the emperor. The prefect of the Praetorian Guard makes his first appearance on this coin, but stands off to the side and does not interrupt the line of sight between the emperor and the troops. The importance of the emperor in this scene is determined by his central position and exaggerated size.¹⁴

This type of iconographic representation was so common that for the period of A.D. 68 to 235, only Vespasian, Antoninus Pius and Didius Julianus fail to appear in an *adlocutio* series.¹⁵ By the time of Galba, even the absence of the customary rhetorical gesture did not detract from the intended meaning of the image. On one version of this type, we see the emperor surrounded by a dense mass of soldiers, with no doubt as to his superior status due to his greater size and the positioning of the men and weapons around him. In addition, on this coin as the front ranks turn to face the emperor, the perspective from the rear view gives the impression of greater depth.¹⁶

The location of an imperial address was highly flexible, as coins of Nerva and Trajan attest. On a coin minted at the beginning of his rule in A.D. 96, Nerva speaks to a closely packed group of soldiers in front of a temple and joined on the platform by the

¹⁴ *BMC I*, p. 218 no. 122.

¹⁵ Campbell (1984), 71.

¹⁶ *BMC I*, p. 355 no. 249.

prefect of the guard. The *adlocutio* of Trajan depicted in the Circus Maximus shows for the first time the dramatic potential of the setting of imperial speeches. The great disproportion in the size of the speaker to his audience is also significant for highlighting the superior status of the emperor.¹⁷

Typically, coins of Hadrian leave no doubt as to the military nature of his *adlocutiones*. On a coin that depicts only the emperor in the traditional pose giving an address from between two standards, the identity of his invisible audience is provided by the presence of the military standards.¹⁸ Also during the reign of Hadrian, the figure of the emperor on horseback was combined with the standard military address to form a new type. These coins show the emperor haranguing his troops from horseback – a depiction that could refer to the practice of the emperor when in the field on one of his many inspections.¹⁹ When not in the field, Hadrian is usually shown addressing the troops from a podium in a camp. One notable exception, however, is a coin that commemorates Hadrian's eulogy for Trajan's wife Plotina. This scene takes place before the Temple of *Divus Iulius* at Rome and is one of only a few examples of an emperor giving a civil *adlocutio*.²⁰

A medallion of Lucius Verus from c. A.D. 166 modifies the traditional gesture of address in a scene of unambiguous political propaganda, by angling the arm of the

¹⁷ *BMC III*, p. 14 no. * and p. 175 no. 827.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 308 no. 530.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 500 no. 1679.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 433 no. 1309.

emperor slightly towards the ground. The gesture is perhaps modified on account of the purpose of the address – the presentation of a young man (maybe Commodus) to the troops.²¹ A particular series of *adlocutio* coins under Commodus show the relationship between the emperor and the troops in a new way. On these coins, the emperor is larger than life, raising his hand in salutation far above the standards of the troops gathered before him. The troops for their part stand with upturned heads in silence. Issued in A.D. 185/6, this series depicts the emperor reaffirming the loyalty of the Praetorian Guard after the prefect Sextus Tigidius Perennis was executed for his role in a conspiracy.²²

In the third century A.D., the iconography of the imperial address mostly followed the established trends, but with coin issues limited to medallions, signifying the importance of the military and its relationship to the power of the emperor.²³ Richard Brilliant identifies three main types of *adlocutio* scenes during this period: the traditional scheme, the group address scheme, and the triangular composition scheme. On the traditional series, the emperor is depicted standing on a raised platform on either the left or right of the frame haranguing the soldiers in front of him. Usually accompanied on the dais by the Praetorian prefect and sometimes an additional subordinate figure, the emperor is always distinguished by his gesture, forward position, and greater size. The main difference between the traditional and group schemes is the presence of whole dynastic groups on the podium, with the speaker sharing the stage with his family

²¹ J. M. C. Toynbee, *Roman Medallions* (New York: The American Numismatic Society, 1986), Plate XLII.4.

²² Brilliant, 148-9; *BMC IV*, p. 725 no. 199.

²³ Brilliant, 165.

members. This type is first seen during the reign of Septimius Severus, on coins of Caracalla and Geta, with one series even bearing the legend ‘*Adlocutio Augg.*’ Coins of this type continued to be minted in the 3rd century A.D. with examples from the reign of Valerian and Gallienus, with the last known example of this type appearing in A.D. 284 under Numerian and Carinus.²⁴ The third *adlocutio* type features a triangular composition to stress the central position of the emperor and an unrestricted view of the speaker for the audience. The first occurrence of this motif is located in the SW relief on the Arch of Septimius Severus in Rome. Here, the emperor addresses the troops after a victorious campaign against the Parthians. Standing on a raised platform the emperor is surrounded by a crowd of officials and standards at his rear which may indicate that his audience is not composed wholly of soldiers, but perhaps civilians as well. This type also continued into the 3rd century with examples from the reigns of Postumus, Probus, and Galerius, and served as the inspiration for the triangular depictions of Constantine together with the senate and people.²⁵

Aside from depictions on coins, *adlocutiones* also appear as important vignettes on the monumental columns of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius. Scenes involving the emperor speaking to his troops occur six times on Trajan’s Column and five times on the Column of Marcus Aurelius.²⁶ On both columns, the emperor is shown in the traditional pose of the orator in order to help make the identification of the emperor easier even in

²⁴ Brilliant, 166.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 167-170.

²⁶ Trajan’s Column scenes 8, 32, 38, 57, 79, and 103; Aurelian Column scenes 4, 9, 55, 83, and 100.

scenes located at the top of the column. As has been mentioned above, it is also noteworthy that three of the six *adlocutio* scenes on Trajan's Column occur directly after the depiction of the emperor conducting the *lustratio* or religious purification of the camp.²⁷

Since the columns only ever depict the emperor in positive situations, the *adlocutio* scenes only occur before or after a campaign or individual battle. On these occasions, the emperor's *imperium* is on full display as he encourages the troops before battles and rewards them at their conclusions. Slight differences in the details of the emperor on the columns do not have any particular meaning and should not be interpreted as anything more than stylistic variety. Some notable differences include the wearing of a toga as opposed to a cuirass and the carrying of a spear or a scroll.²⁸ The same can be said for the depictions of the attentive soldiers, who are shown most often with faces upturned towards the emperor, but sometimes a few soldiers are looking in a different direction. The soldiers also appear unarmed in some scenes, and in others they raise their hands as if cheering the emperor's words (since the depiction of a negative response would never have been carved).²⁹ Despite any stylistic irregularities, all of the iconographic representations of the emperor and the army reinforce the reciprocal

²⁷ Trajan's Column scenes 8, 38, and 79.

²⁸ Toga: Trajan's Column scenes 7, 24, 37, 57, 64, and 75; Aurelian Column scenes 4, 9, 55, 83, and 100. Spear: Trajan's Column scenes 27, 96, and 100. Scroll: Trajan's Column scenes 36 and 57; Aurelian Column scenes 9 and 55.

²⁹ Looking away: Trajan's Column scenes 38 and 103; Aurelian Column scenes 55 and 83.

relationship which legitimized and reinforced the authority of the emperor and assured the approval and obedience of the soldiers and by extension all the citizens of the empire.³⁰

Part 2 – Vocabulary

On account of their common purposes and contexts, it is perhaps not unsurprising that some *adlocutiones* also feature similar vocabulary. Based largely on the evidence from Hadrian's address at Lambaesis, this section will analyze the words employed by the emperors when addressing their troops for any significant trends. It will also discuss whether or not the emperors followed Quintilian's advice that addresses to soldiers should be kept simple and to the point to reflect their lack of education in rhetoric.³¹ While Hadrian's address to the African army has been described as both short and brief and lengthy and verbose, there is no doubt as to the emperor's intimate knowledge of the exercises that he witnessed at Lambaesis.³²

Perhaps the most obvious use of military language involves references to the administrative structure of the African army. Numerous troop classifications such as the mention of cohorts, mixed equestrian cohorts, *primi ordines* (front-line fighters), centurions, and the *officium proconsulis* (office of the Proconsul), all point to the highly

³⁰ Jean-Michel David, "Les *contiones* militaires des colonnes Trajane et Aurélienne: les nécessités de l'adhésion," dans *Autour de la colonne Aurélienne : Geste et image sur la colonne de Marc Aurèle à Rome*, eds. John Scheid et Valérie Huet (Bèlge : Brepols, 2000), 225.

³¹ Quintilian 11.1.33: "*simpliciora militaris decent.*"

³² Campbell (1984), 78; Speidel (2006), 88.

organized hierarchy of the Roman army.³³ Other strictly military terms that appear include *supplementum* (reinforcements), *stationes* (outposts), and *hibernacula* (winter quarters).³⁴ Of course, it would not be possible for the emperor to critique military exercises without mentioning the various types of weaponry being used by his troops. Thus we are told of manoeuvres involving the use of *loricati* (cuirass), *hastis* and *lanceae* (two types of spears), and *fundis* (slings) and *missilibus* (javelins).³⁵ In addition, two references to the *armorum cultus* in Fields 6 and 30 and the use of the verb *splendere* in Field 3 serve to highlight Hadrian's desire that each soldier should take pride in his appearance not only to increase morale, but also to instil fear in the enemy from the gleam of his weapons and armour. For this reason many Roman military commanders assumed the cost of shiny new weapons from their own purses.³⁶ Similar sentiments regarding the value of a clean and well-kept appearance are espoused by both Vegetius and Curtius Rufus.³⁷

The emperor's descriptions of the exercises are much more precise and frequently employ words that accentuate the pace of the manoeuvres. Words such as *acriter* (three times), *agiles* (three times), *alacriter*, *celeriter*, *rapido cursu*, *raptim*, and *velociter* give a sense of constant motion to the exercises and are also indicative of the necessity for speed

³³ Fields 2, 6, and Fragment 47; J.-F. Berthet, "L'orateur," dans *Les discours d'Hadrien à l'armée d'Afrique: Exercitatio*, ed. Yann Le Bohec (Paris: De Boccard, 2003), 150. All references to fields or fragments of Hadrian's address follow the numbering in Speidel (2006).

³⁴ Fields 2 and 10.

³⁵ Fields 6, 29 and 30.

³⁶ Michael Speidel, *Roman Army Studies II* (Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1992), 131-6.

³⁷ Vegetius 2.12.2; 2.14.5 and 8; Quintus Curtius Rufus, *Historiarum Alexandri Magni* 4.13.1.

in actual battle situations where speed is more useful than bravery.³⁸ And, since the alliteration *acriter alacriter* occurs in other military contexts, it cannot be simply a rhetorical device.³⁹ Moreover, the use of the terms *acriter* and *rapido cursu* in Fragments 23-4 refer to two different types of charges that could be made by infantry troops.⁴⁰ In conjunction with these comments, in Fragments 62 and 85, Hadrian also approves of the straightness of the battle line during the execution of the manoeuvres.⁴¹

In contrast to the positive connotations described above, Hadrian's use of adjectives in his address tends to emphasize the difficulties involved in the manoeuvres or other mandatory tasks. In this way the garrisons are described as *multae* and *diversae*, rocks being collected for the construction of walls are *grandes*, *graves*, and *inaequales*, and the ditch dug through gravel that was *duram* and *scabram*.⁴² More significant is the fact that the adjective most used to describe the manoeuvres is *difficilis* and its cognates.⁴³

Other important terms in Hadrian's address include references to the spirit of the troops while conducting their exercises in Field 6. By bringing attention to the *animus* that the soldiers display even in drills, Hadrian is implicitly critiquing the whole of the

³⁸ Berthet, 150; Vegetius 4.31.4: "*quia in rebus bellicis celeritas amplius solet prodesse quam uirtus.*"

³⁹ Rufus 7.9.9; Florus, *Epitoma* 2.146.4; Speidel (2006), 55.

⁴⁰ Cf. Tac., *Ann.* 1.68.

⁴¹ The terms used in these instances are *directe* and *derecte*.

⁴² Fields 2 and 10.

⁴³ Berthet, 151.

Roman military for its recent tendency towards laxness in training.⁴⁴ A similar opinion that a passion for war is lacking in the army in Hadrian's day is evident when the emperor brings attention to the *calor* displayed by the troops. According to Speidel, this may be one of the reasons for Hadrian's promotion of the use of ethnic battle cries and tactics.⁴⁵ The emperor's praise also extends to the obvious *cura* (attention) to detail of his legate and of a prefect in Fields 3 and 30 and to the soldiers' *cura* for their training in Fragment 66. Significantly, given the emperor's penchant for constant preparation and drilling for war, there is also a reference to the all important quality of *disciplina* in Fragment 68. In addition, the use of the terms *strenue*, *non languide*, and *vehementius* serve to encourage not only discipline in conducting exercises, but also show the degree of effort expected by the emperor.⁴⁶

There is also much evidence to suggest that Hadrian did not speak in a stark manner, but embellished his speech with rhetorical flourishes. One example of this is Hadrian's use of the phrase *sub illo viro viri estis* at the end of his speech which recalls the alliterations found in Vergil and Livy to describe the traditional warrior mentality.⁴⁷ The emperor's address also features multiple examples of assonance and anaphora, as well as several instances of poetic meter inspired perhaps by his favourite poet Ennius. All of these rhetorical additions were not accidental, but were intended to show off the

⁴⁴ Speidel (2006), 38.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 64 and Field 14; see Arrian, *Tact.* 44.1.

⁴⁶ Fields 3, 22, and 30.

⁴⁷ Field 30; Verg., *Aen.* 10.361 and 734; Livy 33.8.14.

emperor's attention to detail and his expertise in all things.⁴⁸ The emperor's knowledge of technical military terms and tactics is also clearly displayed in this address. Three terms in particular are corroborated only in only one other source - Arrian: the attack *e tecto*, the Cantabrian charge, and the *dextrator*.⁴⁹ The use of such highly specialized language is not surprising from a man who is described as and being well-skilled in weaponry and an expert in military affairs.⁵⁰ For his part, Marcus Aurelius displays his knowledge of military issues and attention to the plight of the soldier in his speech to the Praetorians when he refers to new privileges of discharged veterans.⁵¹

Each example of his understanding of the life of a soldier would have served to endear the emperor to the troops and to promote a healthy relationship with his armies. In this sense, Hadrian's flair for rhetorical devices to describe military activities in his address would have flattered the troops more than confuse them.⁵² Within Hadrian's address, one word stands out above all others – *vos* – which occurs more than any other word (seven times). The emperor uses this word especially to create a bond with his troops. In contrast, the legate Catullinus, as the emperor's own representative, is referred

⁴⁸ Speidel (2006), 88; Berthet, 154-7; see SHA, *Hadr.* 14-15; 20.

⁴⁹ Fields 26 and 30; cf. Arrian, *Tact.* 35.1; 36.5; 40.1.

⁵⁰ SHA, *Hadr.* 14: "*armorum peritissimus et rei militaris scientissimus.*"

⁵¹ *Frag. Vat.* 195.

⁵² Jean-Louis Voisin, "Au miroir des discours d'Hadrien: hommes et valeurs militaires," dans *Les discours d'Hadrien à l'armée d'Afrique: Exercitatio*, ed. Yann Le Bohec (Paris: De Boccard, 2003), 35.

to as *legatus meus* and a *vir clarissimus*, while Cornelianus, a unit commander, is *vester*.⁵³ This differentiation signals the emphasis of the emperor on the importance of the chain of command, with his position as the supreme commander highlighted by the success of the generals that he appointed.

Part 3 - Themes

While the desire of emperors to promote their relationship with the army has been discussed at length above, it is important to note that the language and themes employed in imperial *adlocutiones* is often similar. For instance, Marcus Aurelius emphasizes his relationship with the soldiers when he refers to retired veterans of the Praetorian Guard as *veterani nostri*, as if he, too, were simply one of the soldiers.⁵⁴ The theme of the emperor as fellow-soldier or *commilito* is an important one and appears frequently and in many different circumstances. One example of this appears in the speeches ascribed to Titus during the siege of Jerusalem, where Josephus has the future emperor address the soldiers on several occasions as his fellow-soldiers. In these speeches, which occur both before and after key battles, Titus praises his *commilitones* for their discipline, experience, courage, and most importantly their obedience, and rewards them with military

⁵³ Speidel (2006), 88 and Fields 26 and 29; see also Voisin, 28.

⁵⁴ *Frag. Vat.* 195.

decorations and promotions.⁵⁵ Several other emperors including Otho, Marcus Aurelius, and Pertinax also address the troops as their fellow-soldiers.⁵⁶

For Commodus, who is known for his desire to conduct himself as a common soldier, it is significant that he considered even low-ranked javelin-men as his *commilitones*.⁵⁷ Upon taking charge of the Praetorians after the murder of his brother Geta, Caracalla won their loyalty not only by addressing them as his fellow-soldiers and promising them many favours, but by stating that he wanted to die in battle at their side as one of them.⁵⁸ Ironically, despite his every effort to appear a common soldier and promises of pay raises and donatives, Caracalla still fell afoul of the Praetorians and was killed by their officers.

After raising an army equal in size to that of the invading Persians under Artaxerxes, Severus Alexander addressed his new legions as a fellow-soldier and informed them that if they would be courageous and have faith in their superior training and tactics then victory would be the only possible outcome.⁵⁹ However, after Severus Alexander had lost favour with the legions in spite of a last-ditch effort to move them to compassion by oratorical means, his soldiers nevertheless deserted him to follow the

⁵⁵ Josephus, 3.472ff; 6.33ff; 7.5ff.

⁵⁶ Plut., *Galba* 27.3; *Otho* 15.3-6; Dio 71.24-6; 72.9; 74.1 78.3.

⁵⁷ Dio 73.9.3.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 78.3.3.

⁵⁹ Herodian 6.3.3-7.

cause of Maximinus, whom they called a braver and more competent fellow-soldier.⁶⁰

When making their bids to become emperor, both Pescennius Niger and Septimius Severus approach the troops as a saviour of an empire in ruin, and allude to the recent treasonous acts of the Praetorians. While Niger attacks the Praetorians as untrustworthy for auctioning the empire to Julianus, Severus tells his troops that the guard is more suited to parades than battles, calling to mind the hardships the legions endured in actual combat situations. Severus also belittles the power of the Praetorians by reminding his legions of their superior numbers and skills, and references their practical training experiences in comparison to the lax and luxurious conditions enjoyed by the guard. Even more scathing is the assertion by Severus that the Praetorians would never dare to confront his legions on the battlefield on account of the greater average body mass and prowess in hand-to-hand combat of the legionnaires.⁶¹

Because of the increasing instability of the position of emperor from the late 2nd into the early 3rd centuries A.D., the support of the army was imperative to ensure the success of each ruler. Appeals to the army featured promises of pay increases, favours, and much flattery. Promotion of the concept of the *commilito* allowed the emperor to align himself with the common soldier, although such claims were often superficial, with few emperors taking steps to actually be seen by large portions of the military.⁶² Another way that the emperor could win over the respect and loyalty of the troops was through his

⁶⁰ Herodian, 6.9.1-5.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 2.8.1-6; 2.10.1-9.

⁶² Campbell (1984), 57-8.

speeches. A key example of this is the speech of Hadrian to the African armies. In his speeches, the emperor displays his knowledge of military affairs both in the content of his critique and in his manner of speaking. In this way, the emperor's use of key military terminology contributes to the effectiveness of the speech and its reception among the soldiers. Combined with the manner in which imperial speeches were commemorated on coins and relief sculptures such as those on the columns of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius, these practices served to reinforce the ideology of a successful relationship between the emperor and the army.

Conclusion

This study represents an attempt to expand our knowledge of the Roman Army during the period of the principate by examining the ceremony of *adlocutio*. In its simplest definition, the *adlocutio* was an address made by the emperor to a body of Roman soldiers. The most common audience for these speeches was the Praetorian Guard not only on account of their position as the best soldiers in the army, but also because of their proximity and potential influence on the political power of the emperor. For this reason, the imperial address normally took place in the *Castra Praetoria* in Rome, but could also occur at provincial legionary camps or in the field. Typically, the emperor would mount a raised platform to give his oration, less frequently and only in the field, he could address the troops while mounted on horseback.

How often *adlocutiones* were heard by the troops is a matter of debate and depends on a variety of factors. The length of the emperor's rule, number of opportunities for formal occasions, number of important military engagements or wars, and especially the personality and policies of the emperor all played a role in determining the frequency of imperial speeches to the army. A speech by the emperor would be expected on formal occasions such as his accession, the presentation of a dynastic heir, during the celebration of a triumph, during major political or military crises, or to announce a declaration of war. Notwithstanding these formal occasions, the emperor could also address the troops in a non-formal setting in the field during his travels to the provinces or to the battle fronts along the frontiers. Granted, even some of these visits by the emperor were also accompanied by formal inspections and parades such as Hadrian's

address at Lambaesis. Depending on the reasons for the oration, the emperor might even repeat the same speech several times so that the same message might be heard by large numbers of men. It is also possible that, in the case of emperors who for various reasons did not travel far from Rome, copies of their speeches might be circulated to the provincial legates to be read in the emperor's stead.¹

Physical evidence for imperial speeches is well-documented on coinage and the relief panels of several important monuments. Depictions of the emperor giving his speech almost always conform to the established iconographic style of the orator, with the right arm of the emperor outstretched in a gesture that both calls for the indulgence of his audience and demands their attention. While coin series of the *adlocutio* type are attested for most emperors, their relative infrequency and specificity encourage the belief that we should understand that some kind of address was actually made during each of the commemorated occasions. For this reason we should also accept that not every instance of an *adlocutio* was deemed important enough for representation on a coin. A speech by the emperor likely occurred also during less significant celebrations such as the emperor's birthday or the anniversary of his accession.²

Since monuments such as the columns of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius often create a link between the ceremonies of the *adlocutio* and the *lustratio*, some measure of religiosity can be ascribed to the former. In this way, the soldiers would make a direct connection between the inviolability of the camp and the sanctity of their relationship

¹ Campbell (1984), 72.

² *Ibid.*, 84.

with the emperor, with indirect reference also to the oath of allegiance that they had taken upon enlistment. Assembled in their ranks, if the speech was part of a formal ceremony, the *adlocutio* served to confirm the status of each individual soldier within the military hierarchy while at the same time calling attention to the collective identity of the whole.³

The purpose of the *adlocutio* was chiefly to promote, establish, or re-establish the bond between the emperor and the troops. In his speech, the emperor would highlight the importance of solidarity in the face of opposition, confirm his own power over the soldiers, and solicit their obedience and loyalty. To this end, the emperor would employ words and phrases that stressed their interdependence: by calling the troops “my” soldiers and by referring to the problems and traditions of, or duties towards the state as “ours”. For a similar purpose, the emperor would make attempts to promote his status as a fellow-soldier or *commilito*. To achieve the perception that he shared a common existence with the soldiers, the emperor might take part in the more mundane activities of soldiering such as marches, eating camp food, removing signs of luxury, and wherever possible leading by example. The conscientious *commilito* would also visit the sick and wounded, present medals and awards where due, respond to petitions on legal matters, provide for veterans, and most importantly provide regular monetary bonuses.

In the increasingly politically charged climate of the late 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D., the role of the military in creating, sustaining, or removing emperors had a definite effect on the attention placed on the emperor’s bond with his troops. It was arguably more important for the emperor to prove himself worthy of the loyalty of the soldiers than

³ David, 217.

for the soldiers to prove themselves to the emperor. As such, the emperor was expected to meet the troops, or at the very least to be seen by them and to show genuine interest in their welfare. To this end, the ceremony of *adlocutio* provided the emperor with an important opportunity to promote himself and his policies and to evaluate first-hand his connection with the various arms of the military.

Appendix

Text and Translation of Hadrian's address at Lambaesis in A.D. 128¹

The inscription has three parts:

- A. Dedication
- B. Legion (fields 1-16)
- C. Auxiliary units (fields 17-32)

A. Dedication:

*Imp. Cae[s]ari Traiano
Hadriano Augusto
for[ti]ss[im]o
libera[lissimo]que,
[[[le]g[io] III Augusta]]*

adprob[at]is campo et exe]rcitu.

Translation:

To Emperor Caesar Trajan Hadrian Augustus, most gallant and most generous, the Third Augustan Legion, training field and army having been approved.

B. The Legion

Field 1:

*Imp(erator) Caesar Traianus
Hadrianus Augustus
[[[legionem I]II [Augustam]]]
exercitationibus inspectis adlocutus
est is quae infra scripta sunt
Torquat[o] II et [Lib]one[us] co(n)s(ulibus), K(alendis) Iulis.*

At pi[l]os

¹ CIL VIII, 2532 = 18042; ILS 2487 = 9133-5. The text and translation that follow is that of Speidel (2006).

Translation:

Emperor Caesar Trajan Hadrian Augustus, having watched its manoeuvres, addressed the Third Augustan Legion in the words written below, on the first of July when Torquatus for the second time and Libo were consuls.

To the *pili*

Field 2:

*[Catullinu]s leg(atu)s me[us] pro causa ves[tra] a]cer est, ve[rum, quae argu]-
[e]nda vobis apud me fuissent omnia mihi pro vobis ipse di[xit, quod]
cohors abest, quod omnibus annis per vices in officium pr[ocon]-
sulis mittitur, quod ante annum tertium cohortem et qui [nos]
ex centurias in supplementum comparum tertianorum dedis-
tis, quod multae, quod diversae stationes vos distinent, quod
nostra memoria bis non tantum mutastis castra sed et nova fecis-
tis Ob haec excusatos vos habere[rem si q]uid in exercitatione cessas-
set. Sed nihil aut cessavis[se videtur au] test ulla causa cur]
vobis excusatione [apud me opus esset - - - ca. 25 - - -]
retis val[- - - ca. 48 - - -]*

Translation:

Catullinus, my legate, is keen in your support; indeed, everything that you might have had to put to me he has himself told me on your behalf: that a cohort is away because, taking turns, one is sent every year to the staff of the Proconsul; that two years ago you gave a cohort and five men from each *centuria* to the fellow third legion, that many and far-flung outposts keep you scattered, that twice within our memory you have not only changed fortresses but built new ones. For this I would have forgiven you if something had come to a halt in your training. But nothing seems to have halted, nor is there any reason why you should need my forgiving ... you would ...

Field 3:

---]stissim[---]
[---i]mpellat q[---fe-]
runtur [---] vis barbar[orum ---]
moti sua s[ponte ---]
[--- ca. 55 ---]
vos modo non faciat leni[ores --- ca. 35 ---]: sperate
[m]elius esse facturos qua[e --- ca. 20 ---s]sim[i o]mniū. Ordinem tam longae exercit[ationis --- ca. 25 ---] et stren[u]e multa fecistis et satis speciose sp[lendetis sub cura Catullini m]ei clari[s]simi viri, [le]gati qu[--- ca. 54 ---]
mir[---]

Translation:

--- most --- let push --- carried away --- a force of barbarians --- borne by their own wilfulness --- does not make you softer ---. Trust that you will do better whatever --- toughest of all. Such a long course of training ---. You have keenly done much, and you shine brightly under the care of my noble Catullinus, the legate who ---

Field 4 (lost)

Field 5 (lost)

Field 6:

[--- ca. 14 ---]armorum [--- ca. 12 ---sollic]ite vide-
[antur attendi]sse vobis. Primi ordines et centuriones agiles
[et fortes mo]re suo fuerunt.

[[[At equites legionis]]]

[Exe]rcitationes militares quodam modo suas leges
[ha]bent quibus si quit adiciatur aut detrahatur aut minor
[exer]citatio fit aut difficilior. Quantum autem difficultatis
[additur, tan]tum gratiae demitur. Vos ex difficilibus difficil-
[limum feci]stis ut loricati iaculationem perageretis
[--- ca. 10 ---c]um damno, quin immo et animum probo
[---].

Translation:

... weapons ... seem to have carefully looked after you. The battle-line leaders and centurions were quick and keen as is their wont.

To the legionary horsemen

Military exercises somehow have their own laws by which, if anything is added or taken away, the exercise gets either lesser or harder. And the harder one makes it, the less graceful it becomes. You have made the hardest out of a hard task by throwing spears while wearing the cuirass, and thereby you lost in elegance. But I do approve the spirit in which you did this - - -

Field 7:

[- - -p]robo .a.[- - -]
[- - -]tis iuvat itaq[ue - - -]
[- - -]IQI[- - -]

Translation:

- - - I approve - - -
- - - hence it helps - - -

Field 8 (lost)

Field 9:

[[[- - -]i[- - -]]]
[- - -]u hesternu[- - -]
- - -
[- - -eleg]ante rest[is - - -]
[- - - exerc]itabam et c[- - -]

Translation:

To the *principes*

- - - of yesterday - - - you did this elegantly - - - thus I would train - - -

Field 10:

*ta]ti]ones [- - - ca. 35 - - - quas] a]li [- ... per]
plures dies dicisis[*sent, e*]as uno die peregistis. Murum lo[*ngi*]
operis et qualis mansuris hibernaculis fieri solet non [mul]-
to diutius exstrucxistis quam caespite exstruitur qui m[*o*]-
dulo pari caesus et vehitur facile et tractatur et sine mo[*les*]-
tia struitur ut mollis et planus pro natura sua. Vos lapid[*ibus*]
grandibus, gravibus, inaequalibus, quos neque vehere n[*e*]-
que attollere, neque locare quis possit nisi ut inaequa[*lita*]-
tes inter se compareant. Fossam glaria duram scabram
recte percussistis et radendo levem reddidistis. Opere pr[*o*]-
bato introgressi castra raptim et cibum et arma cepistis
equitem emissum secuti magno clamore revertentem per*

Translation:

- - - work others would have spread out over several days, you took only one day to finish. You have built a lengthy wall, made as if for permanent winter-quarters, in nearly as short a time as if it were built from turf which is cut in even pieces, easily carried and handled, and laid without difficulty, being naturally smooth and flat. You built with big, heavy, uneven stones that no one can carry, lift, or lay without their unevenness becoming evident. You dug a straight ditch through hard and rough gravel and scraped it smooth. Your work approved, you quickly entered camp, took your food and weapons, and followed the horse who had been sent out, hailing them with a great shout as they came back.

Field 11 (lost)

Field 12 (lost)

Field 13:

[[[At] hast[a]t[os]]]

*[- - -]+ dies poscit u[*t* - - -]*

[- - -]+s+u[- - -]

Translation:

To the *hastati*

- - - the day - - - demands that - - -

Field 14 (lost)

Field 15 (lost)

Field 16:

[- - -] *iaculari non potuit qu*[- - -]
[- - -] *yo Celer hastatus rect*[e - - -]
[- - -] *vos exercuit.*
[- - -]

Translation:

- - - could not throw spears, for - - -
- - - Celer, the hastatus, has rightly drilled you.

C. Auxilia

Field 17 (lost)

Field 18 (lost)

Field 19:

- - - *il*]-
lic saltib[*us* - - - *in*]-
tellexi v[*os* - - - *fuis*]-
setis ne[- - -] *habili-*
ter iacu[*la* - - -] *as qui-*
dam bi[- - -]
[.] *ic*[- - -]

Translation:

- - - there with jumps - - - I understand that you - - - would have been - - - but not - - -
spear-throwing skilfully - - - some - - -

Field 20:

[---]et ex equis per tot[---]
[---]am quoque celer[---]
[---]exercitatione c[---]

Translation:

--- alighted from the horses over the whole --- also, quickly --- by training ---

Field 21:

[---]K(alendis) Iul(is). Coh(orti) II Ha[miorum]

[Cum cast]ra vobis refragata s[int --- ca. 30 ---]
[---]us in campo, iusto [--- ca. 26 ---]
[--- a]quis ipsis int[erclu--- ca. 28 ---]
[--- ca. 55 ---]
[--- ca. 55 ---]
[--- ca. 55 ---]

Translation:

June ---. To *cohors II Hamiorum*

Since the fort worked against you --- open field, set battle --- even cut off from water
(?) ---

Field 22:

[.....]m[.....]cistis et minibus non languidis. Id-
[circo, cum] vos iam sagitt[as no]n ad signum miseritis quod iam hostis
[adest, impe]llit pra[efectus ed eu]m vos mittendi saepius et instantius
[studium ut] in freq[uentibus telis ho]stis ultra scutum non audeat caput
[tollere. --- ca. 31 ---] tarde iunxistis [..]
[--- ca. 42 ---] erumpetis veh[e-
[mentius --- ca. 36 ---]idit [--- ca. 9 ---]
[--- ca. 52 ---]tum
[--- ca. 40 --- Catullinus meu]s lega-
[tus --- ca. 45 ---]dit prae-
[fectus --- ca. 49 ---]
[---]

Translation:

--- you did --- and with hands not slack. Hence, as you do not shoot at a signal (the foe being already upon you) your prefect makes you try and shoot oftener and sharper, so that among the many missiles the foe dare not lift his head above the shield. --- You were slow to close ranks --- you will break out more briskly --- my Catullinus, the legate --- the prefect --- .

Field 23 (lost)

Field 24 (lost)

Field 25:

---]ate contos [---]sī [---]
[---] scop[os ---]rsent es[---]
[--- praefectus vester] vobis[c]um agīl[iter decucurrit].

[---] Ala [. . .]pā[.] sīn[---]

[Cantabricum a]criter alacriter eff[ecistis ita ut hostis] non potuisset vos tu[rbare]
[--- vos red]egisset qua fui[ssetis]
[--- Catullinum meum virum clarissimum, legatum]

Translation:

--- thrusting lances --- the targets --- your prefect, keenly rode with you in the manoeuvre.

To *ala* . . . *pā* *sīn* ---

You rode the Cantabrics sharply and keenly, so that the foe could not thwart you, nor push you where --- my noble Catullinus, the legate ---

Field 26:

*laudo quod convertuit vos ad hanc exercitat[ionem] quae verae di]-
micationis imaginem accepit et sic exercet [vos - - - ca. 12 - - - ut lau]-
dare vos possim. Cornelianus praefectus ves[ter intre]pide [officio suo sa]-
tis fecit. Contrari discursus non placent mihi nec [div]o Tra[iano qui mihi]
est auctor. E tecto transcurrat eques et pe[- - - . Si non]
videt qua vadat aut, si voluerit, eum r[efr]en[are] nequit, non potest
[qu]iñ sit obnoxius caliculis tectis a[ut fo]ss[is] quas] non videt. S[i]
[vul]tis congregi, debetis concurrere per me]dium campum. Ta[m]-
[q]uam adversus hosti facienda [umquam sunt u]lla quam cante.*

[- - -N]on(is) Iul(is), Zarai. Coh(orti) [- - -]

*[- - - ca. 15 - - -] turbetis et di[- - -]
[- - -]*

Translation:

I praise him for having brought you over to this manoeuvre that has taken on the looks of true fighting, and for training you so well - - - that I can praise you. Your prefect Cornelianus has done his duty undauntedly. I do not like counter-wheelings, nor did deified Trajan, my model. A horseman should ride out from cover and - - -. If he does not see where he is going, or cannot rein in his horse when he wishes, he may come to grief from hidden traps and trenches he does not see. If you want to attack, you must charge across the middle of the field – as when facing the foe, nothing must ever be done recklessly.

July - - -, Zarai. To cohort - - -

- - - you might break the formation - - -

Field 27 (lost)

Field 28 (lost)

Field 29:

III Idus Iulias. Ala I Pannoniorum

Omnia per ordinem egistis. Campum d[ec]ursionibus complestis, iaculati estis non ineleganter, hast[is] usi q[uam]quam brevis et duris; lanceas plures vestrum [scie]nter miserun[t]. Saluistis et hic agiliter et heri velociter. Si q[ui]t defuisset, desid[e]rarem, si quit eminuisset, designarem. Tota exercitatione perae[q]ue placuistis. Catullinus legatus meus v[ir] clarissimus in o[mni]-

Translation:

July 13. *Ala I Pannoniorum*

You did everything according to the book: you filled the training ground with your wheelings, you threw spears not ungracefully, though with short and stiff shafts. Several of you hurled *lancea* spears with skill. Your jumping onto the horses here was lively and yesterday swift. Had anything been lacking, I would note it; had anything stood out, I would mention it. You pleased equally throughout the whole manoeuvre. Noble Catullinus, my deputy, gives the same care to all - - -

Field 30:

bus quibus praeest parem suam curam exhib[uit] ... [prae]fectus vester sollicite videtur vobis attendere. Congiar[i]um accipiter. Viator, iam in Commagenorum campo salieti[s].

Eq(uites) coh(ortis) VI Commagenorum

Difficile est cohortales equites etiam per se placere, difficilius post aliam exercitationem non displicere: alia spatia campi, alius iaculantium numerus, frequens dextrator, Cantabricus densus, equorum forma, armorum cultus pro stipendi modo. Verum vos fastidium calore vitastis, strenue faciendo quae fieri debebant. Addidistis ut et lapides fundis mitteretis et missilibus confligeretis; saluistis ubique expedite. Catullini leg(ati) mei c(larissimi) v(iri) [insignis virtus] apparet, quod tales vos sub illo v[ir]o v[ir]i estis.

Fragment 47:

---]us et
[---p]raefectum.

[--- Coh(orti)--- eq]uit(atae)

Translation:

--- and --- the prefect.

--- To cohort --- part-mounted. ---

Fragments 62:

---] + + + [---]
[---] direct[e .]n[---]
[---

Translation:

--- straight ---

Fragment 66:

--- exercitati]onum cu[ra---]
[---]num laudo [---

Translation:

--- the care for training --- I praise ---nus ---

Fragment 68:

---] disci[plina ?---

Translation:

--- discipline ---

Fragment 85:

---]IA [---]
---] *derecte*.

Translation:

--- straight.

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