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THE “TWO-PROVINCE” DIPLOMATA

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FRAGMENT OF A SEVERAN AUXILIARY DIPLOMA:
NOTES ON A VARIETY OF THE “TWO-PROVINCE” DIPLOMATA*

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Among several fragments of auxiliary diplomata recently found at Kostolac, the ancient Viminacium¹ (Moesia Superior), there is one which deserves scholars’ special attention – because of its late date as well as the complex structure of its *constitutio*.²

The fragment³ belonged to the upper lefthand part of the second tablet.⁴ The left edge (or the upper edge, when viewed from the inner face) has been preserved; the perforation holes, invisible now, were at the height of the (uninscribed) line following line 6 extr. The text reads (see Fig. 1):



Fig. 1 Fragment of the second tablet of an auxiliary diploma (AD 202)
Found at Viminacium in Moesia Superior

Extr. [---
 ÇALL [32–34 letters]
 2 sub Egn[atio(?)] 9(–7) letters legato, item ala/coh(orte) 7(–9) letters]
 quae est [in 7(–17) letters sub 20(–10) letters]-
 4 no legat[fo, quinīs et vicenis pluribusve stipen]-
 dis emer[itis, dimissis honesta missione per]
 6 Varium [31–33 letters]
 [---

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¹ The find-spot of many diploma fragments, some of them already published (cf. M. Mirković, “Epigraphy in Moesia. Roman Army and Roman City”, *Acti of the Eleventh Congress of Greek and Roman Epigraphy, Rome 1997*, to appear). See also note 1 of my section of the paper on “Antoninus Pius and the Citizenship of Soldiers’ Children” to be published in a forthcoming issue of the *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*.

² Discovered at the site of Čair (the legionary camp and the civilian settlement in its immediate neighbourhood: *Viminacium 1*, Belgrade 1990, 1 f. 4, 35) in the early months of 1992, the bronze has been acquired by the Museum of Požarevac (Serbia). I am indebted to Mr. Dragan Jacanović, the Keeper of the Museum, for his very kind permission to edit it here.

³ *Vidi*. Dimensions: height: 2.5 cm (max.), width: 2.4 cm (max.), thickness: 0.05 cm. Weight: 4.13 gms.

⁴ The arrangement of the text of the original diploma’s two tablets was of an unusual type, although not so rare in the production of the late second and early third centuries (cf. *RMD* 108, 187, 192 and 196, with the editor’s notes on the matter).

Line 1 init. The ends of four letters forming part of the name of an auxiliary regiment. A reading *CRII* (for [- - -] | *ç(ivium) R(omanorum) et* [- - -] ?) seems improbable if not impossible. *Line 2* Though not complete, the *G* is certain; of *N*, the bottom of the first stroke is extant. This suggests the restoration *Egn[atio(?)]*;⁵ other nomina in *Egn*-⁶ are neither frequent enough nor of convenient length to be envisaged here. As the numeral and the (slightly abbreviated)⁷ name of the unit written at the end of the line are likely to have occupied some 7(–9) letters at the minimum,⁸ the length of the first part of the lacuna, having contained *Egn[atius(?)]*’ cognomen, can be estimated at the complementary 9(–7) letters (for the total length of the lacunae in lines 1–6 extr. see the apparatus ad lin. 4–5). After *Egn[atius(?)]*’ cognomen, restore [*legato*] or [*legat(o)*],⁹ not [*leg(ato)*] (cf. line 4 extr.), and [*item*] rather than [*et*] (cf. *CIL* XVI 99 quoted below). *Line 3* The length of the first lacuna, before the *sub*, has been determined – at the cost of a circular argument – on the basis of an estimate of the number of letters which the (unabbreviated)¹⁰ name(s) of [*Jnus*’ province, in the ablative, would contain. As the total number of letters lost in that line may be approximated at c. 32 (cf. lines 4–5 extr.), the “7(–17)” has resulted in the estimate that the lacuna after the *sub* numbered 20 (correlating with the “7”)–10 (correlating with the “17”) letters. *Lines 4–5* can be restored with confidence (which gives us the approximate length of the original lines of extrinsecus: 36–39 letters) and show (line 4: *legat.* or *legat[o]*; line 5: *-dis*) that this diploma, like the majority of the late Antonine – early Severan diplomata, avoided radical abbreviations. *Line 6* The trace of a vertical after *M* ?

Int.

- [– – – *singuli*] *s. A. d. V* [10–20(?) letters: the end of the numeral(?), the month’s name]
 2 [*Imp. Caes(ar) L. Septimius S]everus [Pius Pertinax Aug(ustus) III]*
 [*Imp. Caes(ar) M. Aurelius Ant]oninus [Pius Aug(ustus) co(n)s(ules)]*
 4 [*coh(ortis)/alae* c. 8(?) letters: the numeral and the slightly abbreviated name of the unit *cui praeest* c. 3(?) letters: the beginning of the commander’s gentile] *ius* [14–25(?) letters: the commander’s cognomen]
 [*ex equite/pedite/gregale* c. 15(?) letters: the recipient’s name(s)] *Q[.]ALIS* [10–25(?) letters]
 [– – –

The inner text is difficult to decipher, as it has been less carefully written; moreover, the intus surface of the bronze has suffered from corrosion and accidental cuts resembling letter-traces sporadically. But the *a. d.* of line 1 and the remains of consular (imperial) cognomina in lines 2 and 3 – the reading of all these being beyond any doubt – make it clear that we are dealing with the dating formula of a Severan diploma. Owing to epigraphical uncertainties (which concern the [varying] breadth of margins and the density of lettering as well as the engraver’s use of vacats and abbreviations), it is impossible to determine the exact lengths of lines. To judge from what can be inferred from the approximate position of the perforation holes (see *supra*), the righthand lacunae will have been somewhat longer than the lefthand ones, but the former need not have been inscribed complete in lines whose content formed a clear unity (e.g. 1–3), unless there were gross cases of “enjambement”. Our estimate of the maximum lengths of the lost ends of lines 1 (“20[?]”), 4 (“25[?]”) and 5 (“25[?]”); note the line’s dense lettering) should be taken, therefore, to imply so many letter-places rather than letters themselves; actually, at least lines 4 and 5 must have included vacats in their righthand parts. *Line 1* The name of the month was probably engraved complete or only slightly abbreviated (cf. *RMD* 185, 189 extr.). *Lines 2–3* Here, as in line 1, the details of restoration and/or the extent of abbreviation may have varied; even the line-division and the line-range of the formula’s elements are not entirely certain (theoretically speaking, Severus’ *nomen Imperatoris* may have stood at the end of line 1 [cf. *CIL* XVI 134] or what is now our line 4 init. was transferred to line 3 fin., after the [*cos.*]).

⁵ Neither the nomina nor the cognomina of governors cited in the *sub* clauses of late auxiliary diplomata (extrinsecus) are engraved in abbreviated forms (cf. e.g. *RMD* 185 and 123).

⁶ Egnatienus, Egnatuleius, Egnius (*Ann. ép.* 1975, 255).

⁷ E.g. without the final *-um* (cf. *RMD* 187).

⁸ There is an additional element of uncertainty here: if [*Jnus*’ unit is identified as a cohort, the word following the [*item*] may have been inscribed, instead of the [*coh.*], complete or only slightly abbreviated.

⁹ A *proc(uratore)* (*procurat(ore)* et sim.) would be *prima facie* possible, too, but see *infra*, text and notes 14 ff.

¹⁰ Cf. e.g. *CIL* XVI 131 (AD 178/203): [*in Pann]onia Infer[io]re*] or *Infer[io]re*]; *RMD* 123 (AD 179): *in Dacia Superior*]; *RMD* 69 (AD 186): *in Syria Palestina* (!).

However, the essence of restoration, postulating AD 202 (the month- and day-date unknown)¹¹ for the date of the diploma, is assured. Though we cannot exclude the possibility that some of the Emperors' names/titles were in the ablative – that is, contrasting with the nominative case of the cognomina (cf. *CIL* XVI 134; *RMD* 75) – it seems likely that the whole formula was, rather unexpectedly, in the nominative. H. Nesselhauf must have been right in noting (ad *CIL* XVI 134) “consulum nomina casu nominativo in laterculo scripta habuit aeriarius”.¹² The [cos.] was probably put at the end of line 3 (cf. again *CIL* XVI 134), not between lines 2 and 3. As restored above, line 3 is comparatively short. It may, but need not, be assumed that there was a vacat after Caracalla's titlature or that the [coh.lalae] (line 4 init., according to the present restoration) was engraved here. *Line 4* The number of letters lost in the lefthand lacuna (21–25 is a rough approximation) must have exceeded that of the corresponding parts of lines 2 and 3, as the lettering of line 4 is somewhat smaller and obviously more crowded than the lettering of the preceding two lines. Nevertheless, the space available suggests a short gentile for the commander, e. g. Iulius, Ulpius or Aelius. Obviously, a vacat (not subtracted from the “14–25(?)” letters) divided the gentile from the cognomen (completely lost), as is frequently the case in diplomata. *Line 5* The extant letters probably belonged to the recipient's patronymic (a genitive in -is), which may be considered as either a barbarian name or a Roman cognomen (? Sodalis); to take the *Q* for the last letter of the recipient's name (“peregrine” or gentile) and the [.]ALIS or ALIS for his patronymic (or the beginning of his patronymic) would be a less attractive alternative. A [fil.] followed. In view of the space considerations,¹³ the complete name-formula of the recipient can be restored both as a “peregrine” one (i.e. containing the name in the dative, the patronymic in the genitive, the fil., and an origo [possibly abbreviated]) and as that of a Roman citizen (praenomen [?], nomen, filiation, cognomen, origo). Note also that there may have been one or more vacats (at the beginning and at the end of the line; between some of the elements of the name-formula).

The document, dated AD 202 (lines 2–3 int.), should be attributed to the class of the “two-province” diplomata.¹⁴ Its catalogue of *auxilia* benefiting from its *lex* is divided into two provincial commands, that of *Egn[atius](?)* (the section closing with line 2 extr.) and that of a legate with a cognomen in -nus (lines 2–4 extr.). The *Varium* (line 6 extr.) reminds us of a variety of the class which is represented by two *constitutiones*, preserved through *RMD* 21+22 (of August 10, 123) and *CIL* XVI 99 (of August 1, 150) respectively. Their unusual structure throws light on the main body of the text of the Viminacian fragmentary diploma and, by analogy, justifies the restoration, proposed above, of its lines 2–5 extrinsecus. The latter *constitutio* was issued (*equitibus qui militaverunt*) in *alis* names of five *alae quae sunt [i]n Pann(onia) Su[p]e[ri]ore* sub Claudio Maximo, item names of three *alae quae sunt in Pa[nn(onia)] Inferior(e) sub Cominio Secundo*, . . . *dim(issis) honest(a) miss(ione) per Porcium Vetustinum proc(uratorem)*, cum essent in expedition(e) Mauretan(iae) Caesarens(is) The former is somewhat different, as it omits¹⁵ the names of one governor (the Lower Pannonian, to be exact) from the pair of governors which the unit list should have cited:¹⁶ (*equitibus et peditibus qui militaverunt*) in *alis duab(us) et coh(orte) [una qua]e appell(antur)* names of three units *et sunt in [Dacia Po]rolis(s)ensi sub Livio*

¹¹ In the diplomata issued as late as the beginning of the third century, the use of the formula citing *consules ordinarii* need not imply the *dies constitutionis* in an early part of the year (cf. W. Eck, “*Consules Ordinarii* und *Consules Suffecti* als eponyme Amtsträger”, *Epigraphia*. Collection de l'École française de Rome 143 [1991] 15–44; *RMD* 187 note 4; 189 note 8). As argued in the sequel, in the case of the diploma dealt with here, the *dies constitutionis* is likely to have been in the latter half of 202. It is best put within the habitual season of sailing or immediately after its close (approximately, October) – to allow for a certain interval between the arrival of the eligible soldiers to Rome and the promulgation of the *lex* itself.

¹² As Professor W. Eck kindly notes in a letter, the construction of lines 2–3 may also be explained as a result of the influence of the document's preamble, where the names of the same Emperors must have figured in the nominative.

¹³ The parallels of onomastic conventions are not helpful here, either: in the diplomata citing Roman citizens as recipients, the filiation by cognomen approximately occurs as often as the other sorts of filiation (by gentile or praenomen) together.

¹⁴ So far published: *CIL* XVI 28 (see also *RMD* p. 127 note 3); *RMD* 9 (+ p. 127 note 12), 10 (+ pp. 127 note 13 and 242 note 11), 21 + 22 (+ pp. 129 note 34 and 244 note 20); *CIL* XVI 99 (see also *RMD* p. 25 note 99); for a related case cf. *CIL* XVI 61. On the “two-province” diplomata in general see (W. Eck and H. Wolff eds.) *Heer und Integrationspolitik. Die römischen Militärdiplome als historische Quelle* (Köln – Wien 1986) 378 ff. (B. Lörincz) and 205–7, 208 f. (S. Dušanić).

¹⁵ For unknown reasons; see B. Lörincz's discussion referred to in the foregoing note.

¹⁶ To judge at least from the parallels of *CIL* XVI 28 and 99 and *RMD* 10 adduced above, note 14.

Ora.o(?), [item ala] I Britann(ica) c. R. quae est in Pannon(ia) Inferiore, . . . dimissis honesta missione per Marcium Turbonem . . .¹⁷ Both *constitutiones*, it is worth emphasizing, unite the *auxilia* of neighbouring or virtually neighbouring armies.

A certain progress with the restoration – beyond the elementary one to be found at the beginning of the present paper – of the corresponding part of the Viminacium fragment seems possible, despite its smallness. Its find-spot (Viminacium) suggests that one at least of the two provinces involved was in the Danubian/Balkan area. Thrace and Macedonia may be put aside as unimportant, militarily speaking, to say nothing of the purely epigraphical difficulties which the names of their legates at that time would have created if restored in lines 2–4 extr.¹⁸ Considerations of military history (and prosopography?) tend to eliminate Dalmatia,¹⁹ too, though perhaps not unreservedly.²⁰ Moesia Inferior should be also excluded, as neither the *Egn[atius (?)]* nor the [*]nus* can be reconciled with the names of the early Severan governors of that province (Ovinus Tertullus in 198/201, Aurelius Gallus in 202/205).²¹ The *fasti* of the Tres Daciae would provide a candidate for the [*]nus* but, as yet, none for the *Egn[atius (?)]*.²² Pannonia Superior had Fabius Cilo (again, neither the consular's gentile nor his cognomen can be restored in lines 2 and 4 extr.) till the imperial visit to the province in the spring of 202, and Ti. Claudius Claudianus was his successor;²³ consequently, Claudianus may have been cited in lines 3/4, if the Viminacium fragment is put in the latter half of 202 and the righthand part of its line 4 extr. is assumed to have contained very crowded lettering or, anomalously, some abbreviations (see *infra*).

The problems with Pannonia Inferior and Moesia Superior, *a priori* our likeliest options,²⁴ are similar. Baebius Caecilianus is attested in Pannonia Inferior in 202 (and the preceding period) but may have left Aquincum before the end of the year.²⁵ Q. Anicius Faustus held Upper Moesia approximately at the time of Septimius Severus' visit there²⁶ but, in view of our present knowledge (rather, ignorance) of his career, both the beginning and the latter half of the year may have seen in Upper Moesia a legate whose names would accord either with the *Egn[]* or with the [*]no*.

¹⁷ Some details of *constitutio*'s text differ in various editions of *RMD* 21+22 but differences are immaterial for our purpose.

¹⁸ The names of Thracian governors who shared AD 202 (P. M. M. Leunissen, *Konsuln und Konsulare in der Zeit von Commodus bis Severus Alexander [180–235 n. Chr.]*, Amsterdam 1989, 292: C. Caecina Largus, 197/8–201/2; Q. Sicin(n)ius Clarus Po[ntianus?], 202–) cannot be reconciled with the remains of lines 2 and 3/4 extrinsecus. For Macedonia see Leunissen 302. It would be possible to place the Macedonian governorship of M. Antius Crescens Calpurnianus in 202 but with his two cognomina his names are too long for the lacuna of line 3 extrinsecus. On the other hand, an [*in Macedonia sub Antio Calpurnia*]⁴*no* would be too short.

¹⁹ We ignore the names of the senator who governed Dalmatia in (the corresponding part of) 202: B. E. Thomasson, *Laterculi praesidium* I (1984) 94. There is a possibility, however slight, that Fulvius Maximus held that post then (G. Alföldy [apud J. J. Wilkes, *Dalmatia*, London 1969, 448 no. 31] put Fulvius Maximus' command of Dalmatia c. 203–206, but see Thomasson 96 no. 60). If so, neither is his gentile compatible with the remains of the *sub* formula in line 2 nor his cognomen with those at the end of the *sub* formula in line 4.

²⁰ Professor W. Eck has warned me against a prompt exclusion of Dalmatia.

²¹ Leunissen (*supra*, note 18) 251.

²² Leunissen (p. 237 f. Cf. I. Piso, *Fasti Provinciae Daciae*, I: *Die senatorischen Amtsträger*, Bonn 1993, 159–161 and 161 f.) registers L. Octavius Iulianus in 200/201 there, with L. Pomponius Liberalis (attested in Dacia in 204) to replace Iulianus directly.

²³ J. Fitz, *Die Verwaltung Pannoniens in der Römerzeit* II, Budapest 1993, 506–509 (Cilo) and 509–513 (Claudianus). Cf. Leunissen (n. 18) 258.

²⁴ Note that two Lower Pannonian diplomata, similar in certain remarkable aspects to the fragment dealt with here, have also been found at Viminacium and the vicinity of Viminacium respectively (*RMD* 22 and 187).

²⁵ Fitz (n. 23) 541 f. no. 323. Cf. Leunissen (n. 18) 279; *Heer und Integrationspolitik* (n. 14) 558 (W. Eck and H. Wolff).

²⁶ Leunissen (n. 18) 254 f.

Now, *Egn[]* can plausibly be restored to introduce Egnatius Victor, who was the governor of Pannonia Superior in 207:²⁷ his name would fit in the lacuna of line 2 extr.; if at Aquincum c. 202/205, his transition from the Provincia Inferior to the Provincia Superior may be well paralleled.²⁸ The question is, whether he obtained the consulate before 202 or at a time much nearer to his Upper Pannonian governorship. In the former case, the province whose troops were cited in the first part of the list of the new diploma from Viminacium should be probably identified with Moesia Superior or even the Tres Daciae (Egnatius Victor successor, for a short tenure, to Octavius Iulianus?). In the latter, the province would be Pannonia Inferior. That possibility appears more attractive, for a variety of reasons. Actually, an inscription from Aquincum,²⁹ in J. Szilágyi's convincing reading and restoration,³⁰ tends to postulate Egnatius Victor's command of Pannonia Inferior after Baebius Caecilianus'.³¹ All in all, the present author is inclined to date the new Viminacian diploma in the second half of 202 and restore, tentatively, its opening lines thus: [- - - et³² II Astur(um) et] I¹ Call[aeor(um)(?)³³ quae sunt in Pannonia Inferiore(?)] I² sub Egn[atius(?) Victore(?), legato - - -]. As we shall see, nothing conclusive can be added to the restoration of lines 2(end)–6 as given above, with the exception of line 6 *Varium [Marcellum (?) - - -]*.

For the province of the other legate (lines 3–4 extr.), obviously a neighbour of what we think was the Pannonia Inferior of Egnatius Victor, the expected possibilities are Moesia Superior, Pannonia Superior, the Tres Daciae, perhaps even Dalmatia. All of them had a higher rank than Pannonia Inferior but in the present case each of them would be cited after it as [*Jnus*' unit list contained no more than one *auxilium*;³⁴ our estimate of the dimensions of the original diploma (more precisely, of the total number of lines lost extrinsecus before line 1) suggests, for *Egn[atius (?)]'* section of the list, a small number (three or four?) of *auxilia* but greater than one unit only.³⁵ To opt for Pannonia Superior would mean, however, restorations too long for the space available (*[in Pannonia Superiore, sub Claudio Claudia]/no*), unless the righthand part of line 3 displayed certain exceptional features of an epigraphical order.³⁶

Of the remaining three provinces, a Dacia seems to have the best claim, despite the Viminacian provenance of the fragment.³⁷ The union, within the *constitutio* of 202, of some Lower Pannonian and Dacian regiments would recall the composite unit list of *RMD* 21+22 and, generally, a number of other testimonies on the close collaboration of the regiments from neighbouring armies participating in distant

²⁷ Fitz (n. 23) 514 no. 301 (*RIV* 249 [June 9, 207] and 686).

²⁸ *Ibid.* 463–471 (especially 465 and 468).

²⁹ *Ann. ép.* 1967, 360.

³⁰ *Arch. Ért.* 94 (1967) 76 no. 7.

³¹ For a sceptical attitude, Fitz (n. 23) 543 no. 325; *Ann. ép.*, loc. cit.

³² Cf. *infra*, text and notes 35, 33 and 70 ff.

³³ In those diploma lists of Lower Pannonian cohorts which are of normal length (13 or slightly less units) and arranged “non-numerically” (cf. *Heer und Integrationspolitik* [n. 14] 507 ff. [Zs. Visy]), II Asturum and Callaecorum never appears at the end. But *Egn[atius (?)]'* section of the unit list will not have been much longer than that of [*Jnus* (below, note 35), and may have cited, after some *alae*, one or two cohorts only (cf. *RMD* 21+22, the Lower Pannonian section). In such a case, naturally, the redactor of the *constitutio* may have been in a situation to catalogue as the last-named (or only) cohort a unit which otherwise occurs in the upper part of normal lists. Cf. *RMD* 181 (III Lusitanorum).

³⁴ Cf. the analogous “inverse” order of provinces in the unit lists of *RMD* 10, 21+21 et sim.

³⁵ It is difficult to be specific about the number of lines originally occupied by *Egn[atius (?)]'* section of the unit list. However, the combination of two features of the original tablet's *scriptura exterior* reveals that the number could not have been high: the prescript (recording Severus' and Caracalla's names, titles and *parentes*) must have been rather long (10–11 lines ?); the main body of the *constitutio* (*equitibus et peditibus . . . stipendis emeritis*), containing two(!) *in* and *sub* formulae, ended one line above the binding holes (which, approximately, marked the centre of the tablet). Consequently, the document probably cited no more than three or four regiments of *Egn[atius (?)]'* command.

³⁶ I.e. very dense lettering or unexpected abbreviations.

³⁷ *RMD* 22, partly Dacian too, was found not far from Viminacium.

expeditions.³⁸ Octavius Iulianus is already on record in his capacity as governor of the Tres Daciae in 200/201.³⁹ The parallel of *RMD* 123⁴⁰ shows that he may have been cited in lines 3/4 extr. of our fragment along with an [*in Dacia Superiore* (or another adjective qualifying the *Dacia*)]⁴¹ formula in line 3. This would produce a complete restoration of lines 3/4 which squares well enough with the length of the lacuna as estimated above; it would be shorter by a single letter-place, actually, than the total of 32 letters calculated in the foregoing comments.

Lastly, if the other alternatives prove unacceptable, between an [*in Dalmatia*] and an [*in Moesia Superiore*] one should prefer the latter restoration. It would imply, however, two prosopographical assumptions: that Q. Anicius Faustus left Viminacium together with Septimius Severus (or shortly after the end of the Emperor's visit), and that Faustus' successor (beginning his tenure of the province in the latter part of 202) had a cognomen in *-nus*.⁴²

The analogy of *RMD* 21+22 may help us elucidate another important point. The *constitutio* of AD 123 has the *dimissi honesta missione per Marcium Turbonem* clause, which seems essentially equivalent to lines 5/6 of the AD 202 fragment. On the one hand, within the context of the early Severan notabilities, it is natural to identify the *Varius* of line 6 extr. with Sex. Varius Marcellus.⁴³ His complex post in 202 was that of the *proc(urator) rationis privat(ae)* and the (*trecenarius*) *vice praef(ectorum) pr(aetorio) et urbi*⁴⁴ (to settle the well-known chronological controversy⁴⁵ in favour of those scholars who propose an early dating of his last equestrian function⁴⁶). On the other hand, Marcium Turbo had been of course the *praefectus praetorio* after 118/119.⁴⁷ Professor H. Wolff⁴⁸ must be right in assuming – the debate is more than twenty years old now⁴⁹ – that Turbo discharged the beneficiaries of the *lex* preserved through *RMD* 21+22 in his capacity as *praefectus praetorio*.⁵⁰ Only, Professor Wolff thought

³⁸ *ILS* 2723 = R. Saxer, *Untersuchungen zu den Vexillationen des römischen Kaiserheeres von Augustus bis Diokletian* (Köln – Graz 1967) 26 no. 44, with comm.; *CIL* XVI 108 = Saxer 32 no. 61; *Ann. ép.* 1956, 124 (lines 7–8) = Saxer 37–39 no. 68; *Ann. ép.* 1957, 123 = Saxer 47 f. no. 84, et alia.

³⁹ Above, note 22.

⁴⁰ Cf. M. M. Roxan's note 9 *ad num.*

⁴¹ [*Dacia Inferiore*] as the least implausible alternative?

⁴² Cf. *supra*, text and note 26.

⁴³ The "Personenregister" in Leunissen (n. 18) 468 (*s. n.* Varius) well illustrates the limitations of our choice.

⁴⁴ *CIL* X 6569 = *ILS* 478 = *IG* XIV 911 = *IGRR* I 402 (Velitrae), lines 2 and 9/10. M. Corbier, *L'aerarium Saturni et l'aerarium militare. Administration et prosopographie sénatoriale* (Rome 1974) 440 f.: (Varius) "intérim des préfets de la ville et du prétoire est-il contemporain de la gestion de la *ratio privata* ou les deux responsabilités se sont-elles succédées? Nous penchons pour la première possibilité . . . Nous ne pouvons cependant pas écarter absolument l'autre éventualité pour l'instant". Cf. A. Birley, *Septimius Severus: The African Emperor*, London 1972¹, 304–306.

⁴⁵ Leunissen (n. 18) 275 (with refs., note 322), 309, 323, 305.

⁴⁶ A. Birley, *The Fasti of Roman Britain*, Oxford 1981, 297 f. and *Septimius Severus* (n. 46) 304 ff. (AD 202–204); Corbier (n. 44) 437–448 (AD 203–205). Taken together, the evidence upon which these two datings have been based and the occurrence of the *nomen* Varius in line 6 extr. of the Viminacian fragment tend to overcome the (otherwise not negligible) indications which led H. Halfmann to put Varius Marcellus' appointment as a *vice praef. pr. et urbi* in AD 211 (*Chiron* 12 [1982] 226–234, followed by i.a. A. Birley, *Septimius Severus . . .*, London 1988², 224). But the reader of the present article must be aware that its interpretation of line 6 extr. of the fragment reposes on a partly circular argument.

⁴⁷ See e.g. W. Eck, *Chiron* 13 (1983) 148 f. with note 328; *PIR*² M 249.

⁴⁸ *Acta mus. Nap.* 12 (1975) 152 ff. Cf. *id.*, *ZPE* 43 (1981) 411 ff. and M. Speidel, cited in *ILB* p. 202 (138).

⁴⁹ Most scholars tend to date the *honesta missio* carried out by Turbo and referred to in *RMD* 21 to the period of Turbo's extraordinary command in Dacia and Pannonia (Inferior) c. 117–118; see e.g. G. Alföldy, *ZPE* 36 (1979) 233 ff., and (with refs. to the earlier scholarship) B. Lörincz, in: *Heer und Integrationspolitik* (n. 14) 379 f. K. Strobel's lengthy discussion (in: H. Kalcyk, B. Gullath and A. Graeber eds., *Studien zur Alten Geschichte: Siegfried Lauffer zum 70. Geburtstag am 4. August 1981 dargebracht von Freunden, Kollegen und Schülern*, III, Rome 1986, 905 ff.) of *RMD* 21+22 and related problems displays more polemical zeal than understanding of the matter.

⁵⁰ Cf. H. Wolff, *ZPE* 43 (1981) 412 note 37: "Die Entlassung der emeriti durch einen Praetorianerpraefecten dürfte in kaiserlichen Auftrag auch dann möglich sein, wenn [*ILB* 138] eine Fälschung sein sollte, wie es scheint; denn wenn der

that the *honesta missio* due to Turbo had taken place in a province while the document of 202 makes it probable that both *missiones* – that of Turbo (AD 123?)⁵¹ and that of Marcellus (AD 202?) – were carried out in Italy, most likely in Rome itself, by the dignitaries responsible for the *res militaris* on Italian soil.⁵² It would be especially difficult to imagine a *vice praef(ectorum) pr(aetorio) et urbi* acting outside the Capital and Italy.

This suggests conjectures concerning the troops' moves. The discharge, in the Capital, of Danubian soldiers presupposes their participation in a distant expedition. If the two *leges* (of AD 123 and 202 respectively) analyzed here – and the implications of *ILB* 138 will have been similar – were rightly assumed to have been issued for auxiliaries having fought a war in the neighbourhood of their permanent garrisons, i.e. on the Danube, the *honesta missio* would have been impractical to perform as far as Rome, and the charge of that ceremony, instead, would have been given to the governor of one of the “Illyrican” provinces. The “two-province” *lex* underlying *CIL* XVI 99 well illustrates the merits of this last claim, though its case is somewhat different (its expeditionary corps did not come from a province in Mauretania's neighbourhood) from the case of of *RMD* 21+22 as commonly interpreted; there is no doubt that *CIL* XVI 99 refers to a *missio* carried out by a local dignitary and in the vicinity of the scene of the West African war. Probably, for some reason, the recipients of the diplomata of AD 150 were not planned to reach their Danubian forts by passing through Rome.⁵³

To revert to *RMD* 21+22 and the Viminacian fragment, their *dimissi*, we are inclined to believe (it is little more than a guess), belonged to units returning to the Danube from Mauretania (c. AD 122–123?)⁵⁴ and the south-east (?Alexandria, c. AD 201–202?)⁵⁵ respectively. The route of the former led normally through Rome.⁵⁶ The case of the latter, geographically speaking, was not quite the same⁵⁷ but

Praetorianerpraefect Soldaten einstellen konnte (vgl. *CIL* VI 39449 . . .), so konnte er sie doch wohl im Namen des Kaisers entlassen”.

⁵¹ As stressed by Wolff (*supra*, note 48), it would be an uneconomic reconstruction of the prehistory of the *constitutio* producing *RMD* 21+22 to assume a long interval between the *missio* and August 10, 123.

⁵² Cf also *RMD* App., p. 103 = *Ann. ép.* 1980, 647 = *ILB* 138. To briefly define my position in the analyses of this unique document, I should note that I believe that it is genuine, that its beneficiary was the soldier of an *ala* or a *cohors Tungrorum* (a tentative attribution based on the indications of the find-spot of the bronze and its witness catalogue), and that the *honesta missio* carried out by the praetorian prefect Claudius Livianus (on January 19, 108) took place in Rome and was granted, together with some material recompenses, to Lower German participants in the Second Dacian War returning home; M. M. Roxan (*RMD*, loc. cit., note 2) appropriately adduces *CIL* XVI 160 (“a special grant made in 106 but apparently not issued until 110”) as a parallel for the lengthy interval – comprehensible in the quite extraordinary conditions of the aftermath of Trajan's wars against Decebalus – between the end of the fighting and the *honesta missio*.

⁵³ It is legitimate to suppose that they took a purely continental route, through Egypt and Syria, perhaps as a sort of *evocati*, in order to help check the revolts along the Nile and, if necessary, prevent a Parthian invasion across the Euphrates. On these revolts and the Parthian threat of the 150's see A. Garzetti, *From Tiberius to the Antonines* (London 1974) 463 f. and 475 (with note 1).

⁵⁴ On the rather serious *motus Maurorum* in 122–123 see Garzetti (n. 53) 390; H. Halfmann, *Itinera principum*, Stuttgart 1986, 190 and 196 f. For several reasons – chronological, geographical, military (the troops of the middle and lower Danube were traditionally employed against the Moorish attacks) – it was the likeliest event to result in the discharge of the Lower Pannonian and Dacian *auxilia* in Rome on August 10, 123. But, alternatively, the *vexillationes* of the beneficiaries of *RMD* 21+22 may have served elsewhere under Hadrian, e.g. in Britain or Syria (cf. Halfmann 196 f.; *infra*, note 75).

⁵⁵ Severus' *expeditio secunda Parthica* was over by January 28, 198; in 199, he attacked Hatra for the second time; his stay in Egypt lasted from late 199 to late 200; after that, he spent more than a year in Syria, to begin his journey, *via* the Balkans, to Rome early in 202 (Halfmann [n. 54] 217 f. 220 f.). For those who would find chronological obstacles to our hypothesis that the *constitutio* of the Viminacian fragment reflected Severus' *expeditio secunda Parthica* (the *expeditio* finished by January, 198, the law promulgated as late as the second(?) half of 202), it might be instructive to read E. Ritterling's words (*RE* XII [1924] 1315) “. . . der zweite Partherkrieg, der den Kaiser und sein Heer bis zu Anfang des J. 202 in den östlichen Provinzen festhielt . . .” *Auxilia* accompanying the Emperor to Alexandria: *CIL* III 6581. *Classis Alexandrina* and the moves of the court and the troops in 201–202: *IG* XIV 917 = *IGR* I 380. The Lower Pannonian cohorts in the East during the late 190's/early 200's: *RMD* 187 and *ILS* 1370 (below).

⁵⁶ Cf. M. Speidel, *Roman Army Studies* I, Amsterdam 1984, 169 and note 10 (on Tac. *Ann.* III 9, 1 [of leg. IX Hispana, *e Pannonia in Urbem, dein praesidio Africae ducebatur*] and *CIL* VI 33032): “The Romans are known to have avoided long

administrative reasons – some perhaps connected with the (ex-)soldiers' *praemia militiae* and the like⁵⁸ – may have contributed on both occasions to the decision that the formalities should be completed in the Capital, not in a province, as was usually done (including AD 149–150).

Our hypothesis that the diploma grants of 202 had something to do with Severus' *expeditio secunda Parthica* (principally, with the rôle of the Lower Pannonian *vexillationes* in it),⁵⁹ as well as the expedition's aftermath implicating the soldiers' stay in Italy, may find some support in two further pieces of evidence which it is tempting to combine and add to the *dossier* of the Viminacian bronze. The first is the diploma of AD 203 (August 31)⁶⁰ for the Lower Pannonian *auxilia*, also found at Viminacium (*RMD* 187). Its recipient, an *ex pedite* of coh. VII Breucorum, was probably of Anatolian origin, to judge from his name ending in *-nna* in the dative.⁶¹ As such, he may be presumed to have been transferred to VII Breucorum from an Oriental unit, while the former fought the Parthians.⁶² The relationship between the *constitutio* of 202, with its complex formulae, and the *constitutio* of 203, which seems to have been issued for the Lower Pannonian army only, would be that of *leges* of many diploma sets sharing the same “qualifying events” and dating from consecutive years; generally speaking, the earlier documents of such sets tend to display more unusual elements in their texts than the later documents, whose beneficiaries need not have all participated in the “qualifying events” in question.⁶³

In this connection, it is worth noting a statistical fact which concerns post-Commodan auxiliary diplomata. For some reason, they are very rare⁶⁴ though their issue continued probably till at least the thirties of the third century.⁶⁵ A plausible explanation for this rarity would be that the Severan Emperors

sea voyages for troop transfers. Thus troops from the Danubian provinces destined for Africa were not transshipped from Aquileia or Ravenna but took the land route down through Italy to be ferried across the sea at the shortest point.”

⁵⁷ They could take the land route, *via* Asia Minor, or sail to Aquileia (cf. my note in *ZPE* 47 [1982] 156 f., on Tac. *Hist* I 31).

⁵⁸ Cf. Tac. *Ann.* I 37. As a *proc(urator) rationis privat(ae)* and, later on, *praef(ectus) aerarii militaris* (cf. Corbier [n. 44] 606), Varius Marcellus must have been able to help in such matters.

⁵⁹ Cf. *Ann. ép.* 1957, 123, and the epigraphical finds mentioned by M. P. Speidel, *ZPE* 27 (1977) 271 with note 2. See Ritterling (n. 55) 1315; Saxer (n. 38) 47 f.

⁶⁰ Its day-date coincided with Commodus' *natalis*, a neglected fact. A simple coincidence is hard to imagine (i.a. *divus Commodus* was cited in the prescript of the diploma, as Septimius Severus' *frater*); the detail rather had a propaganda rôle (*HA*, Comm. 17, 12; for *CIL* VI 716, of AD 205 and also commemorating a special case of *honesta missio*, see P. Herz, *Untersuchungen zu dem Festkalender der römischen Kaiserzeit nach datierten Weih- und Ehreninschriften*, Diss. Mainz 1975, 264 f. and 527). Cf. e.g. *RMD* 131, of Nov. 27 (Commodus' *dies imperii*), AD 214 (*Heer und Integrationspolitik* [n. 14] 240 with note 241 [Dušanić]).

⁶¹ For the Anatolian male names in *-nna*s (lacking proper analogies in Illyricum) see e.g. L. Zgusta, *Kleinasiatische Personennamen*, Prag 1964, 662 f. (“Rückläufiger Index”). According to the usual Greek declension, their datives ended in *-nna* (the same held of course for other names in *-as* declined in the Greek fashion, cf. e.g. *Zerula* in *CIL* XVI 146), which explains the unexpected form of the fragmentary anthroponym of *RMD* 187. It seems that the recipient's ethnic began in *ORVNTI* (only the upper parts of the letters are visible, and the editors read the second character as *P*; cf. e.g. H. Wolff, *Ostbairische Grenzmarken. Passauer Jahrbuch* 29 [1987] 34 f.). This may be interpreted (and restored) as a reference to the tribe of (to cite the Latin equivalents of the Hellenophone ethnonym) *Oroandenses* (*Orontici* et sim.) in Pisidia (W. Ruge, *RE* XVIII [1939] 1130-2; L. Zgusta, *Kleinasiatische Ortsnamen*, Heidelberg 1984, 445-7). An *Orunti[co]* instead of *Oroandico* or *Orontico* would recall such doublets as *Perminunda/Perminoda* (a toponym in Pisidia, too; Zgusta, *Ortsnamen*, 484 f. no. 1044).

⁶² For such transfers see e.g. P. A. Holder, *The Auxilia from Augustus to Trajan* (Oxford 1980) 121 and 126 note 25; S. Dušanić, in: A. D. Rizakis ed., *Roman Onomastics in the Greek East: Social and Political Aspects*. Int. Colloquium, Athens 1993, Athens 1996, 39 (on *CIL* XVI 67).

⁶³ Cf. e.g. *Epigraphica* 55 [1993] 36 ff.

⁶⁴ In addition to ours, *RMD* 187 (Pann. Inf.; AD 203) belongs to their number, perhaps also some of the following four: *CIL* XVI 131 (Pann. Inf.; AD 178/203) and 132 (Pann. Inf.; AD 178/203); *RMD* 186 (Maur. Ting.; AD 162/170 or 180/203) and 190 (? Pann. Inf.; AD 202 or 202–209 [see *infra*, note 67]).

⁶⁵ *Heer und Integrationspolitik* (n. 14) 566, 575 (W. Eck and H. Wolff).

changed the criteria for their distribution *in difficilius*,⁶⁶ somewhat similar to the criteria regulating the pre-Flavian and early Flavian practice, whose diplomata seem to reveal clearer links with the recipients' participation in wars and related events than the less exclusive diplomata of the later Flavians and the Antonines. An aspect of the Severan change, it seems, bore on the geographical distribution of diplomata, which had already shown a tendency to favour the Danubian armies: during the early 200's, Pannonia Inferior will have received more diplomata than the numbers of its auxiliaries would have required according to an unqualified statistical assessment. Now, of the two, possibly three, Severan diplomata published so far, whose exact date and nature (privileges for the auxiliary soldiers) can be determined with certainty or a high degree of probability, two, possibly all three, seem to belong to the AD 202–203 period and the *exercitus Pannoniae Inferioris*.⁶⁷ This striking state of affairs may have had something to do with the importance Septimius Severus and his Lower Pannonian legate(s) accorded to the *expeditio secunda Parthica* and its effects.⁶⁸ To venture a comparison with the early years of Vespasian's reign, an analogous concentration can be observed in the case of their numerous diplomata for the Italian Fleets, reflecting what the Emperor's coins advertised as the *Victoria Navalis* of AD 69.⁶⁹

The second piece of evidence just announced is Ulpius Victor's *cursus*, ILS 1370.⁷⁰ It begins with two posts antedating AD 205 and hard to dissociate: the *praef(ectura)* of VII Breucor(um) and the command over the *vexill(ationes)*⁷¹ *auxiliar(iorum) Pann(oniae) Infer(ioris)*. There are reasons to think that Victor's *vexillationes* were sent against Parthia⁷² and included the men of VII Breucorum, who will have accompanied their former prefect; perhaps, they formed the core of his expeditionary corps⁷³ and in that capacity became a group (including the [*Jnnas* of RMD 187), possibly the most numerous group of all those rallying the members of the same units, within the collectivity of the beneficiaries of the *constitutio* passed in 203 (and of that passed in 202 [the Viminacian fragment], too?). Victor's third post in time was the tribunate of leg. II Parthica at Albanum. His promotion to it was a remarkable step, presupposing the officer's special merits.⁷⁴ We are entitled to assume that he was chosen both for his war record and the fact that he was in Italy, Rome itself, in 202 at the head of his returning vexillations. Varius Marcellus – who had possibly met Ulpius Victor in the East – may have been instrumental in the promotion. In any case, the tribunate of II Parthica, too, was obtained before AD 205.

If the epigraphical and historical comments on the Viminacian fragment set forth in the foregoing pages prove correct, a number of observations of a wider interest would follow. Let us stress, in conclusion,

⁶⁶ The Severan treatment of *dona militaria* might be adduced as a parallel: V. A. Maxfield, *The Military Decorations of the Roman Army*, London 1981, 199 f. 248 et passim.

⁶⁷ The Viminacian fragment (Pann. Inf. ? [+ an unidentifiable province]; AD 202); RMD 187 (Pann. Inf.; AD 203); RMD 190 (AD 202 ?). As follows from M. M. Roxan's excellent commentary of RMD 190, this last – of extremely difficult reading – is best interpreted as an auxiliary diploma, and the two Thracian regiments cited in its very fragmentary unit list (according to H. Nesselhauf's and H. Lieb's transcripts) make it likely – though far from conclusive – that the grant was to the *auxilia Pannoniae Inferioris*. For several reasons, notably considerations of space, it is hard to believe that RMD 190 formed part of the same *constitutio* which produced the Viminacian fragment.

⁶⁸ Septimius Severus' policy in awarding *dona militaria* tells a similar story, to judge at least from the meagre evidence at our disposal; for the prominent rôle of his second Parthian war in that policy see Maxfield (n. 66) 199 f. 248. On the other hand, we should not forget Severus' well documented sympathies for the Pannonian soldiers and officers, who had acclaimed him Emperor in 193.

⁶⁹ *Epigraphica* 46 (1984) 102 ff.

⁷⁰ Cf. Pflaum, *Carrières* II 691–4 no. 257 (1); Saxer (n. 38) 48 no. 85; *PME* U 20 (+ add., Suppl. I p. 1749).

⁷¹ Or: *vexill(atio)*.

⁷² The previous commentators of the inscription were more cautious: “une expédition militaire inconnue” (Pflaum); “Ziel und Aufgabe dieser Truppen bleibt im dunkeln” (Saxer); “inter a. 200–205” (Devijver).

⁷³ On such structures of legionary and auxiliary *vexillationes*: Saxer (n. 38) 118 f.; coh. VII Breucorum in vexillations sent periodically to the wars in the East: *Germania* 56 (1978) 467–475; *PME* S 25 (?) and O 18.

⁷⁴ Cf. Pflaum (n. 70) 691.

one point only. Together with the related documents analyzed here, the fragment shows that some military *constitutiones* grouped as diploma recipients those soldiers who had served together in distant and dangerous war expeditions.⁷⁵ A variety of indications suggest that such recipients were specially rewarded, though neither the expedition nor the reward are explicitly mentioned in the text of the *constitutio*; in the case of the beneficiaries of the *lex* underlying the Viminacian bronze it is natural to assume that their passage through Rome in 202 resulted from, precisely, the Central Command's wish to give them *praemia militiae* and some other recompenses.⁷⁶ Seen in that light, the Viminacian fragment, *RMD* 21+22, and the other "two-province" diplomata, belong to the large group of *aura* which tend to connect what has been commonly and not very fortunately labelled "normal" and "special" diplomata. Recently published,⁷⁷ an early Vespasianic diploma for the *beneficarii* (they alone!) serving in the Ravennate Fleet is a clear, if different representative of that intermediate group. The very existence of diplomata whose formulae and other features seem to connect the so-called normal and special classes does not support, in the present author's opinion, the popular notion that the former class should be qualified as automatic grants.

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⁷⁵ The crucial fact that a distant expedition caused the issue of the *constitutio* of *RMD* 21+22 was insisted upon as early as *Germania* 52 (1974) 425 (cf. *Roman Frontier Studies* 1979, BAR Int. Series 71, III [1980] 1061 and 1965 note 2) but has been generally discarded by later scholarship (true, the argument from the *honesta missio* carried out by Marcius Turbo [~ Varius Marcellus in 202] at Rome was unavailable up to now). In 1974, the expedition seemed identifiable with Trajan's Parthian War, in which at least some of the *constitutio's* *auxilia* had taken part. For chronological reasons, the alternative of Hadrian's Mauretanian campaign seems preferable now (cf. note 53 above); however, the contrast between the two "expeditionary" interpretations of *RMD* 21+22 need not be very sharp in certain respects, as the cavalry *vexillationes* which had served with distinction in the Parthian War were liable to preserve something of their operative identity and soon be reemployed on a different front – there is more than one parallel for such a practice.

⁷⁶ Above, text and note 58.

⁷⁷ M. M. Roxan, *JRA* 1996, 247–256.