Mobility in Research on the Black Sea Region



Editors:
Victor Cojocaru & Alexander Rubel

In collaboration with:
Diana Stah & Thibaut Castelli

Mega Publishing House

Mobility in Research on the Black Sea Region

PONTICA ET MEDITERRANEA

Vol. VI

Editorial Board:
Victor Cojocaru (editor-in-chief)
David Braund, Thibaut Castelli, Altay Coşkun,
Mădălina Dana, Lavinia Grumeza,
Joachim Hupe, Alexander Rubel, and Diana Stah

Mobility in Research on the Black Sea Region

Editors:
Victor Cojocaru & Alexander Rubel

in collaboration with:
Diana Stah & Thibaut Castelli

The Proceedings of the International Symposium organized by the Iaşi Branch of the Romanian Academy, in collaboration with German Cultural Centre of Iaşi (July 5–10, 2015), supported by the Romanian National Authority for Scientific Research, CNCS – UEFISCDI, project numbers PN-II-ID-PCE-2011-3-0054 and PN-II-ID-PCE-2012-4-0490

Mega Publishing House
Cluj-Napoca
2016

DTP and cover:
Francisc BAJA

Cover image:
Main Itineraries of the (Western) Black Sea in Ancient Times
(Drawing by Lavinia Grumeza)

Descrierea CIP a Bibliotecii Naţionale a României
COJOCARU, VICTOR
Mobility in Research on the Black Sea Region / Victor Cojocaru, Alexander Rubel; in collaboration with Diana Stah, Thibaut Castelli. - Cluj-Napoca: Mega, 2016
Conţine bibliografie
ISBN 978-606-543-722-7

I. Rubel, Alexander
II. Stah, Diana (colab.)
II. Castelli, Thibaut (colab.)

902

© Editors, 2016

Editura Mega | www.edituramega.ro
e-mail: mega@edituramega.ro

Contents – Inhalt – Table des matières

Preface……9

Note on Abbreviations……12

Contributors……13

I. STATE OF THE ART AND PROSPECTIVE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Victor Cojocaru
Das Forschungsprojekt „External Relations of the Pontic Greek Cities in Hellenistic and Roman Times" (PN-II-ID-PCE-2011-3-0054). Ergebnisse und Perspektiven……21

Alexander Rubel
Das Forschungsprojekt „The ‚Other' in Action. The Barbarization of Rome and the Romanization of the World" (PN-II-ID-PCE-2012-4-0490). Versuch einer Bilanz……41

Altay Coşkun
Heinz Heinen und die bosporanischen Könige: Eine Projektbeschreibung……51

Johannes Nollé, Marta Oller Guzmán
Foreigners and the Foreign in some Black Sea Area Epigrams: Towards a Corpus of the Epigrams of the Black Sea Region……73

Sever-Petru Boțan, Costel Chiriac
State of the Art and Prospective Research Directions on Hellenistic and Roman Glass from the Pontus Euxinus……101

II. LITERARY SOURCES AND EPIGRAPHY

David Braund
Wagons, Wallies and Wisdom: Scythians, Bosporans and Greeks in Herodotus, Diodorus and Isocrates……119

Johanna Leithoff
Kyzikos bei Herodot……143

Alexander Baumgarten
The Concept of Leisure (σχολή): From Thematic Unity to the Cosmological Foundation of Aristotle's *Politics*……155

Anna Ginestí Rosell
Fremde Klänge, fremde Bilder? Grabinschriften für Personen aus dem Schwarzmeerraum im klassischen Athen……183

Tassilo Schmitt
Φασιανός, „vom Phasis". Komisches und Exotisches von Fasanen und anderen Tieren……205

Thibaut Castelli
Les conditions de la navigation commerciale dans l'ouest de la mer Noire aux époques classique et hellénistique……223

Livia Buzoianu
Les relations économiques de Callatis à l'époque hellénistique basées sur les découvertes de timbres amphoriques……247

Luis Ballesteros Pastor
The Satrapy of Western Armenia in the Mithridatid Kingdom……273

Mustafa H. Sayar
Die Beziehungen der Bevölkerung der griechischen Poleis des Propontis-Gebiets und der westpontischen Küste von der hellenistischen Zeit bis zum Ende der römischen Kaiserzeit……289

Ligia Ruscu
Griechen, Römer und Einheimische in Poleis von Thrakien und Pontus……301

Claire Barat
Les habitants de Sinope, entre identité grecque et domination romaine (I^{er} s. av. J.-C. – II^{e} s. ap. J.-C.)……323

Michael A. Speidel
Maximinus and the Thracians. Herodian on the Coup of 235, and Ethnic Networks in the Roman Army of the Third Century CE……339

Dan Ruscu
Scythians and Places of Exile: The Black Sea in Early Christian Literature……367

III. ARCHAEOLOGY, ICONOGRAPHY, NUMISMATICS

Valentina Mordvintseva
Barbarians of the North Pontic Region and Their Contacts with Centres of Antique Civilization from the 3rd Century BCE to the mid-3rd Century CE (According to the Research of the Elite Burials)……387

Lavinia Grumeza
Sarmatian Personal Ornaments from the South-Eastern Part of the Great Hungarian Plain During the 1st–3rd Centuries CE: Imports and Local Production……439

Alexandru Popa
Untersuchungen zum Fundbestand und zur Verbreitung der kaiserzeitlichen Glasgefäße jenseits der römischen Provinzgrenzen von Dacia und Moesia Inferior……483

Florina Panait Bîrzescu, Iulian Bîrzescu
Umdeutungen von Kultbildern in den griechischen Kolonien des Schwarzmeergebietes……531

Lucian Munteanu, Costel Chiriac
The Hoard with Coins of 'Huşi-Vovrieşti' Type Discovered in Huşi……541

Preface

The events which have occurred in the countries of the Black Sea region since the 1990s (especially in the last years) demonstrate a need to reflect on the past in order to gain a better understanding of the instability and risks that have emerged. Against such a background, conjoining the research traditions of scholars educated in the West with those of scholars educated in the East provides a good chance to absorb, interpret and integrate the constant flow of new information about the Black Sea region into mainstream western classical scholarship. The 'Mobility' conference brought together 35 scholars from Europe, Asia, and North America, willing to discuss aspects of political, social, cultural, and economic history in Greek, Roman and Byzantine times.

This gathering reflects and exemplifies a tradition of fruitful collaboration between the Institute of Archaeology of Iasi with many academic institutions from Romania abroad. Its roots lie in important earlier initiatives, and in many networking meetings, organized mainly in the last decade. In this respect, the international symposium *Ethnic Contacts and Cultural Exchanges North and West of the Black Sea between the Greek Colonization and the Present* (Iasi, June, 2005) may be mentioned. Next, we would like to pick out three recent networking gatherings. Their proceedings were published and warmly welcomed at national and international level. In 2010, at Constanta took place the conference on 'Foreign relations of the cities of Black Sea area and Asia Minor in Hellenistic and Roman times'. It was followed in 2012, this time in Bucharest, by a national symposium on the topic 'Poleis in the Black Sea region and Propontis in Hellenistic and Roman times'. In 2013 an international symposium was organized again in Constanta – 'Interconnectivity in the Mediterranean and Pontic World during the Hellenistic and Roman Periods'.

Such meetings firmed up the timeline of the topic, and helped to establish a permanent discussion within a research group focused on the Black Sea region in the ancient world. In that way we gradually developed the idea of an interdisciplinary research network of Romanian and foreign

scholars (especially historians, epigraphists, classical archaeologists and numismatists), which would engage in some large international projects. Among the participants of the current conference, most have contributed to the events mentioned above; some joined our research network even earlier. 'Mobility' provided plenty of opportunities not only for exchanging updates related to recent literary, epigraphic, numismatic, iconographical and archaeological discoveries, but also to share perspectives, methods, and frameworks from which to look at ancient texts and artefacts, whether to gain a better understanding of the past, or to make ancient objects or histories more meaningful for us today.

Out of the 27 papers presented in Iaşi, 19 have been included in this volume; four (by L. Ballesteros Pastor, D. Braund, V. Mordvintseva, and A. Popa) were subsequently admitted as very fitting contributions to the subject of mobility in the Black Sea region. The subsequent collection of papers has been organized into three main blocks based on research fields and chronological criteria. Their content can be easily accessed through the abstracts available in all three languages of the conference.

Charles King, the author of a brilliant history of the Black Sea (Oxford 2004), points out that "Today, there are few places in the world where political elites and average citizens know less about their neighbours than around the Black Sea. But this is a wilful ignorance, furthered by versions of history that take the nation as timeless, the state as predestined, and the region as ephemeral" (p. 239). As a solution to this impasse, the same author proposes to understand the Black Sea as a discrete unit. Rather than dividing it among nations and states, new generations of scholars are uncovering the ways in which what happened in one part of the sea was intimately linked with the fate of every other part of it.

In what follows, we would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to the many individuals and institutions that have supported the Mobility conference in Iaşi and/or the publication of its proceedings.

The symposium was organized by the Iaşi Branch of the Romanian Academy, in collaboration with the German Cultural Centre of Iaşi. We are particularly grateful to Mihail Voicu, President of the Iaşi Branch of the Romanian Academy, as well as to Valerica Apopei, George Bilavschi, Sever-Petru Boţan, Cristian Carp, Roxana-Gabriela Curcă, Meda Gâlea, Monalisa Iftene, Lucian Munteanu, Margareta Munteanu and Ionel Tudosă. Their continuous and generous support in the run-up to and during the conference was invaluable. Among the other institutions involved, first mention is owed to the Romanian National Agency for Scientific Research (CNCS – UEFISCDI): we are grateful for its financial support of the conference as well as for the subsidizing of the present publication. We

also owe particular thanks to Lavinia Grumeza (Caransebeş) for editing the illustrations of this volume.

As editors of the present volume, we would also like to express our deep gratitude to our colleagues within the editorial board of the book series 'Pontica et Mediterranea': David Braund (Exeter), Altay Coşkun (Ontario), Mădălina Dana (Paris) and Joachim Hupe (Trier), who have generously supported us as reviewers and language editors. Last, but not least, we would like warmly to acknowledge that our collaboration with the Mega Publishing House has been very collegial and efficient, so that we look forward to continuing this cooperation in future.

June 2016 Editors

Maximinus and the Thracians. Herodian on the Coup of 235, and Ethnic Networks in the Roman Army of the Third Century CE

Michael A. Speidel

Mobility was a hallmark of the military profession in imperial Rome. Soldiers, officers and generals, on the whole, travelled significantly more than the average inhabitant of the Roman Empire.[1] Some travelled individually or in small groups within the context of specific assignments or because they were being transferred to another unit. Others marched in large numbers to new garrison places or to battlefields that could be hundreds, even thousands of kilometres away. Even recruits had to undertake a journey before they began military service in the proper sense of the word. For after the formal recruiting procedure (*probatio*) at the governor's headquarters, recruits from the provinces had to march to their new garrison places. Most recruits marched to a fortress somewhere within their province, yet others had to travel to garrison places far beyond the confines of their native province.[2] As the *probatio* was carried out in all provinces continuously throughout the year or at least on numerous occasions,[3] one would no doubt have encountered travelling recruits quite regularly on the trunk roads of the Roman Empire, both in times of peace, and even more so in times of war. Literary texts, inscriptions, military diplomas and papyri provide ample documentation of this important phenomenon, which has so far received only insufficient scholarly attention.

I. Thracian 'clubs' in Roman army units

An important aspect of this phenomenon are the ties that developed and eventually formalized between fellow countrymen serving in the

[1] For summarizing accounts cf. e.g. Mitchell 1976; Kolb 2000; Speidel 2010; 2014; Eck 2014. For a well-known example see AE 1981, 777 = SEG 31, 1116 (with Wilkinson 2012).
[2] Speidel 2009: 213–234.
[3] Speidel 2009: 319. For the recruiting procedure see Watson 1969: 38–53; Gilliam 1986: 163–172; Davies 1989: 3–30.

same military unit far away from their native provinces. Several inscriptions show that soldiers with a common ethnic background bonded to form associations of fellow countrymen within their units. These associations were more than informal, loose groupings, for they disposed of assemblies, decision-taking mechanisms, common funds, and the means to implement their resolutions. This is revealed by inscriptions on altars that such associations occasionally set up. An altar dedicated to Mars and Victoria Augusta in 153 CE at Birrens in southern Scotland provides a typical example:[4]

> *Marti et Victo/riae Aug(usti) c(ives) Rae/ti milit(antes) in coh(orte) / II Tungr(orum), cui / praeest Silvius / Auspex praef(ectus) / v(otum) s(olverunt) l(ibentes) m(erito).*

Inscribed altars, dedicated to one or more deities, or to the reigning emperor, are, in fact, our only sources for the existence of organized ethnic 'clubs' within units of the Roman army. However, the restricted nature of our sources in this matter cannot be taken to imply that ethnic associations in the Roman army only dealt with religious matters. Manifestations of other decisions they may have taken might simply not have survived. In any event, such associations of fellow countrymen could also decide to team up with other ethnic clubs in the same unit and act together. This is, again, instanced by an altar, dedicated in fulfilment of a vow to *Deus Mercurius* in the mid-second century at Castelcary on the Antonine Wall. The Altar was set up jointly by associations of soldiers from Italy and from Noricum, both serving in the 6th legion:[5]

> *Deo / Mercurio / milites leg(ionis) VI / Victricis pi(a)e f(idelis) / (a)ed(em) et sigillum / cives Italici / et Norici / v(otum) s(olverunt) l(ibentes) l(aeti) m(erito).*

A fitting occasion for these two groups to decide to (take and) fulfil their vows together may have occurred around 153 CE if (as seems likely) they marched as freshly drafted recruits to Britain together to reinforce the 6th legion that was facing increasingly serious trouble on the Antonine-Wall.[6] In any event, the Roman army fostered such ethnic associations, as

---

[4] RIB 2100. For this group of *Raeti* see CIL XVI 94; Birley 1935 and Speidel (forthcoming A). For other such altars see e.g. CIL VI 32557 (Rome, 249/251 CE): *[Fortun]ae [Apollini] [Vi]ctoriae // pro salute Imp(eratoris) Caes(aris) [[C(ai) M(essi) Q(uinti) Traiani Deci]] Aug(usti) n(ostri) / et H[[[erenni]ae]] sanctis[simae] Aug(ustae) / cives Cotini ex provincia [Pannonia i]nferiore / milites cohh(ortium) [praet(orianarum) … con]tulerunt / (…).* RIB 2107 = ILS 4752 (Birrens, II / III c. CE): *Deae Ricagam/bedae pagus / Vella(v)us milit(ans) / coh(orte) II Tung(rorum) (…).* RIB 2108 = ILS 4756 (Birrens, II / III c. CE): *Deae Viradec/thi pa[g]us Con/drustis milit(ans) / in coh(orte) II Tun/gror(um) (…).*

[5] RIB 2148.

[6] Thus Speidel (forthcoming A). The draft in Italy is a strong indication of an emergency measure. For a possibly similar case see below.

it actively encouraged competition within its ranks as a means to boost morale and to spur exceptional performance.[7]

Inscriptions reveal soldiers of Thracian origin to have formed a particularly large and noticeable ethnic group among those who served far away from their native provinces (Thracia and Moesia Inferior).[8] According to a very old tradition, Thracians were exceptionally skilled in the art of war.[9] Vegetius in his book on military recruitment even maintained that 'it is well known that the warlike dispositions of the Dacians, Moesians and Thracians gave rise to the fable that Mars was born among them'.[10] In 26 CE (according to Tacitus) it was still among the Thracians greatest fears that they might be "doomed to slavery" and, "dispersed by the Romans and mingled with other tribes, they would be dragged away to distant countries".[11] Only one generation later, precisely that was a common fate for many young men of Thracian origin. Thrace, a province with a very small Roman garrison, had become one of the most important sources of recruits for the entire Roman army. Numerous young Thracians were now sent abroad to join units at distant bases, no doubt because of their fame as soldiers, but at least initially also to prevent local uprisings.[12] Thus, for instance, an inscription from the end of the second century explicitly records the transmission of a thousand Thracian recruits to the auxiliary army of Mauretania Tingitana.[13] No reasons for this transfer are mentioned, but their large number suggests that there was a fairly urgent need of fresh recruits in Mauretania Tingitana at the time. It therefore seems more likely that these young Thracians were drafted during a formal *dilectus* rather than having joined the Roman army as volunteers over a longer period of time. Recent finds of military diplomas indeed revealed several more such previously unknown major drafts among Thracians and their

[7] See in general Speidel 1994a: 85; 2009: 233, 671. Cf. ILS 5795: *certamen operis inter classicos milites et gaesates dedi*.

[8] See esp. Kraft 1951: 53–88. For recent studies see e.g. Zahariade 2009, esp. 59–111; Dana – Matei-Popescu 2009: 234; Mihailescu-Bîrliba – Dumitrache 2012; Dana 2013; Haynes 2013: 106, 109.

[9] Hdt. 2.167, 5.3; Pl. *Lg.* 637d; Arist. *Pol.* 1324b; Liv. 36.17.4f.; Tac. *Ann.* 4.46; Arr. *An.* 2.7.5; Amm.Marc. 26.7.5: *bellatrices Thraciae gentes*. Expositio 50: *Thracia provincia ... maximos habens viros et fortes in bello. Propterquod et frequenter inde milites tolluntur.* Socrates HE 4.28. But cf. also Anon. *De Physiognomia* (André) 9: *Thraces autem sunt iniqui, pigri, temulenti*.

[10] Veg. 1.28: *Dacos autem et Moesos et Thracas in tantum bellicosos semper fuisse manifestum est, ut ipsum Martem fabulae apud eos natum esse conferment*.

[11] Tac. *Ann.* 4.46: *disiecti aliisque nationibus permixti diversas in terras traherentur.*

[12] Forni 1992: 290–297.

[13] CIL VIII 9382 = ILS 2763 = AE 1977, 864: *D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum) Sex(tus) Iul(ius) Iulianus / ex Germania superiore{m} / tribunus n(umeri) Syrorum M(a)l/vensium hic sepultus est / <c>um deducit iuniores Bessos / (mille) in Tingitana(m) provinciam / qui vixit annis XXXXV cui / monimentum fecit / Iul(ius) Ingenuus frater / et heres curante / Sacimatho / liberto eiusdem / defuncti*. Cf. Speidel 1984: 341–347.

neighbours, all of which led to the transfer of thousands of young men from Thracia and Moesia to distant parts of the Empire.[14] At times, certain units were even dominated by Thracians and their neighbouring peoples, as, for instance, was the case with the praetorian guard after its reorganization under Septimius Severus.[15]

It is no surprise therefore that there is also epigraphic evidence for associations of Thracians in several different units of the Roman army.[16] Such 'clubs' of Thracian soldiers, too, could and would team up with other national associations if the occasion arose. One such case led to the erection and dedication on 29 September 219 of an altar to Hercules Magusanus (a Batavian god) in fulfilment of a vow, and to celebrate the arrival of the new emperor Elagabal in Rome:[17]

> *Herculi Magusano / ob reditum domini nostri / M(arci) Aureli Antoni[ni P]ii / Felicis Aug(usti) equites singulares / Antoniniani eius cives / Batavi sive Thraces adlecti / ex provincia Germania / inferiore votum solverunt / libentes merito III Kal(endas) Oct(obres) / Imp(eratore) d(omine) n(ostro) / Antonino Aug(usto) II et / Tineio Sacerdote II co(n)s(ulibus).*

The dedicants, Batavian and Thracian *equites singulares Augusti*, had been selected from among the horsemen of Lower Germany's *auxilia* to join the imperial horse guard in Rome. The occasion for the two groups to decide to vow an altar together may therefore have occurred during their long joint march from Lower Germany to Rome.[18]

II. Portraits of a Thracian soldier

One of the many soldiers of Thracian origin who served in the Roman army well beyond the confines of his homeland in the early third century was Gaius Iulius Verus Maximinus, the later Roman emperor usually related to as 'Maximinus Thrax'.[19] His Thracian origins are well attested and undisputed, even if the earliest surviving instance for the added ethnikon 'Thrax' is only from the late fourth century.[20] Maximinus' home is unknown. The best guess remains that of Ronald Syme who suggested that Maximinus hailed from the Thracian military community on the Danube in Lower Moesia.[21]

---

[14] See esp. Eck 2009: esp. 95–103, 108f.
[15] Cf. e.g. Eck 2012: 326.
[16] CIL VI 2799 = CIL VI 32543 = ILS 2094 (Rome). CIL VI 31147 = ILS 2182 = Denkmäler 11 (Rome); CIL VI 31157 = CIL VI 31176 = Denkmäler 26; AE 2009, 1080 (Cornacum).
[17] CIL VI 31162 = ILS 2188 = Denkmäler 62 (Rome).
[18] Speidel 1994a: 88.
[19] PIR² J 407.
[20] Hdn. 6.8.1, 7.1.2; HA Max. 1.4. 'Thrax': Epit de Caes. 25.1.
[21] Syme 1971: 182, 185f.

Maximinus' Thracian background should give cause to listen up. For Herodian, our only surviving contemporary narrative of the mutiny on the eve of the military expedition into Germany in 235 CE relates that 'Pannonians and barbarian Thracians' were responsible for elevating the Thracian officer to the throne.[22] Herodian apparently evoked common ethnicity as the most important bond between Maximinus and his supporters in the army.[23] Moreover, Herodian's remark reeks of disapproval. For notwithstanding the fact that all free-born inhabitants of the Empire were Roman citizens since 212, he counted the inhabitants of distant provinces among the 'barbarians'. He particularly despised the Thracians, and even held that being Thracian meant 'possessing the bloodthirsty temperament derived from (...) ancestors and the country'.[24] We must therefore ask: is Herodian's account simply distorted by his personal hatred of Maximinus and the Thracians? Or is there more evidence to support the view that Maximinus' elevation to the throne was, to a certain extent, a Thraco-Illyrian conspiracy, perhaps brewed up in the Thracian 'clubs' of Severus Alexander's expeditionary army?

Ancient historiography mostly dislikes Maximinus, and portrays him as a person of inferior social and ethnic background.[25] Herodian seems to have hated him altogether. He calls Maximinus a cruel tyrant,[26] easily enraged, a 'savage by nature and by race', a 'half-barbarian' shepherd from a small and remote village of Thrace's furthest interior'.[27] He describes him as a frightening appearance of colossal size, strong and courageous but bloodthirsty, and a man who could not even compose a speech on his own.[28] Fourth century sources, the Historia Augusta in particular, also portrait Maximinus in the darkest of terms, as an evil and unrefined 'barbarian' and the first of a series of emperors who rose to power with the sole support of the army. This allegedly made him the first of the so-called 'barrack-emperors' or 'Soldatenkaiser'.[29] It almost seems as if Maximinus were personally to blame for the 3rd-century crisis of the Roman Empire.[30]

And indeed he was. For Herodian and the fourth century historians in particular considered Maximinus' reign to mark the beginning of a new and decidedly dark age. Aurelius Victor, for instance, claimed that Maximinus

---

[22] Hdn. 6.8.3, 8.6.1.
[23] Thus also Weiss 2015: 59 n. 130.
[24] Hdn. 7.1.2, 8.5.6, 8.6.1; Whittaker 1970: 287 n. 1.
[25] Cf. the discussion of the evidence in Moralee 2008.
[26] Hdn. 7.1.1.
[27] Hdn. 6.8.1, 7.1.2. Enraged: Hdn. 7.8.1, with Whittaker 1970: 205 n. 2.
[28] Hdn. 6.8.3.
[29] Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 25.1; Eutr. 9.1; HA Alex. 64; HA Max. 8.1. Cf. Epit. 25.1. See also Johne 2006**:** 125–134 and below n. 34.
[30] Cf. Moralee 2008; Haegemans 2010: 47f.

ushered in a new era that nearly wrecked the Roman State: *Romanum statum quasi abrupto praecipitavere*.[31] Many modern scholars have therefore also placed the Thracian at the beginning of a new epoch of great instability, violence and a major political, social, economic and religious crisis of the Roman Empire that was overcome only after around half a century.[32] Maximinus became the iconic symbol of an epoch that 'turned black for senators and highly distasteful to the pretentious exponents of the renascent and now dominant Hellenic culture'.[33] Allegedly, he replaced the refined Hellenic style of the Antonine and Severan era by rough and cruel Thracian ways in only three years. His rule between spring 235 and spring 238 thus found its position among the classic, epoch-marking events of European Antiquity[34] and has attracted a great deal of scholarly attention, not least in recent years.[35]

Much of modern interest in Maximinus lies with his alleged lowly social origins, his 'barbarian' ethnic background, and his breath-taking career in the Roman army that took him from the rank and file to the pinnacle of Roman power, thereby completely bypassing the Senate. Yet although the era that Maximinus allegedly spawned is universally described in dark terms, he is no longer generally styled an evil, hateful character nor is he held solely responsible for the ensuing developments. Thus, Ronald Syme thought of him as "a product (and not the worst) of the wars and tumults in the age of Severus: a symptom of social transformation, a manifestation of the potency now gathering among the Danubian military".[36] Michael Rostovtzeff called him a "Thracian peasant" and a "terrorist", but he did "not doubt that Maximin was an honest man and an able general". Yet Rostovtzeff believed that it was the Thracian's aim to destroy the fabric of the Roman state, as based on the cities, and to butcher both the "imperial nobility" and the municipal "bourgeoisie".[37] Indeed, at first glance Maximinus appears to be the exact opposite of a ruler like Antoninus Pius

[31] Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 24.9.

[32] Thus already Aur. Vic. *Caes.* 24.9–11. Cf. Christol 1997: 119–173; Strobel 1993: 299f.; Witschel 1999: 375; de Blois 2006: 26. See also the references cited in Haegemans 2010: 3.

[33] Syme 1971: 181.

[34] Börm 2008: 69: „zählt seit langem zu den klassischen epochalen Ereignissen des europäischen Altertums." It is surprising, therefore, that Maximinus is missing from the collection of imperial biographies edited by Clauss 2001. For weaknesses of the concept of 'barrack-emperors' or 'Soldatenkaiser' as a means to define this epoch of Roman imperial history see Speidel 2015.

[35] For recent overviews of the relevant modern historiography and ancient sources see Haegemans 2010: 1–27 and Wiegels 2014. Cf. in particular also Syme 1971; Loriot 1975; Dietz 1980; Burian 1988; Lippold 1991; Potter 2004; Hilali 2007; Börm 2008; Huttner 2008; Sommer 2010: 29–36; Wiegels 2012; 2013; Weiss 2015.

[36] Syme 1971: 190.

[37] Rostovtzeff 1957: 439, 452, 734.

less than a century earlier. For while Pius never left Rome during his entire reign and was remembered as a most peaceful, caring and cultivated ruler, the Thracian was the first emperor never to enter Rome during his short reign, as he was busy fighting Rome's northern enemies. Perhaps the most devastating modern judgment is also one of the most recent. For according to Clifford Ando, Maximinus' reign betrays "the weakness of the Senate, the imbecility of Maximinus and the fragility of armies on the move – the staggering idiocy, one might say, of the entire imperial system".[38]

It has, of course, long been pointed out that contrary to what Herodian and other ancient writers would like us to believe, "Maximinus was no scandalous anomaly".[39] The phenomenon had its forerunners. Moreover, the surviving ancient historiographical texts (Herodian in particular) appear to inspire the composition of modern narratives in which a militarist tyrant of cruel and unrefined nature is finally removed by the heroic resistance of the legitimate governmental body composed of the educated and cultivated Roman elite that was the Senate. In these narratives, the tensions between Maximinus and the senatorial aristocracy are indicative of social strife and symbols of a revolution that was eventually to transform the entire Roman Empire. The clash reached a tentative climax in April 238 when the Senate first declared the Thracian a 'public enemy' (*hostis publicus*) and then, for the first time in its history, elected new emperors on its own initiative. Maximinus eventually lost the support even of his soldiers who finally murdered him.[40] For the time being, it seems, the old order prevailed.

Yet, considering his very short reign of only three years, and the dearth of precise and reliable information, caution is essential. From the Historia Augusta, Theodor Mommsen accepted as true only what the *vita Maximini duo* copied from Maximinus' coeval Herodian: "entweder herodianisch oder apocryph".[41] Ronald Syme was a little less categorical and allowed for "three modest exceptions".[42] However, he nevertheless maintained that "nothing apart from Herodian has validity; and Herodian is flimsy and deceptive".[43] It is very welcome, therefore, that the discovery in 2008 of the 3rd c. CE battlefield at the Harzhorn, a place between the towns of Kalefeld and Bad Gandersheim in Germany's Lower Saxony, now proves beyond doubt that the author of the Historia Augusta drew

[38] Ando 2012: 105. For a more sympathetic view cf. Sommer 2010: 29–34.

[39] Syme 1971: 189f., with reference to Macrinus in 217, Oclatinius Adventus, and Aelius Triccianus. Cf. already Bang 1906: 303. Börm 2008 and Haegemans 2010 plead against having Maximinus' reign mark the beginning of a new era.

[40] Hdn. 8.5.3 and 8–9; 8.6.4. HA Max. 23.2.

[41] Mommsen 1890: 259 (= 1909: 240).

[42] Syme 1971: 184.

[43] Syme 1971: 188f., followed by Loriot 1975: 662f. and 668.

reliable information for Maximinus' biography not only from Herodian but also from other independent sources. For the archaeological remains of this battlefield reveal a Roman army operating in 235/6 CE well over three hundred Roman miles inside German territory, something that was previously considered unthinkable.[44] The discovery thus restores a small degree of credibility to parts of the *vita* of the two *Maximini* in the Historia Augusta. For this late fourth century text indeed reports Roman military operations, led by the emperor Maximinus, deep inside Germany.[45] Unfortunately, that does not allow us *a priori* to put more confidence in other parts of this biography. Because of the many errors, falsifications, and contradictions in the *vita* of Maximinus and his son in the Historia Augusta, we must continue to be highly sceptical about the veracity of anything in that *vita* that is not confirmed or supported by other evidence. Herodian remains our key source. However, it is surely fair to say that the discovery of the battlefield at the Harzhorn unexpectedly confers upon Maximinus traits of a dynamic, responsible and foresighted general who was willing to take on great personal hardship in order to secure lasting peace for the Roman Empire.

III. Training Recruits

Evidently, responsibility and foresight were very important characteristics for any ruler of the Roman Empire, characteristics that Marcus Aurelius, for instance, had turned into a hallmark of his reign.[46] Yet taking responsible action and enduring personal hardship was hardly sufficient for a man like Maximinus, a mere Thracian soldier by origin, to win general approval for having seized supreme power. The true reasons for the success of his coup are generally sought in Maximinus' military skills and in the support of the army. Yet, again, the historiographical sources are not forthcoming. Herodian is curt and vague. He reports that Maximinus: "was drafted into the army as a horseman because of his size and strength" (…), "he progressed through all the ranks in the army and was given charge of legions and command over provinces".[47] So much may be "accepted without discomfort or enlightment".[48] Epigraphy identifies only two possible positions in Maximinus' career: his rank as a

[44] Cf. e.g. Wolters 2013.
[45] HA Max. 12.1.
[46] Speidel (forthcoming B).
[47] Hdn. 6.8.1f., 7.1.2. The criticism by Wiegels 2012: 447 of Whittaker's translation of Hdn. 6.8.1 (Whittaker 1970: 133 with n. 2: "was given charge of legions and commands over provinces") as more concrete than the Greek text allows is unwarranted: see Weiss 2015: 60–62 for Herodian's use of 'ethnos' for *provincia*.
[48] Syme 1971: 188.

decurion in the imperial horse guard and a governorship of Mauretania Tingitana.[49] In the years immediately before his accession to the throne, Herodian has the Thracian commanding legions in Mesopotamia and successfully fighting in Severus Alexander's Persian war.[50] Like many of his fellow officers, his military career, it seems, made Maximinus known to the Guards at Rome and to a great many regiments in numerous provinces of the Empire. Finally, in the preparatory phase of the German campaign of 235, Herodian says that "Alexander put Maximinus in charge of all the recruits to give them military training and turn them out fit for battle".[51]

Unfortunately, the latter indications cannot be easily translated into specific and otherwise attested positions or functions within an equestrian career. Scholars have therefore turned to other, later sources, which provide more detail, the *Historia Augusta* in particular. Thus, ever since Martin Bang's first attempt in 1906, modern historiography has produced an ever-growing list of speculative reconstructions of Maximinus' military career.[52] Most recently, in 2012, Rainer Wiegels published a full discussion of the evidence, producing yet another admittedly hypothetical reconstruction of Maximinus' military career before he became emperor.[53] Clearly, in this case progress depends entirely on further evidence. Like nearly all of his predecessors, Wiegels identified Maximinus' final position before he was made emperor in 235 as that of a *praefectus tironibus* (*in limite Rhenano*).[54] However, no such title is transmitted by our sources. In fact, it seems that Martin Bang invented the title *praefectus tironibus* in 1906, in an attempt to translate Herodian's Greek into Latin technical terms.[55] Reference is therefore usually made to two inscriptions, which attest the title *praefectus tiro-*

[49] *Equites Singulares Augusti*: Denkmäler 115. Cf. Speidel 1994a: 68f. Mauretania: ILatMaroc 41 = IAM 2,298 = AE 1989, 911: *[[Iuliae Mamaeae]] Aug(ustae) / [[matri Imp(eratoris) Caes(aris) M(arci) Aure/li Severi]] Alexand[[ri / P(ii) F(elicis) Aug(usti)]] cohors IIII / Gallorum devota/ numini maiestati/[[que e]]oru[m ara]m(?) C(aio) Iu/[l]io Maximino v(iro) e(gregio) / [p]raes[ide] pro legato / [V]alerio Salviano [pr]aefecto posuit*. Cf. Magioncalda 1989: 15 with n. 51. For *pro legato* cf. Šašel 1974.

[50] Hdn. 7.8.4.

[51] Hdn. 6.8.2f.

[52] Bang 1906. Among other recent accounts cf. Kienast 1996²: 183; Petraccia – Traverso 2000: 676–681; Huttner 2008: 161–163; Haegemans 2010: 52–55; Deppmeyer 2013.

[53] Wiegels 2012: esp. 441–450.

[54] Wiegels 2012: 450 with n. 93; cf. Wiegels 2012: 443 with n. 39 ('vermutlich'), and with less confidence 449 ('vielleicht') and n. 88 ('unklar'). See also Bang 1906: 303; Hohl 1919: 857; PIR I² 619; Lippold 1968; 86; Whittaker 1970; 131 n. 3 and 134 n. 1; Loriot 1975: 669; Forni 1992: 208; Kienast 1996: 183; Petraccia – Traverso 2000: 679; Haegemans 2010: 55; Sommer 2010: 30. Cf. Gagé 1970: 235 n. 11 and 237; Horsmann 1991: 82–92. Huttner 2008: 163 is duly sceptical.

[55] Bang 1906: 303, admitting that he knew of no other occurrence of the title nor of the function it presumably described.

num.[56] Yet, the two officials who held this title were a junior equestrian and a legionary veteran. It is practically inconceivable that a Roman official who had previously commanded legions and governed important military provinces would have next taken on such a lowly position. Hence, there is nothing to support the notion that Maximinus, in 235, held the title *praefectus tironum* or *praefectus tironibus*. Moreover, there is no evidence at hand to suggest that a 'chief recruit trainer' existed as a permanent position in the Roman army. Bang therefore argued that Maximinus' last military function was a special command, which had become necessary in order to bring the army back up to strength for the projected German campaign, as it had incurred major losses during the Persian war.[57] However, there is also no record for the existence of such a special command for high-ranking equestrian officers.

Be that as it may, it would, on the other hand, surely be unwise to entirely dismiss Herodian's testimony that Maximinus was somehow engaged in training recruits before he seized supreme power. Herodian himself provides examples, which show that the supply and training of fresh recruits before major campaigns was a standard procedure. For instance, he relates how recruits were drafted in Italy and the provinces during the preparations for Severus Alexander's Persian war only four years earlier, and how a major expeditionary army was set up from the units in the Illyrian provinces for that war. Soldiers and recruits were then marched to near Antioch where manoeuvres and training made them ready for battle.[58] The same procedure is thus likely to have been adopted in 235. Moreover, the very task of training fresh recruits was among Herodian's toxic reproaches against Maximinus' suitability as an emperor. The Greek author characterises the Thracian as a barbarian military man, who even as emperor "never stopped training and exercising the men, even getting into arms himself and urging the troops on".[59] He claims that Maximinus was very popular with the troops, and eventually became their role model because he taught and trained them by taking

[56] AE 1921, 21 = ILAfr. 473: *G(aius) Herennius / M(arci) f(ilius) Quir(ina) Festus / veteranus leg(ionis) / X fretensis ho/nesta missio/ne dimissus / praefectus tiro/num in Mau/retania praef(e)c/-tus iuventutis / IIvirum(!) bis vixit / annis LXXV h(ic) s(itus) e(st).* CIL XI 6011 = ILS 2691: *L(ucio) Voluseno / L(uci) f(ilio) Clu(stumina) Clementi / trib(uno) mil(itum) praef(ecto) / equit(um) praef(ecto) tir(onum) / Gall(iae) Na[rbonen]/sis it[em(?) in(?) Pan]/non[ia censum(?)] / accepit missus a / divo Aug(usto) hic cum / mitteretur a Ti(berio) Caes(are) Aug(usto) / in Aegypt(um) ad iur(is) dict(ionem) / decessit provinc(ia) / Aquitania.* Wiegels' references to CIL VI 41050 and AE 1991, 1691 = 1992, 1866 are unwarranted as they do not contain *praef. tironum* or any information that might illuminate that title (Wiegels 2012: 443 n. 39).

[57] Bang 1906: 303 ('ausserordentliches Commando'), followed by Sommer 2010: 30 and Wiegels 2012: 454 n. 113.

[58] Hdn. 6.3.1f., 6.4.3; cf. also 6.7.8.

[59] Hdn. 7.1.5.

the lead in all tasks.[60] Herodian thus describes the training of recruits as what Maximinus was best at, both before and after he became emperor.[61]

Much has therefore been made of four building inscriptions with nearly identical texts from Aquileia and neighbouring Torviscosa. These texts record the improvement of roads and bridges under Maximinus by *tirones iuventutis novae Italicae suae dilectus posterioris*.[62] There is no precise indication of a date. Nor is there mention of Maximinus' son and Caesar, which may indicate a date 'relatively' early in Maximinus' reign. The inscriptions have been thought to refer to recruits from Novae in Lower Moesia.[63] According to this view, the town of Novae was here called by the unusual name of 'Novae Italicae' (because *legio I Italica* was stationed there), the possessive pronoun *sua* indicating that the town was Maximinus' home ('his' Novae). If true, that would make the recruits Thracian countrymen of Maximinus', drafted after his accession to the throne during a *dilectus posterior* in Moesia Inferior. Others, however, embracing various different theories, suggested these inscriptions to record recruits from Italy.[64] This solution is surely to be preferred as it works without having to assume a curious name for Novae.[65] Moreover, it also takes the technical military sense of the term *iuventus* into account, which, in the context of military recruitment, infallibly refers to the recruitable male youth of a given community (or people).[66] Calling the *iuventus* of the towns of Italy 'the emperor's own' (*iuventus sua*) is also known from third-century coins evoking

[60] Hdn. 6.8.2f.

[61] Cf. also HA Max. 5.6.

[62] AE 1979, 256 (Torviscosa): *Imp(erator) Caes(ar) / [[[Cai]u[s Iu]lius]] / [[Ve[rus]]] / [[M[aximinus] P(ius) F(elix)]] / Invictus Aug(ustus) / Aquileiensium / restitutor et / conditor / viam quoq[ue] Anniam / a por[ta] usque / ad miliarium / septimum per / tirones / iuventutis / novae Italicae / suae dilectus / posterioris / longi temporis / labe corruptam / munivit ac / restituit.* See also: CIL V 7989 = ILS 487 (Aquileia); CIL V 7990 (Aquileia); AE 1979, 257 (Torviscosa). Discussed e.g. in Gerhardt 2008: 769f., and Wiegels 2012: 450–452.

[63] Petraccia Lucernoni 1987: 125–133; Forni 1992: 206–212. Accepted e.g. by Speidel 1994a: 68; Witschel 2002: 343f.

[64] Whittaker 1970: 269 n. 4; Gagé 1970: 235; Loriot 1975: 712; Jaczynowska 1978: 27f.; Christol 1997: 112 n. 1 and 113 n. 5; Strobel 2007: 270; Sarnowski 2007: 20f.

[65] For the name of Novae see Sarnowski 2007. Forni 1992: 207f. shows that there is indeed no epigraphic parallel for the contraction of the names of any garrison places and its legion into a new composite place name. *Pace* Forni 1992: 208, the name Φλα. Σαμό(σατα), known from coins of the Commagenian capital (BMC 117–123) have nothing to do with *legio XVI Flavia firma*: Speidel 2012: 12f.

[66] Thus e.g. Gerhardt 2008: 770. Cf. in general Speidel (forthcoming B), with further literature. For examples referring to Italy cf. CIL VI 1377 = 41142 = ILS 1098 (*misso ad iuventutem per Italiam legendam*); CIL VI 41237 (*misso] ad iuniores legendos per Aemi[liam et Liguriam]*); CIL VIII 7036 = ILS 1068 (*misso ad dilec[tu]m iuniorum a divo Hadriano in r[e]gionem Transpadanam*). Cf. also RIC Pius 1233, 1239, 1292 (etc) rev. (personified Iuventas standing next to a trophy and shield) for the traits between the *iuventus* (of Italy) and the military in the reign of Marcus Aurelius.

the *iuventus Aug(usti)* of Gallienus and Claudius II.[67] Finally, there is also a second century parallel for the expression *iuventus nova* referring to a fresh population of young men fit for military service.[68]

The four inscriptions from Aquileia and Torviscosa thus highlight Maximinus' continued recruiting activities even after his accession to the throne. They also add to the evidence indicating that Italy, too, had become a frequently exploited recruiting field in this period.[69] For the inscriptions apparently refer to the Thracian emperor's second draft (*dilectus posterior*) in Italy as the occasion during which the *tirones iuventutis novae Italicae* were enrolled into the army.[70] Although it is evidently not possible to determine when exactly the *dilectus prior* had been conducted, that surely happened at least one year earlier. In any event, as *tirones,* the young Italian men of the second draft had not yet joined their units and were therefore available for other tasks.[71] Several scholars assumed that employing such recruits in road repair must have been considered inappropriate and humiliating, and that the recruits of the Aquileian inscriptions were therefore involved in bringing the Thracian's rule to an end.[72] However, that is far from certain as it was not unusual for groups of recruits to be engaged in such chores.[73] The *tirones iuventutis novae Italicae (Maximiniani)* were therefore neither Thracians and staunch supporters of Maximinus', nor had they anything recognizable to do with his downfall in 238 CE.

IV. The coup of 235

Other recruits, however, are held to have been critically involved in Maximinus' violent seizure of the throne. In a curious account, Herodian, relates how recruits of mainly Pannonian origins forced their chief

[67] RIC Gallienus 615: *Iubentus Aug(usti)*; RIC Claudius Gothicus 213: *Iuventus Aug(usti)*. For the wide-spread use of such terminology (e.g. *equites singulares eius. milites suos. populo suo* etc.), cf. e.g. Speidel 1984: 79f. Denkmäler 19, 26, 43, 62, 69; CIL VIII 22765 = ILS 8923 = ILTun 3; AE 1950, 74; AE 1996, 1623; CIL III 324.

[68] Apul. *Met.* 7.4.3 *tirocinio novae iuventutis ad pristinae manus numerum Martiae cohortis facies integraretur*. It is thus not necessary to restore *tirones iuventutis (legionis) novae Italicae*, as proposed by Mann 1999: 228 (and accepted e.g. by Sarnowski 2007: 20f.) who believed that the inscriptions referred to *legio IV Italica* (cf. Not. Dig., Or. VII 54), and that they belonged to the context described in HA Maximinus 5.5: *statim denique illum* (sc. Maximinum) *tribunum legionis quartae, quam ex tironibus ipse* (sc. Alexander) *composuerat, dedit*. The passage, however, is probably fictitious.

[69] Severus Alexander: Hdn. 6.3.1f.; CIL X 3856 = ILS 1173 (Capua) with Dietz 1980: 164f. no. VIII*. The Senate against Maximinus: Hdn. 7.12.1; CIL VI 3836 c. d. = 31747 c. d = 41237 (perhaps referring to 238 CE).

[70] Gagé 1970: 235; Peachin – Preuss 1997: 181.

[71] Cf. Dig. 29.1.42 (Ulpian); Gilliam 1986: 163–172.

[72] Whittaker 1970: 269 n. 4; Gagé 1970: 235; Loriot 1975: 712; Jaczynowska 1978: 27f.

[73] AE 1951, 210 = AE 1957, 133; AE 1973, 560. Cf. RIB 3355.

instructor, who was not even a member of the *ordo senatorius*, to accept the purple.[74] A few pages further on, the historian specifies that "Pannonians and barbarian Thracians" were responsible for the uprising.[75] In any event, it was not uncommon for expeditionary troops to be brought up to strength with fresh recruits in preparation of military expeditions, and given the importance of Thracian recruits for the Roman army in general, their presence at the coup in the spring of 235 is anything but out of the question.[76] According to Herodian, the young men were being trained in Upper Germany for the German campaign. They admired Maximinus' courage and despised Alexander for being under his mother's control and for his cowardice in his conduct of war during the Persian campaign.[77] Herodian also calls Severus Alexander's attempts to offer the Germans gold in exchange for peace an important reason for the soldiers' betrayal, as they took their emperor's behaviour to reveal his reluctance to go to war.[78] In any event, according to Herodian, Maximinus hesitantly gave in and set off with his half-trained recruits on the two days march to Mogontiacum (Mainz) where the emperor, his guard and his expeditionary army were encamped.[79] The news of the recruits' feat and their impending arrival allegedly reduced Alexander Severus to a panic-stricken and utterly dumb-founded coward, even though, as Herodian assures, his experienced and battle ready soldiers initially stood firmly by their commander-in-chief.[80] In the end, however, the recruits, in Herodian's version, only had to shout a few insults at Severus Alexander and his mother, to persuade the entire expeditionary army to join the rebellion.[81]

Although it is anything but hard to imagine even recruits from different ethnic groups forming bonds and taking joint decisions, Herodian's story raises questions. In particular, he appears to have exaggerated the role of the recruits.[82] In fact, there is reason to believe that there were substantial numbers of seasoned soldiers in Maximinus' 'training camp' as well. For a few pages further on in his 'History', Herodian maintains that Pannonian legions (not recruits) were first to recognise the Thracian as emperor.[83]

---

[74] Hdn. 6.8.3–6.9.8.

[75] Hdn. 8.6.1: οἱ Παίονες καὶ ὅσοι βάρβαροι Θρᾷκες.

[76] See in general Speidel 2009: 221. Cf. also Weiss 2015: 48–52 for Caracalla recruiting Thracians into his expeditionary army in Thrace in 214.

[77] Hdn. 6.8.3.

[78] Hdn. 6.7.9f.; at 6.9.4 he adds the army's general greed for money.

[79] Although the 'training camp' is described as being 'not far' from Severus Alexander's headquarters it took the recruits around two days to reach the imperial headquarters at Mogontiacum: Hdn. 6.8.8f.; HA Max 7.4; Sync. 439.

[80] Hdn. 6.9.1–5.

[81] Hdn. 6.9.5.

[82] Cf. Wiegels 2012: 450: „nur Inizialzündung".

[83] Hdn. 7.8.11.

As there is nothing to suggest that the historian confused recruits with legionaries or that he referred to former recruits who had become legionaries, it seems very likely that recruits and legionaries were both present at the coup, and that both backed Maximinus. If true, soldiers of the Pannonian legions X Gemina, XIIII Gemina, I and II Adiutrix (overwhelmingly of Pannonian, Illyrian, or Thracian origin) as well as recruits drafted in Pannonia were under the Thracian's command in a camp at some distance from Mogontiacum in the days before the coup.[84] At any rate, the participation of experienced soldiers in the upraising might explain how the rebels could hope to succeed with their insurrection. It is interesting, therefore, that the Historia Augusta claims to have knowledge of versions of Severus Alexander's downfall, in which recruits played no role at all.[85] According to one of these, Severus Alexander put Maximinus in command of the entire army. That, of course, cannot be true, but one might speculate whether Maximinus' alleged superior command simply was the exaggeration of a lesser but still important command that Maximinus held on the eve of the rebellion. Be that as it may, according to this tradition Maximinus (or barbarian commanders: *tribuni barbari*) incited the soldiers (*milites*, not recruits) against the emperor not much later.[86]

Zosimus, too, has nothing to say about recruits. Quite remarkably, this early sixth century historian claims that the rebellion broke out among the armies of Pannonia and Moesia.[87] Although Zosimus' account is otherwise garbled, this piece of information might be accurate as it echoes Herodian's "Pannonians and barbarian Thracians" and fits with his reference to Pannonian legions mentioned above. Moreover, it also goes well with what is otherwise known of the deployment and encampment of expeditionary armies before campaigns.[88] For while they were waiting for troops from other parts of the empire to arrive at the deployment zone and before they assembled to fully-fledged expeditionary armies, the units and detachments of field armies were allocated to several different camps in the wider neighbourhood of the imperial expeditionary headquarters.[89] Most likely this was done in order not to overburden the civilian communities of one region. Perhaps the best known example of such an expeditionary base is that of *legio II Parthica* near Syrian Apamea in the deploy-

[84] For the origins of soldiers serving in the Pannonian legions in the 2.–3. c. CE, see Forni 1992: 116f., 119, 132, 135.

[85] HA Alex. 59.7.

[86] HA Max. 7. Cf. also Oros. 7.18.8–19.1; Eutrop. 8.23 and 9.1; Iord. *Get.* 88; Synk. 439.

[87] Zos. 1.13.1.

[88] Hdn. 7.8.11, 8.6.1; cf. below. Wiegels 2014: 97 is also inclined to accept this information as true.

[89] Speidel 2009: 259f.; 2012: 604–612. Cf. Amm. 23.2.3 for a similar situation at the beginning of Julian's expedition against the Persians.

ment area of Antioch.[90] Epigraphy and archaeological surface surveys have revealed more such bases in the same deployment area, for instance at Cilician Anazarbos (for the *equites singulares Augusti*),[91] at Zeugma on the Euphrates (for legions and *auxilia* from Pannonia and Moesia, as well as from North Africa),[92] and possibly at Cyrrhos and Beroia.[93] There may have been more.

According to Herodian, Severus Alexander brought his field army for the Persian war up to strength with fresh recruits from Italy and the provinces in 231, and then marched his troops through the Illyrian provinces, where he collected further troops, on to Syria.[94] On arrival in Antioch he distributed his army among the various expeditionary camps in the wider neighbourhood of his Syrian headquarters, including the ones at Apamea and Zeugma.[95] Next, "he made preparations for war, training the soldiers and practising manoeuvres".[96] No doubt, Severus Alexander and the Roman army followed the same basic procedure in the run-up for the German campaign of 235.[97] However, there is nothing in the surviving evidence to suggest that recruits moved into separate bases before imperial campaigns, or that they trained and practised manoeuvres entirely on their own. Nor would such a segregation have made military sense.

Herodian's reference to a military base at more than a day's march from the imperial headquarters as Maximinus' sphere of activity can therefore be taken as another indication that the Thracian was responsible not just for training recruits, but for getting a substantial part of the imperial field army, including entire units and detachments of experienced soldiers, ready for battle.[98] Taken together, the evidence suggests that the units under Maximinus' command included the legionary detachments and some auxiliaries from Pannonia and Moesia that shared a common base, just as they are known to have done at Zeugma on the Euphrates. If true, this would also help to understand why Severus Alexander's comportment during the Persian campaign could become one of the reasons that

---

[90] Dio 78.34.1ff. Cf. Dio 78.28.2, 78.29.2, 78.34.2 and 5; Balty 1988: 97; Balty – van Rengen 1993: 13f.

[91] Speidel 1994b: 62f.; cf. also IK 56, 70–72.

[92] Cf. Speidel 2012; Hartmann – Speidel 2013.

[93] Cyrrhos: IGLS I 148, 150–152; AE 1955, 225. Beroia: IGLS I 179, 180, 181; IGLS II 455; AE 1987, 953. Cf. in general Gebhardt 2002: 132.

[94] Hdn. 6.3.1, 6.4.3.

[95] Millar 1992: 149; Speidel 2009: 255–271; 2012; cf. 2014. See also HA Alex 45.2 and cf. 47. For Julian and his army at Antioch in 362, see Julian *Misop.* 368Cff.; Amm.Marc. 22.14; Liban. *Or.* 18.195f.; Socrates *HE* 3.17.

[96] Hdn. 6.4.3.

[97] For the possible composition of Severus Alexander's expeditionary army in 235, see Wiegels 2014: 118–133.

[98] See above n. 79.

incited the soldiers in their distant camp to rebel. For Herodian relates how soldiers from the Illyrian provinces had forced Alexander to break off the Persian campaign in 233, because their families at home were being massacred and abducted by German invaders who crossed the Rhine and the Danube.[99] Evidently, these soldiers sought revenge and punishment of the Germans, and had little appreciation for Alexander's negotiations with the enemy, or indeed his offering gold in exchange for peace.[100] To those who had lost family and friends, Alexander's proposal came close to rewarding the invaders for their atrocities. That, presumably, was a motive strong enough to eliminate an unpopular commander-in-chief. It is surely no coincidence, therefore, that legends on Maximinus' earliest coin series included not only such general statements as *virtus Augusti*,[101] *victoria Augusta*,[102] *victoria aeterna*,[103] or *pax Augusti*,[104] but also more specific paroles like *victoria Germanica*,[105] *Marti Pacifero*,[106] and *Fortuna Reduci*[107].

Taken together, the evidence therefore strongly suggests that Maximinus was responsible for an important part of the expeditionary army of 235 when the mutiny broke out.[108] The Thracian, we must surely conclude, was not a lowly trainer of recruits on the eve of the rebellion, but instead counted among the ambitious and successful equestrian officers that emperors had begun to promote to the command of entire Roman armies since the later second century.[109]

---

[99] Hdn. 6.7.2–5; vgl. HA Alex. 63.5f., Max. 7.2.
[100] Hdn. 6.7.9f.; cf. HA Max. 7.5.
[101] RIC Maximinus 106.
[102] RIC Maximinus 16, 67–69, 109.
[103] RIC Maximinus 15.
[104] RIC Maximinus 12, 58–60, 83.
[105] RIC Maximinus 71–74.
[106] RIC Maximinus 11, 55–57.
[107] RIC Maximinus 104.
[108] Cf. Loriot 1975: 668f. who concluded that Maximinus was "un des principaux conseillers militaires" of the emperor in 235.
[109] Cf. e.g. L(ucio) Iulio Veh[il]io Ga[llo(?)] / Iuliano (PIR² J 615): *praep(osito) vexil[la]/-tion(um) tempore belli [Germ(anici) II*: CIL VI 41271 = 31856 = ILS 1327. L. Valerius Valerianus (PIR² V 215): *praeposito summ(a)e [feliciss(imae) exped(itionis)] / Mesopotamenae adv[ersus Arabes(?)] / praepos(ito) vexil(lationis) feliciss(imae) [expedit(ionis)] / urbic(ae) itemq(ue) Asianae [adversus] / hostes publicos:* AE 1966, 495 = AE 1969/70, 612 = AE 1971, 476 = AE 1985, 829 = AE 1991, 1579 (cf. Speidel 2009: 186). Theocritus (PIR² T 167), an imperial freedman, a dancer and pantomime, commanded an army against Armenia under Caracalla, probably after he was admitted to the equestrian order: Dio 78.21.1–4; HA Caracalla 6.1. Cf. also C. Furius Sabinus Aquila Timesitheus (PIR² F 581): *vice praesid(is) prov(inciae) German(iae) inferior(is)*, at the time of Severus Alexander's preparations for the German campaign: CIL XIII 1807 = ILS 1330.

V. Ethnic pretensions

Herodian's emphasis, however, is not only on the lowly rank of Maximinus' supporters (mere recruits) but also on their 'barbarian' ethnic background. According to Herodian, the "Pannonians and barbarian Thracians" who made Maximinus emperor in 235 remained among the Thracian's keenest supporters throughout his reign. When they heard of Maximinus' murder in spring 238, "they accepted it, however unwillingly". Together with the majority of Maximinus' field army, they strongly resented that their 'own' emperor had been eliminated and replaced by two men of noble birth chosen by the Senate. However, "because of the prevailing conditions", they showed their loyalty and honoured the new emperors "of necessity".[110] Herodian's reference to Pannonians was, as we have seen, most likely both to legionary soldiers and to recruits from the Danubian provinces. It is more difficult to identify his "barbarian Thracians". As mentioned above, it is likely that the reference included recruits drafted in Thracia and (or) Moesia inferior in 234/5. However, as with the "Pannonians", Herodian's "barbarian Thracians" may have comprised regular troops too. If so, he hardly meant soldiers from the tiny auxiliary garrison of the province of Thrace. Instead, a reference to the legions of Moesia inferior seems more likely.[111] So far, however, only soldiers of Upper Moesian *legio IIII (Flavia) S(everiana) A(lexandriana)* are known to have participated in the German campaign.[112] The majority of the soldiers serving in this legion originated from Moesia Superior, Thrace and the Illyrian provinces.[113]

Be that as it may, as soon as Maximinus and his Thracian and Pannonian insurgents reached Mogontiacum and the imperial headquarters in 235, they met many more soldiers from their respective home countries. Their most prominent fellow countrymen served in the praetorian cohorts and the imperial horse guard. Though Herodian fails to mention it, both guards, in this period, were heavily dominated by soldiers from Thrace and Pannonia, and neither unit, it seems, stood to the emperor in his hour of need.[114] If we are to believe the Historia Augusta, soldiers of the imperial horse guard actually murdered Severus Alexander.[115] Furthermore, Herodian's record of the praetorian's comportment reveals beyond any doubt that this unit was indeed among the fiercest supporters of the

[110] Hdn. 8.6.1, 8.7.3, 8.8.1f.
[111] Thus also Wiegels 2014: 134 n. 155; Weiss 2015: 59 n. 130. *Pace* Piso 1982: 237 (= 2005: 106).
[112] Cf. Wiegels 2014: 96, with further literature.
[113] Forni 1992: 125.
[114] See Hdn. 6.8.7; Wiegels 2014: 119f. Dominated: Speidel 1994a: 83; Eck 2012: 326.
[115] HA Sev. Alex. 61. The story is not necessarily true; cf. Speidel 1994a: 67f.

Thracian. For in 238, only a few weeks after the assassination of Maximinus, the enraged praetorians took revenge and killed both usurpers the Senate had chosen to rule in the Thracian's stead.[116] Yet, there were many more Thracians and Pannonians serving in the expeditionary army of 235, for recruits from the Middle and Lower Danube had also been drafted into the Roman army on earlier occasions, and many of them were still serving when Maximinus rebelled. Thus, no less than 28 inscriptions and two recently published magnificent bronze discharge documents from 240 CE reveal the existence of a very substantial group of soldiers from Thrace (and a few from other Illyrian provinces) that Caracalla had enrolled into the legions of Upper and Lower Germany on 28 February 214.[117]

The two bronze discharge documents belonged to Thracian soldiers of the Upper German legions VIII Augusta and XXII Primigenia pia fidelis. As Peter Weiss persuasively argued, both soldiers are likely not only to have witnessed Maximinus' coup of 235 but they may also have served in detachments of their respective legions in the field army of 238 when the Thracian was murdered near Aquileia. They may even have been present at Gordian's III elevation to the imperial throne in Rome.[118] The grant of exceptionally noble discharge documents in 240 was no doubt due to exceptional circumstances. According to Weiss' convincing interpretation, Gordian III granted such magnificent bronze documents especially to those who had transferred their loyalty to the new regime without resistance in the course of the events that followed the assassination of Maximinus in 238.[119] Gordian's grant of exceptionally noble discharge documents in 240 thus aimed at reconciling those who still regretted Maximinus' death two years later, and thereby appears to vindicate Herodian's account, that the 'Pannonians and barbarian Thracians', and others in the field army of 238 only accepted the new regime 'unwillingly' and 'of necessity'.[120]

We can thus conclude that Pannonians and Thracians served in particularly large numbers and in many units and detachments of Severus Alexander's expeditionary army in 235, and that these units were both quick to join the mutiny of Maximinus and continued to be among the Thracian's fiercest supporters until after his assassination. Yet, as we have seen, Maximinus' popularity among his supporters in the army was based at least as much on his military skills and achievements as on common Thraco-Illyrian origins. It is interesting, therefore, that according to

[116] Hdn. 6.9.4–6, 7.11.2–7.12.7, 8.8.5–7.
[117] Alföldy 1987: 368–376; Weiss 2015: 48–52.
[118] Weiss 2015: 58–63.
[119] Weiss 2015: 63.
[120] Hdn. 8.6.1, 8.7.3. Cf. also the Gordian's III many coin series between 238 and 244 with the reverse legend *fides militum*: RIC Gordian III 1.7. 182–185. 209b-c. 234. 254A-C. 315.

Herodian, not all of Severus Alexander's expeditionary soldiers were quick and willing to join the upraise.[121] The historian tells the story of a huge force of Osrhoenian archers who immediately challenged Maximinus in 235 by choosing their own rival emperor. These Orientals, Herodian says, bitterly regretted the death of Severus Alexander and gave up their mutiny only after their chosen candidate, a consular named Quartinus, was murdered.[122] Remarkably, Herodian does not explain why these excellent eastern soldiers failed to oppose the Thraco-Illyrian mutiny in 235. Perhaps they, too, were quartered in an outlying base, and only heard of the revolt when it was too late.

The veracity of the episode has been doubted, as the new emperor apparently never punished the eastern soldiers.[123] Perhaps, therefore, there never was a full-blown Osrhoenian rebellion against Maximinus. Be that as it may, Herodian's narrative repeatedly singles the Osrhoenians out, and calls them, together with Parthians, Armenians and Moors, the best troops Severus Alexander had for his German campaign.[124] Herodian thus consistently sets the eastern *auxilia* in opposition to the Thracian and Pannonian contingents, of whom he has nothing to say before they resurface in his account of the early stages of the civil war in 238 as Maximinus' most trusted units.[125] At the very beginning of the twentieth century, the Austro-Hungarian scholar Alfred von Domaszewski placed this upsurge of ethnic rivalry within a context of epic dimensions, in which the disappearance of true Roman emperors led to a struggle between Oriental and Illyrian factions for supreme power in the Roman Empire.[126] More recent accounts, on the other hand, hardly seem to attribute any relevance to ethnicity in this context. It is interesting, therefore, that the name of *milites Osrhoeni* appears to have been erased at Mainz from an altar to Fortuna redux (?) during the reign of Maximinus.[127] This might be evidence for the odium that the Arab Osrhoenians incurred as a result of their initial rejection of the Thracian emperor.[128] There is not much documentary evidence to illustrate the existence of hatred between

[121] See Hdn. 7.1.4–11.

[122] Hdn. 6.7.8, 7.1.9f.; cf. HA Max. 11.1–4; HA Tyr. trig. 32.1.

[123] Thus e.g. Wiegels 2014: 123.

[124] Hdn. 6.7.8 and 7.2.1f.; cf. 8.1.3; HA Sev. Alexander 61.8; HA Max. 11.7. For the composition of expeditionary army of 235, see Wiegels 2014: 118–133.

[125] Hdn. 7.8.11.

[126] Domaszewski 1921: 233–293, esp. 284–288; 1967: 134, 164f. Contra e.g. Dietz 1980: 22.

[127] CIL XIII 6677a = Frenz 1992: 76f. Nr. 32, Taf. 19.1–3. Although the altar is badly abraded, the letters FORTVMAE REG/DVCI of the first one and a half line (if they have been read correctly) surely intended to render *Fortunae Reduci* and not *Fortunae Reg(inae) / duci* etc. as often held: see Wiegels 2014: 123 and HD054799 of the 'Epigraphische Datenbank Heidelberg' for references and published readings.

[128] Thus Whittaker 1970: 156f. n. 2. Wiegels 2014: 123f. rejected the possibility that the erasure was connected to a revolt by the Osrhoenians because there is no evidence for an

ethnic groups within the Roman army, but what little has survived appears to fit the same pattern and general time frame. Thus, a third century (?) graffito in Greek cursive letters on the gravestone of an *eques singularis Augusti* from Arabian Philadelphia at the Horse Guard's cemetery in Rome has been read: Θ ΑΡΑΠΣΙ – Θ (= θάνατος) Ἄραπσι – 'death to the Arabs'![129] If read correctly, the graffito evidently addressed Greek-speaking passers-by (which will have included Greek-speaking Arabs serving in the Horse Guard), but was written by someone who was anything but a fluent writer of Greek. Unfortunately, neither the precise chronology nor the reading of this graffito can be established beyond doubt. A gravestone from Virunum (modern Maria Saal in Austria) from the first half of the third century provides somewhat more useful evidence. For its inscription deplores the death of one Aggaeus, a skilled Near Eastern archer (*vir sagittandi peritissimo*) of *ala Celerum*, who was murdered by fellow soldiers (*vi / militum interem(p)/to*) in Noricum.[130] Although the inscription cannot be securely dated to the reign of Maximinus, it does seem to testify to the latent hatred between groups of soldiers from the East and others from the West in the first half of the third century.

Domaszewski's interpretation of the third century crisis of the Roman Empire evidently owes much of its inspiration to worldviews of his own days, which are hardly relevant to the revolt of 235. Moreover, neither Herodian nor the later sources identify common Thracian and Illyrian origins as such, as the reasons for the insurrection at Mogontiacum, nor is there evidence that it was the aim of the soldiers from the Danubian provinces to take over the Roman Empire. Instead, Herodian maintains that they disagreed with the foreign politics of Severus Alexander. The surviving evidence does not suggest that violent ethnic strife was, in general, widely spread or virulent in the Roman imperial army. It is therefore probably all the more significant to find respective evidence in our sources during the first half of the third century, and particularly, as it seems, in the context of Maximinus' usurpation.

VI. Fides Militum

Countless Roman soldiers were killed by their fellow soldiers during the many civil wars of the 3rd century CE. Such deaths were detrimental to the

official punishment of the troop by Maximinus. However, it is perhaps not necessary to assume an official punishment in order to explain the erasure.

[129] Denkmäler 265. For Θ (= θάνατος) in this sense see Isid. *Etym.* 1.3.9.

[130] CIL III 4832 with 11506 = ILS 2528: *Aggaeo / hexarcho / alae celerum / viro sagittandi / peritissimo vi / militum interem(p)/to Monna / marito amantissimo.* The date of the inscription lies between the establishment of the *ala* around 222/4 and after the mid-third century when it disappears from our records – see Speidel 1994a: 70f.

unity of the Roman army. As a result, the parole *fides militum* was repeatedly spread throughout the army during the 3rd century. Maximinus, too, immediately began issuing coins with the legend *fides militum* in 235 and continued to do so until he was killed in 238.[131] In his case, however, the parole was not prompted by civil war and blood shed between Roman soldiers. Instead, these coins betray Maximinus' concern for the unity of the Roman army and thus point to the existence (or presumed existence) of serious tensions, among which ethnic rifts, as we have seen, appear to have played an important part. A pay-rise of 100%, cash bonuses, and the cancellation of punishments, which the Thracian had promised at the outset of the rebellion were no doubt welcomed by all soldiers of the Roman army.[132] Furthermore, legends on his earliest coin series propagated and enhanced the effect of his generosity.[133] Finally, Maximinus gave all those soldiers who had rejected or even resisted his usurpation in 235 the chance to make up for their mistake by fighting side by side with his early supporters. The measure had proven immensely successful before. Septimius Severus, for instance, had led the combined army of his own soldiers and those of his defeated rival Pescennius Niger to grand victories in East and West forty years earlier.

The Roman imperial army had a long history of successfully avoiding the fatal dangers posed by ethnic strife within its own ranks. Above all else, recruiting strategies, emperor worship, the regular replacement of senior commanders, a common military culture and a doctrine of Roman patriotism prevented ethnic rivalry among soldiers to take on dimensions that might lead to the outbreak of civil war.[134] Yet since the reign of Marcus Aurelius, continuous external threats, civil wars, and the constitutio Antoniniana of 212 sparked far-reaching changes in the recruitment patterns of the Roman army. These new patterns eventually led to a significant increase of the power of ethnic networks in the Roman army, particularly during military campaigns. Herodian's account of Maximinus' rebellion in 235 strongly implies that such networks of Thracian and Pannonian soldiers played an important role in overthrowing Severus Alexander. If true, their success reveals both the far-ranging power of these networks as well as a serious lack of careful management and good leadership in the expeditionary army of Severus Alexander. The nearly perpetual recurrence of the parole *fides militum*, particularly on the imperial coinage of the third century, betrays the continuous threat posed by

[131] RIC Maximinus 7A, 18A, 43–45, 78–80.
[132] Hdn. 6.8.8. The pay-rise appears to be reflected in the surviving documentary evidence – see Speidel 2009: 350, 366–371.
[133] RIC Maximinus 9, 10, 48–52, 54, 111 (*liberalitas Augusti*); 8, 46, 47 (*indulgentia Augusti*).
[134] Cf. Speidel 2009: 19–51, 213–234; 2011.

internal tensions within the army. It was a serious problem caused mainly by the many civil wars of the period. Yet Herodian's account of the coup of 235 implies that ethnic networks and ethnic strife may have played a greater role in this context and the ensuing developments than hitherto assumed.

Michael A. Speidel
University of Bern
Bern, Switzerland
mspeidel@sunrise.ch

Bibliography

1. Abbreviations

ANRW II 2	Temporini, H. (ed.): Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt. II. Teil, Bd. 2. Politische Geschichte (Kaisergeschichte), Berlin – New York 1975.
Denkmäler	see Speidel 1994a.
DPIR	Johne, K.-P. [et al.] (ed.): Deleto paene imperio Romano, Stuttgart 2006.
RVF	Pöppelmann, H. [et al.] (ed.): Roms vergessener Feldzug – Die Schlacht am Harzhorn (Katalog der Landesausstellung Niedersachsens in Braunschweig), Darmstadt 2013.

2. Authors

Alföldy, Géza 1987: Römische Heeresgschichte. Beiträge 1962–1985, Amsterdam.
Ando, Clifford 2012: Imperial Rome AD 193 to 284 – The critical century, Edinburgh.
Balty, Jean-Charles 1988: Apamea in Syria in the Second and Third Centuries AD., JRS 78, 91–104.
Balty, Jean-Charles – van Rengen, Wilfried 1993: Apamée de Syrie, Bruxelles.
Bang, Martin 1906: Die militärische Laufbahn des Kaisers Maximinus, Hermes 41, 300–303.
Bellezza, Angela 1964: Massimino il Trace, Genua.
Birley, Eric 1935: A Note on the Second Cohort of Tungrians, Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society (Ser. 2) 35, 56–60.
de Blois, Lukas 2006: The Onset of Crisis in the first half of the third century A.D., in: DPIR, 25–36.
Börm, Henning 2008, Die Herrschaft des Kaisers Maximinus Thrax und das Sechskaiser 238. Der Beginn der Reichskrise?, Gymnasium 115, 69–86.
Burian, Jan 1988: Maximinus Thrax. Sein Bild bei Herodian und in der Historia Augusta, Philologus 132, 230–244.
Christol, Michel 1997: L'Empire romain du III^e siècle, Paris.

Clauss, Manfred 2001: Die römischen Kaiser. 55 historische Portraits von Caesar bis Iustinian, München[2].

Dana, Dan 2013: Les Thraces dans les diplômes militaires: onomastique et statut des personnes, in Parissaki, M.-G. G. (ed.): Thrakika Zetemata II. Aspects of the Roman Province of Thrace, Athens, 219–269.

Dana, Dan – Matei-Popescu, Florian 2009: Soldats d'origine dace dans les diplômes militaires, Chiron 39, 209–256.

Davies, Roy W. 1989, Service in the Roman Army, Edinburgh.

Deppmeyer, Korana 2013: Maximinus Thrax – vom thrakischen Soldaten zum römischen Kaiser, in: RVF, 103–109.

Dietz, Karlheinz 1980, Senatus contra principem. Untersuchungen zur senatorischen Opposition gegen Kaiser Maximinus Thrax, München.

Domaszewski, Alfred von 1921: Geschichte der römischen Kaiser, Bd. 2, Leipzig[2].

—. 1967: Die Rangordnung des römischen Heeres, 2. durchgesehene Auflage von Brian Dobson, Köln[2].

Eck, Werner 2009: Friedenssicherung und Krieg in der römischen Kaiserzeit. Wie ergänzt man das römische Heer?, in Eich, A. (ed.): Die Verwaltung der kaiserzeitlichen römischen Armee. Studien für Hartmut Wolff, Stuttgart, 87–110.

—. 2012: Diplomata militaria für Prätorianer, vor und seit Septimius Severus. Eine Bestandsaufnahme und ein Erklärungsversuch, Athenaeum 100, 321–336.

—. 2014: Unterwegs im Auftrag des Kaisers. Römische Funktionsträger auf Reisen, in Fischer, Th. – Horn, H. G. (ed.): Straßen von der Frühgeschichte bis in die Moderne. Verkehrswege – Kulturträger – Lebensraum, Wiesbaden, 95–108.

Forni, Giovanni 1992: Esercito e marina di Roma antica. Raccolta di contributi, Stuttgart.

Frenz, Hans G. 1992: Denkmäler römischen Götterkultes aus Mainz und Umgebung, CSIR Deutschland 2, 4, Mainz.

Gagé, Jean 1970, Les organisations des „iuvenes" en Italie et en Afrique du début du III[e] siècle au Bellum Aquileiense, Historia 29, 232–258.

Gebhardt, Axel 2002: Imperiale Politik und provinziale Entwicklung, Berlin.

Gerhardt, Thomas 2008: Unterschichten und Soziale Konflikte, in Johne, K.-P. [et al.] (ed.): Die Zeit der Soldatenkaiser, vol. II, Berlin, 763–789.

Gilliam, John F. 1986, Roman Army Papers, Amsterdam.

Haegemans, Karen 2010: Imperial Authority and Dissent. The Roman Empire in AD 235–238, Leuven.

Hartmann, Martin – Speidel, Michael A. 2013: Roman Military Installations and New Inscriptions at Zeugma, in Aylward, W. (ed.): Excavations at Zeugma Conducted by Oxford Archaeology, vol. III, Los Altos, 381–392.

Haynes, Ian 2013: Blood of the Provinces. The Roman Auxilia and the Making of Provincial Society from Augustus to the Severans, Oxford.

Hilali, Arbia 2007: La crise de 238 en Afrique et ses impacts sur l'Empire Romain, in Hekster, O. [et al.] (ed.): Crises and the Roman Empire, Leiden, 57–65.

Hohl, Ernst 1919: C. Iulius Verus Maximinus, Nr. 526, in: RE X, 852–868.

Horsmann, Gerhard 1991: Untersuchungen zur militärischen Ausbildung im republikanischen und kaiserzeitlichen Rom, Boppard.

Huttner, Ulrich 2008: Die Ereignisse der Reichsgeschichte: Von Maximinus Thrax bis Aemilianus, in Johne, K.-P. [et al.] (ed.): Die Zeit der Soldatenkaiser, vol. I, Berlin, 161–221.

Jaczynowska, Maria 1978: Les associations de la jeunesse romaine sous le Haute Empire, Wroclaw.

Johne, Klaus-Peter 2006, Die illyrischen Kaiser als Herrscher neuen Typs, in: DPIR, 125–134.

Kienast, Dietmar 1996: Römische Kaisertabelle, Darmstadt^{2}.

Kolb, Anne 2000: Transport und Nachrichtentransfer im Römischen Reich, Berlin.

Kraft, Konrad 1951: Zur Rekrutierung der Alen und Kohorten an Rhein und Donau, Bern.

Lippold, Adolf 1968: Der Kaiser Maximinus Thrax und der römische Senat, BHAC 1966/7, 73–89.

—. 1991: Kommentar zur vita Maximini duo der Historia Augusta, Bonn.

Loriot, Xavier 1975: Les premières années de la grande crise du III^{e} siècle: De l'avènement de Maximin le Thrace (235) à la mort de Gordien III (244), in: ANRW II 2, 657–787.

Magioncalda, Andreina 1989: I procuratori-governatori delle due Mauretaniae: un profilo (titolatura e carriere), in Christol, M. – Magioncalda, A.: Studi sui procuratori delle due Mauretaniae, Sassari, 9–154.

Mann, John. C. 1999: A note on legion IV Italica, ZPE 126, 228.

Mihailescu-Bîrliba, Lucreţiu – Dumitrache, Iulia 2012: Les Thraces dans l'armée romaine d'après les diplômes militaires. I. Les diplômes de Claude à Domitien, DHA 238.2, 9–16.

Millar, Fergus 1992: The Roman Near East: 31 BC – AD 337, Cambridge MA.

Mitchell, Stephen 1976: Requisitioned transport in the Roman Empire: A new inscription from Pisidia, JRS 66, 106–131.

Mommsen, Theodor 1890: Die Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Hermes 25, 228–292 (= idem 1909: Gesammelte Schriften 7, Berlin, 302–374).

Moralee, Jason 2008: Maximinus Thrax and the Politics of Race in Late Antiquity, G&R 55, 55–82.

Peachin, Michael – Preuss, Gerhard 1997: CIL VI 3836 (= 31747). Die Karriere des Aspasius Paternus?, ZPE 116, 176–192.

Petraccia Lucernoni, Maria Federica 1987: Epigrafi aquileiesi relative al riassetto delle vie Annia e Gemina e l'origo di Massimino il Trace, in Mirabella Roberti, M. (ed.): Aquileia e Roma. Atti della XVII settimana di studi aquileiesi, 24–29 aprile 1986, Udine, 119–136.

Petraccia Lucernoni, Maria Federica – Traverso, Marco 2000: A proposito di Massimino il Trace, in Le Bohec, Y. (ed.): Les légions de Rome sous le Haut-Empire, Paris, 675–684.

Piso, Ioan 1982: Maximinus Thrax und die Provinz Dazien, ZPE 49, 225–238 (= idem 2005: An der Nordgrenze des Römischen Reiches. Ausgewählte Studien [1972–2003], Stuttgart, 95–107).

Potter, David 2004: The Roman Empire at Bay. AD 180–395, London.

Rostovtzeff, Michael 1957: The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire, 2nd edition revised by P. M. Fraser, New York^{2}.

Sarnowski, Tadeusz 2007: The Name of Novae in Lower Moesia, Archeologia 58, 15–23.
Šašel, Jaroslav 1974: Pro legato, Chiron 4, 467–477 (= idem 1992: Opera selecta, Ljubljana, 305–315).
Sommer, Michael 2010: Die Soldatenkaiser, Darmstadt[2].
Speidel, Michael A. 2009: Heer und Herrschaft im Römischen Reich der Hohen Kaiserzeit, Stuttgart.
—. 2010: Les longues marches des armées romaines. Reflets épigraphiques de la circulation des militaires dans la province d'Asie au III[ème] s. apr. J.-C., CCG 20, 199–210.
—. 2012: Making use of history beyond the Euphrates: Political views, cultural traditions, and historical contexts in 'The Letter of Mara bar Sarapion', in Merz, A. – Tielemann, T. (ed.): The Letter of Mara bar Sarapion in Context, Leiden, 11–42.
—. 2014: Herrschaft durch Vorsorge und Beweglichkeit. Zu den Infrastrukturanlagen des kaiserzeitlichen römischen Heeres im Reichsinneren, in Kolb, A. (ed.): Infrastruktur als Herrschaftsorganisation? Interaktion von Staat und Gemeinden im Imperium Romanum. Herrschaftsstrukturen und Herrschaftspraxis, Berlin, 80–99.
—. 2015: Kaiserliche Privilegien, Urkunden und die "Militäranarchie" des Zeitalters der "Soldatenkaiser". Einige Beobachtungen, in Babusiaux, U. – Kolb, A. (ed.): Das Recht der Soldatenkaiser – rechtliche Stabilität in Zeiten politischen Umbruchs?, Berlin, 46–64.
—. forthcoming A: Antoninus Pius, der Krieg und das Militär, in Michels, C. – Mittag, P. (ed.): Jenseits des Narrativs – Antoninus Pius in den nicht-literarischen Quellen.
—. forthcoming B: Actium, Allies, and the Augustan Auxilia: reconsidering the transformation of military structures and foreign relations in the reign of Augustus, in Faure, P. – Wolff, C. (ed.): Les Auxilia de l'armée romaine.
Speidel, Michael P. 1984: Roman Army Studies I, Amsterdam.
—. 1994a: Riding for Caesar. The Roman Emperors' Horse Guard, London.
—. 1994b: Die Denkmäler der Kaiserreiter (*equites singulares Augusti*), Bonn.
Strobel, Karl 1993, Das Imperium Romanum im "3. Jahrhundert". Modell einer historischen Krise?, Stuttgart.
—. 2007: Strategy and Army Structure between Septimius Severus and Constantine the Great, in Erdkamp, P. (ed.): A Companion to the Roman Army, Oxford, 267–285.
Syme, Ronald 1971: Emperors and Biography. Studies in the Historia Augusta, Oxford.
Watson, George R. 1969: The Roman Soldier, London.
Weiss, Peter 2015, Eine *honesta missio* im Sonderformat. Neuartige Bronzeurkunden für Veteranen der Legionen in Germania superior unter Gordian III, Chiron 45, 23–75.
Whittaker, Charles R. 1969/70: Herodian in two Volumes with an English Translation, vol. 2, London.
Wiegels, Rainer 2012: Tribunus legionis IIII (Italicae)? – Zu einer Notiz in der

Historia Augusta und zur Vita des Maximinus Thrax vor seiner Kaisererhebung, Klio 94, 436–461.
—. 2013: Reiter Roms an Germaniens Grenzen – Zu den Heeresformationen Roms an Rhein und oberer Donau in der Zeit des Alexander Severus und Maximinus Thrax, in: RVF, 235–241.
—. 2014: Zu den Heeresformationen Roms an Rhein und oberer Donau in der Zeit des Alexander Severus und Maximinus Thrax, Klio 96, 93–143.
Wilkinson, Kevin W. 2012: Aurelius Gaius (AE 1981.777) and Imperial Journeys, ZPE 183, 293–299.
Witschel, Christian 1999: Krise-Rezession-Stagnation? Der Westen des römischen Reiches im 3. Jahrhundert n. Chr., Frankfurt am Main.
—. 2002: Meilensteine als historische Quelle? Das Beispiel Aquileia, Chiron 32, 325–393.
Wolters, Reinhard 2013: Wiedergewonnene Geschichte. Der Feldzug des Maximinus Trax in das Innere Germaniens 235/236 n. Chr. in der numismatischen Überlieferung, in: RVF, 116–123.
Zahariade, Mihai 2009: The Thracians in the Roman Imperial Army from the First to the Third Centuries A. D. I. Auxilia, Cluj-Napoca.

Abstract: Herodian, the early third century historian, wrote the only surviving contemporary narrative of the mutiny of 235 CE that elevated Maximinus 'the Thracian', a man of alleged lowly social and ethnic background, to the emperor of the Roman Empire. The episode is commonly ranked among the epoch-making events of Roman history. According to Herodian, 'Pannonians and barbarian Thracians' in the expeditionary army of Severus Alexander were responsible for this scandalous and reprehensible crime that happened on the eve of a major military expedition into Germany. Herodian evidently aimed at evoking common 'barbarian' ethnicity as the most important bond between Maximinus and his supporters in the army. The present paper investigates Herodian's proposed role of ethnic networks in overthrowing Severus Alexander.

Zusammenfassung: Der Historiker Herodian schrieb vielleicht um das Jahr 240 n. Chr. die einzige erhaltene Schilderung der Rebellion des Jahres 235, bei der Maximinus „der Thraker", ein Mann von angeblich niedrigster gesellschaftlicher und ethnischer Herkunft auf den römischen Thron gelangte. Die Episode wurde und wird üblicherweise zu den epochemachenden Ereignissen der römischen Geschichte gezählt. Gemäß Herodian waren „Pannonier und barbarische Thraker" im Feldheer des Severus Alexander für diese skandalöse und verwerfliche Tat am Vorabend einer großen militärischen Expedition ins Innere Germaniens verantwortlich. Offensichtlich versuchte Herodian die gemeinsame „barbarische" Herkunft als ein besonders wichtiges Band zwischen Maximinus und seinen Unterstützern im Heer herauszustellen. Der vorliegende Beitrag untersucht die von Herodian angenommene Rolle ethnischer Netzwerke beim Sturz des Severus Alexander.

Résumé: Peut-être autour de l'année 240 ap. J.-C., l'historien Hérodien écrivit le seul récit conservé de la rébellion de l'année 235, qui faisait de Maximin «le Thrace» (un homme prétendument de la plus basse extraction sociale et ethnique) l'empereur du monde romain. L'épisode se range parmi les évènements faisant date dans l'histoire romaine. Selon Hérodien, les «Pannoniens et les Thraces barbares» de l'armée expéditionnaire de Sévère Alexandre étaient responsables de cet acte scandaleux et condamnable à la veille d'une grande expédition militaire contre les Germains. Hérodien cherchait évidemment à évoquer l'origine ethnique commune comme le lien le plus important entre Maximin et ses partisans dans l'armée. La présente contribution analyse le rôle des réseaux ethniques lors de la chute de Sévère Alexandre tel que c'est proposé par Hérodien.