

A LETTER OF CONTENTION... ONCE AGAIN ON THE TITULUS PICTUS FROM NOVAE (ILATNOVAE 38 = IGRLATNOVAE 57)

Texts tend to live their own life, often despite all efforts of their researchers. This also applies to a text well-known to experts, namely the painted building inscription (*titulus pictus*) from Novae, discovered during the excavations of the Archaeological Expedition of the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań in 1978 (Fig. 1).¹ It has found a particular place in specialist literature due to three reasons: 1. made exclusively with a brush and (red) paint, it constitutes a unique find; there is only one known instance of an inscription thus made in the Roman camps along the Danube line: a *votum* to Heliopolitan Jove ('IOM Heliopolitani'), offered in Carnuntum by the princeps of *Legio XIV Gemina*;² 2. the inscription occasioned the attempts to supplement, in part, the list of governors of Lower Moesia during the reign of Marcus Aurelius; 3. the first suggestions³ regarding the reconstruc-

¹ See S. Parnicki-Pudętko (ed.), *Novae. Secteur Ouest, 1978. Compte-rendu préliminaire des fouilles effectuées par l'Expedition archéologiques de l'Université Adam Mickiewicz de Poznań* [in Polish, with summary in French and Russian], *Archeologia* 31 (1980) [1982], 138; L. Mrozewicz, 'Inscriptions latines de Novae: Inscription de construction peinte [in Polish, with summary in French and Russian], in *Novae. Secteur Ouest, 1978*, 157–161 [hereinafter 'Inscription peinte'].

² *CIL* III 11138 ('Litterae non incisae sunt, sed minio tantum pictae'); *ILS* 4286 ('ara litteris non incisis, sed tantum pictis'); cf. A. von Domaszewski, *AEM* XI 1887, p. 8, no. 4 ('Die Schrift ist bloss mit rother Farbe aufgemalt'); E. Vorbeck, *Militärinschriften aus Carnuntum*, Wien² 1980, 29, no. 41 ('Altar, Inschrift nur mit roter Farbe aufgetragen'); E. Vorbeck, *Museum Carnuntinum. Bad Deutsch-Altenburg*, Wien² 1979, 4; none of the original publishers included a photograph of the stone; since visual material is unavailable, no comparisons are possible.

³ L. Mrozewicz, 'Latin inscriptions. A building inscription in red painting' [in Polish, with summary in English], in S. Parnicki-Pudętko (ed.), *Novae – Sektor Zachodni 1976, 1978*, Poznań 1981, 130–132 [hereinafter Mrozewicz, 'Inscription in red painting']; L. Mrozewicz, 'P. Calpurnius Iulianus, der Statthalter von Moesia inferior', *Eos* 69 (1981), 315–317.

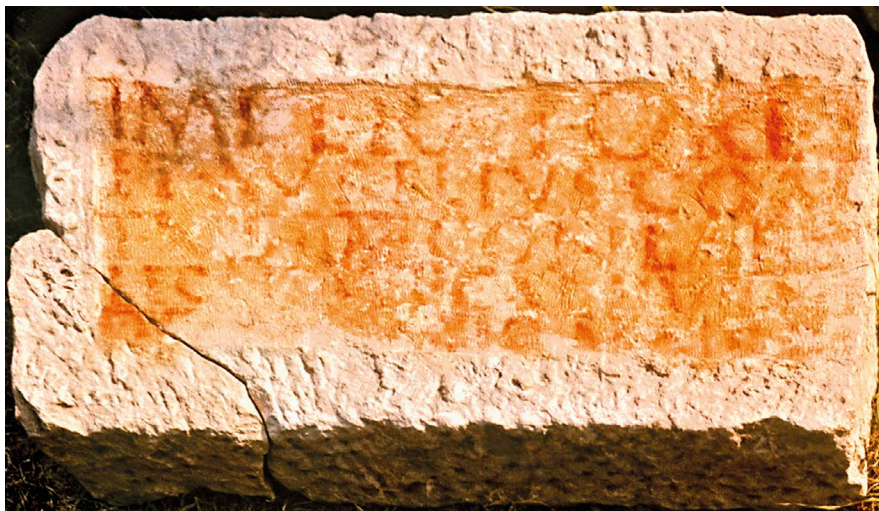


Fig. 1a. *Titulus pictus* from Novae. State of conservation in 1978. Photo by Jerzy Kotecki

tion of the text aroused particular emotions, as once it had been published, the *titulus pictus* became an element in the debate concerning full reconstruction of a fragmentarily preserved inscription *CIL* III 1566 from Dacia, thereby acquiring a significant status in the deliberations concerning administrative nature of Upper Moesia during the Marcomannic wars.

The block with the inscription measures 101.0 cm in length, while its width varies between 55.0 and 57.0 cm, while its thickness is 19.5 cm.⁴ Upon discovery (in the rubble in the southern apse of the great Christian basilica) the left bottom corner had already been found chipped off, yet fortunately loosely preserved. The fragment is nevertheless now missing (see Fig. 1a, 1b, 4). The inscription is surrounded with a border 9.4 cm wide, which initially extended beyond the epigraphic field, but when the block was taken for the construction of the basilica, it was made even with the said field. It may be surmised that the surviving fragment of the inscription constitutes around a third of the whole, which means that the block must have been approx. 2.5 – 3.0 metres long; it is possible that the inscription was made with two (three?) identically worked stones, which were built into

⁴ For metrical data of the stone see E. Bunsch, 'Roman inscriptions painted on stone – technique reconsidered. Results on conservation work on a *titulus pictus* from Novae in Lower Moesia' [in Polish, with summary in English], *Novensia* 17 (2007), 71–73 n. 9; E. Bunsch, L. Mrozewicz, 'C. Sannucius Maior im *titulus pictus* aus Novae (ILatNovae 38 = IGrLatNovae 57)', *ZPE* 165 (2008), 241–248 [hereinafter Bunsch, Mrozewicz, 'Sannucius aus Novae'].

the wall of the renovated edifice. In the basilica, each (?) was fitted depending on how it suited the needs of construction.

The very first inspection of the stone demonstrated that we are dealing with a classic imperial building inscription from the period of joint rule of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus, i.e. from the years 176–180.⁵ The names of the rulers are provided in the Nominative, which was fairly frequent with this kind of inscriptions.⁶ The text was laid out in five lines of varying height. The interlines are uneven, sometimes they disappear altogether; there are also evident differences in how the same letters of the alphabet were executed. This suggests that the scribe did not necessarily follow the previously prepared template, but handled the brush freely. Consequently, the ductus, which was supposed to be rendered in *scripta monumental*, ‘drifted’ towards the cursive.⁷

IMPERATORES [.....]
 ET AVRELIUS COM[.....]
 TVSTATE CONLABSV[.....]
 4. LEG I ITAL P CALPVRNI[.....]
 ET C ŞAMMVICIO MAIORE[.....]

The above reading, with certain modifications in comparison with the *lectio princeps*,⁸ results from the revision and conservation work carried out in 2004 (Fig. 1b, 1c).⁹ The reconstruction of the part which had not survived, advanced in further parts of this paper, is naturally a hypothetical one, yet I believe that it is nevertheless viable.

⁵ November 27th, 176 (probable *dies imperii* of Commodus) – March 17th, 180 (death of Marcus Aurelius); see D. Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle. Grundzüge einer römischen Kaiserchronologie*, Darmstadt² 1996, 138 and 147.

⁶ Despite the claim of A.R. Birley, ‘The Man from Mehadia’, Manchester 1982 (unpublished text, obtained by courtesy of the author), 5; see M. Horster, *Bauinschriften römischer Kaiser. Untersuchungen zu Inschriftenpraxis und Bautätigkeit in Städten des westlichen Imperium Romanum in der Zeit des Prinzipats*, Stuttgart 2001, on 251–439 a listing of inscription (‘Katalog’), most of which contain the names of rulers in the Nominative; Horster’s work is concerned with imperial building inscriptions from the cities of the western part of the Empire, yet in its general outline the formula was the same as in military camps; cf. *CIL* III 11965 = F. Vollmer, *Inscriptiones Baivarum Romanae*, Monaci 1905, no. 362 = K. Dietz *et al.*, *Regensburg zur Römerzeit*, Regensburg 1979, 387–388 (Castrum Regina); *CIL* VIII 2488 (Mesarfelta?); *CIL* VIII 2548 (Castrum Lambaestana).

⁷ See L. Mrozewicz, *Palaeography of Latin Inscriptions from Novae (Lower Moesia)*, Poznań 2010, 48–51; also Bunsch, Mrozewicz, ‘Sammucius aus Novae’, 241–248.

⁸ Mrozewicz, ‘Inscription peinte’.

⁹ Bunsch, Mrozewicz, ‘Sammucius aus Novae’, *AE* 2008, 1184; the conservation procedures thanks to which it was possible to identify the surviving text should be credited to Eryk Bunsch, see E. Bunsch, ‘Roman inscriptions painted on stone – technique reconsidered. Results on conservation work on a titulus pictus from Novae in Lower Moesia’, *Novensia* 17 (2006), 63–71.

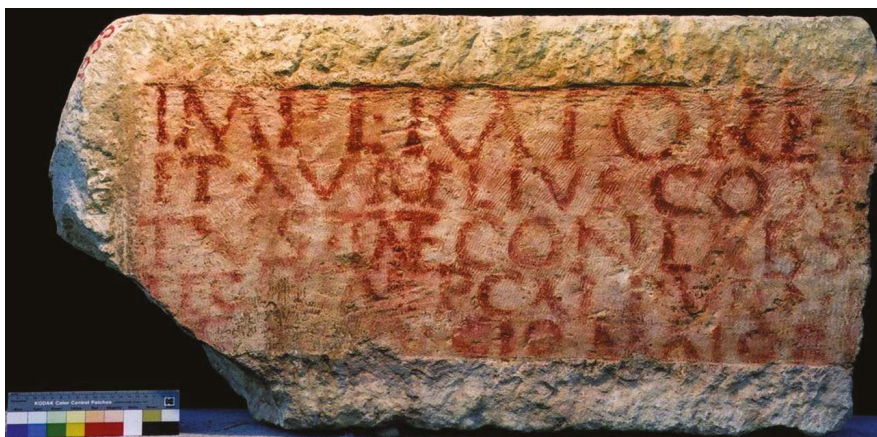


Fig. 1b. State of conservation in 2004. Photo by Eryk Bunsch

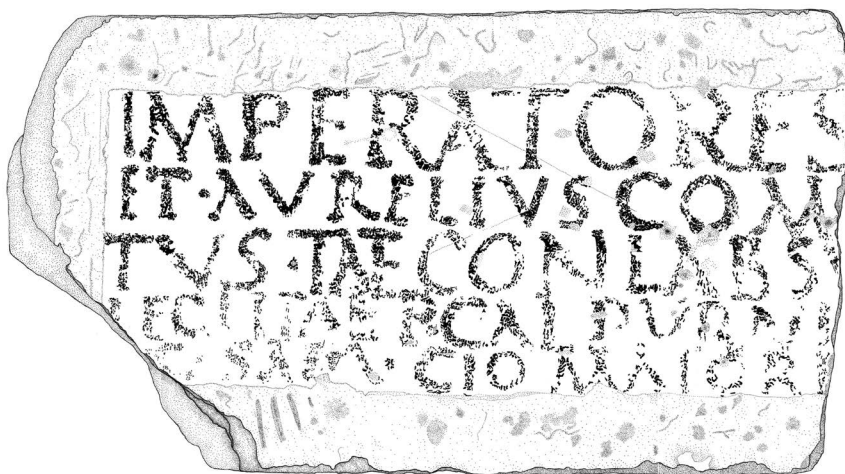


Fig. 1c. Reading of letters. Drawing by Eryk Bunsch

We may assume that in line one, the praenomen was omitted in the names of emperor Marcus Aurelius, just as it was done with Commodus in line two, while the title CAESARES might have been shortened to CAES or CAESS,¹⁰ I rule out the abbreviation of AVRELIVS, because in the following line, next to the person of Commodus, it is given in the full form. The word IMPERATORES consists of 11 letters; assuming that we are dealing with more or less 1/3 of the whole, this

¹⁰ Cf. *CIL* VIII 2488 (Mesarfelta²): 'Imp. Caesares M. Aurelius Antoninus et / L. Aurelius Commodus Aug. Germanici', etc.

would suggest that approximately 22 letters are missing from the first line; considering the fact that their height became gradually reduced and the size diminished, the number of letters is likely to have increased. The scribe wrote less and less carefully, compressing the letters and creating ligatures (cf. lines 3 and 5). In the preserved part, each of the lines has 2–5 letters more than the first, i.e. 13, 15, 17 and 18 respectively; these figures should also include dividing marks.

We may assume that the titulus began as follows:

‘Imperatores [Caes. Aurelius Antoninus]’¹¹

This means that when supplemented, the line should count 21 letters; if CAES were expanded to the full form, i.e. CAESARES, there would be 25 letters, which is theoretically possible.

Line two starts with the conjunction ET, followed by a dividing mark (*littera distinguens*) in the form of a dot; it closes with the letters VE, the beginning of the word VE]/TVSTATE, which ends subsequently in line three. Between them and the cognomen COM[MODVS, provided in full, there was the plural of AVGVSTI, which I presume was not abbreviated either, as well as the name of the renovated building, in masculine or neuter singular, containing approximately 10–12 letters. Given that the later basilica, erected using the material from the demolished military facilities, was built on the western side of the principia, as well as the fact that authority of both emperors was invoked, we are entitled to claim that the building in question was an important edifice which may have been located in the centre of the fortress. However, suggesting anything which would contradict my observations from the initial publications,¹² entails too great a risk of creating a ‘history in square brackets’.¹³ It is preferable to leave a lacuna. Consequently, line two may be written as follows:

‘et Aurelius Com[modus Augusti - - - ve]’

The titulature of both emperors is very concise, limited to the basic elements, as space is lacking for a more elaborate one. It is nevertheless possible that after AVGVSTI (alternatively AVG) there came a title that both rulers shared,

¹¹ For comparison: AE 1955, 135 = Horster, *Bauinschriften*, p. 425 (Lambaesis): ‘Imperatores M. Aurelius Antoninus et L. Aurelius / [[Commodus Aug.]] Germanici Sarmatici fortissimi / partem amphith[e]atri a solo / et podium univ[e]rsum vetus/^otate corrupta res[t]ituerunt per / [[leg. III]] Aug. [... leg. Aug. pr. pr.]’; CIL VIII 2548 (Castra Lambaesisitana): ‘Imperatores [Caesares M. Aurelius Antoninus et] / L. Aurelius [Commodus Augusti Germanici] / Sarmatici [fortissimi principes refece]/runt tures et munimenta castrorum a solo / per [legionem III Augustam]’; cf. L. Leschi, ‘Autour de Amphithéâtre de Lambèse’, *Libya* 2 (1954), 181–183.

¹² Mrozewicz, ‘Inscription in red painting’, 159; Mrozewicz, ‘Inscription peinte’, 160.

¹³ The expression comes from E. Badian, ‘History from Square Brackets’, *ZPE* 79 (1989), 59–70; cf. J. Bodel, ‘Epigraphy and the ancient historian’, in J. Bodel (ed.), *Epigraphic Evidence. Ancient history from Inscriptions*, London – New York 2001, 52–56.

e.g. GERMANICI. It is also worth noting that the name COMMODVS was not erased, despite the *damnatio memoriae* to which the ruler was subjected.

Line three is the least problematic, as it begins with the classic formula of VE]/TVSTATE CONLABSV[m, which is necessarily followed by a more specific statement of the act performed and a preposition indicating the direct executor:

‘testate conlabſu[m a solo reſtituerunt per]’

The letters TE in VE]TVSTATE were inscribed in ligature, which bears a considerable significance for the reconstruction of the text; moreover, the word was split with a dividing mark (*littera distinguens*): VE]TVS•TATE. The reconstruction of this line is crucial for the determination of the length of inscription, since the standardised formula it contains, used in building inscriptions, raises no doubt.

However, a controversy arises in line four. Bearing in mind the consular status of Lower Moesia (with two legions stationed on its territory) and the official nature of the inscription, it may be surmised, with a fair degree of probability, that the line contained the names and the title of the imperial governor of the province (*leg. Aug. pr. pr.*). His *praenomen* and *nomen gentile* have survived: P(ublius) Calpurni[us...]. In order to identify the figure with any personages of the period, the first step was to consider the senators associated with Lower Moesia and, subsequently, with the territories on the Lower Danube. It turned out that the prime candidate was Calpurnius Iulianus,¹⁴ known from a votive inscription from Dacia (Fig. 2),¹⁵ both in view of the *gentilicium*, as well as the fact that the Dacian inscription clearly links him with Moesia. Iulianus was first a legate of the 5th Macedonian Legion (*Legio V Macedonica*), which after 167 was stationed in Dacian Potaissa, and then a governor of Moesia. Unluckily enough, the section of line 8 which stated the Moesian province in question, was damaged in such a way that possible reconstructions include both ‘[superiori]s’ and ‘[inferiori]s’.¹⁶ Direct examination of the stone, conducted in 1873 by Otto Hirschfeld, demonstrated that none of the alternatives could be dismissed,¹⁷ yet Alfred von Domaszewski

¹⁴ PIR² C 270 (E. Groag); RE III 1 (1897), col. 1373 (E. Groag); S.E. Stout, *The Governors of Moesia*, Princeton 1911, 55–56; A. Stein, *Die Legaten von Moesien*, Budapest 1940, 94; cf. 55, 11; A. Stein, *Die Reichsbeamten von Dazien*, Budapest 1944, 92; J. Fitz, *Die Laufbahn der Statthalter in der römischen Provinz Moesia inferior*, Weimar 1966, 23–25.

¹⁵ CIL III 1566 (Aqua Herculis; ad Mediam; Mehadia, Băile Herculane): ‘Herculi Genio / loci Fontibus / calidis Calpu(rn)ius Iulianus / v(ir) c(larissimus) leg(at)us leg(ionis) V Mac(edonicae) / leg(at)us Aug(usti) pr(o) pr(aetore) / [prov(inciae)] Moes[i]ae / [.....]s / v(otum) l(ibens) s(olvit)’.

¹⁶ See *variae lectiones* in CIL III ad n. 1566.

¹⁷ O. Hirschfeld, ‘Dacia’, in O. Hirschfeld, *Kleine Schriften*, Berlin 1913, 745 n. 3 (= *Sitzungsberichte der Wiener Akademie der Wissenschaften* 73 [1874], 365 n. 2): ‘Die von mir vorgenommene Revision der sehr zerstörten Inschrift bestätigt, daß in v. 8 *inferioris* oder *superioris* gestanden habe; es lautet nach meiner Lesung v. 7–8 [...] so daß nicht zu unterscheiden ist, ob man *inFErioriS* oder *suFErioriS* zu ergänzen habe’.

HERCVLI • GENIO
LOCI • FON†BVS
CALIDIS • CALPV
NIVS • IVLIANVS
5 V • C • LEG • LEG • V • MC
LEG • AVG • PR • PR
pro u MOESIAE
...erioris
VL S

Fig. 2. CIL III 1566. Inscription from Băile Herculane

arbitrarily suggested '[su]pe[r]ioris'.¹⁸ His view was accepted by Edmund Groag.¹⁹ In turn, to Hermann Dessau, Calpurnius Iulianus was unequivocally a governor of Lower Moesia: 'leg. Aug. pr. pr. Moes[i]ae i[n]ferioris'.²⁰ Also Arthur Stein, in spite of his clearly stated reservations,²¹ spoke ultimately in favour of the latter version, i.e. – in his reconstruction – 'i[n]ferioris'.²² He also conjectured that Calpurnius Iulianus may have governed Lower Moesia 'in the late 2nd or early 3rd century'.²³

Despite the doubts that Otto Hirschfeld had or the position of Hermann Dessau and Arthur Stein, the concept advanced by Alfred von Domaszewski was supported by Anthony R. Birley.²⁴ The unequivocality of his judgement stemmed

¹⁸ A. von Domaszewski, 'Die Grenzen von Moesia superior und der illyrische Grenzzoll', *AEM* 13 (1890), 144 n. 81: 'Dann obwohl die Reste der letzten Zeile [...] nach Hirschfeld's Bemerkung auch gestatten *in]fe]rioris* zu ergänzen, so führt doch der Fundort auf erstere Ergänzung', i.e. *superioris*'; A. von Domaszewski assumed that the territory of Banat, the area where the inscription of Calpurnius Iulianus had been discovered, constituted a part of Upper Moesia, to which the inscription would attest.

¹⁹ Cf. *RE* III 1 (1897), col. 373: 'leg. Aug. pr(o) pr(aetore) [prov(inciae)] Moes[i]ae [superioris]'.

²⁰ *ILS* 3891.

²¹ Stein, *Die Legaten von Moesien*, 55: '[Er] war Statthalter von Moesien, ungewiss ob von Ober- oder Niedermoesien', cf. also p. 111.

²² Stein, *Die Legaten von Moesien*, 94: 'Die Lesung *inferioris* ist nicht ganz sicher, doch scheint eine vertikale Hasta nach *Moesiae* darauf zu führen'.

²³ *Ibidem*.

²⁴ A.R. Birley, 'The Status of Moesia Superior under Marcus Aurelius', in B. Gerov *et al.* (eds), *Acta Antiqua Philippopolitana. Studia Historica et Philologica. Actes de la VP Conférence internationale d'études classiques des pays socialistes, Plovdiv 24–28 avril 1962*, Sofia 1963, 109–112.

from the fact that Calpurnius Iulianus, as a (praetorian) *legatus Aug. pr. pr. Moesiae superioris*, became a major argument supporting the theory of a temporary change in the province's legal status, from consular to praetorian. I shall address this issue later in the paper.

At the time, the available knowledge about Calpurnius Iulianus, or more precisely about the inscription which mentioned him, encouraged the thesis that he may be one and the same with P. Calpurni[us---] from the *titulus pictus* from Novae. Thus, line four would read as follows:

'leg(ionem) I Ital(icam) P. Calpurni[o Iuliano leg(ato) Augustorum pr(o) pr(aetore) v. c.]'

Unlike in earlier publications, I decided to drop the name of the province, which would be self-evident to the direct addressees of its contents.²⁵ Naturally, with different arrangement variants of the line, one could consider the notation 'leg. eorum pr. pr.', as suggested by Ioan Piso.²⁶ Still, it seems to me that the version 'leg. Augustorum' occurs more often.²⁷ However, by way of transmission from the inscription from Băile Herculane, I have introduced the designation 'v(ir) c(larissimus)', which is justified by the preserved epigraphic material.²⁸ Thus comple-

²⁵ As aptly noted by Birley, 'The Man from Mehadia', 5; cf. also I. Piso, *Fasti Provinciae Daciae. II. Die ritterlichen Amtsträger*, Bonn 2013, 52 [hereinafter Piso, *Fasti II*].

²⁶ Piso, *Fasti II*, 52; cf. *CIL VII 210 = IRB 637* (Ilkley) = A.R. Birley, *The Fasti of Roman Britain*, Oxford 1981 [hereinafter Birley, *Fasti*], 149, no. 197: '... restituerunt curante Virio Lupo leg(ato) eorum pr(o) pr(aetore)'.

²⁷ *RIB 1149* = Birley, *Fasti*, 163 (Corbrige) : '.... su[b] c]ura [Sexti Calpurni] Agrico[?]ae [legati Augustoru]m pr. pr.'; *AE 1910, 86* = Birley, *Fasti*, 123 = *IMSup II 52* (Viminacium): '[leg(atus) Augustor(um) pr(o) p]r(aetore) provin[c(iae) Moesia]e superioris item leg(atus) August[or(um)] [provin]c(iae) Britan[niae]'.

²⁸ See *CIL VIII 2353* (Thamugadi): 'ex decreto Fonte Frontiniani leg. Aug. pr. pr. c(larissimi) v(iri)' – after 160; *CIL VIII 18247* = Horster, *Bauinschriften*, 427 (Lambaesis): '[Imp. C]aes. M. Aurelius [Commodus Antoninus Pius Felix Aug.] / [Ge]rmanic. Sar[mat. Brit. pont. max. trib. pot. ... cos. IV p.p.] / [arc]um muni[cipio Lambaesito] a solo fecit' / per. leg. [III Augustam dedicante] /⁵ [M.] Valerio Ma[ximiano] leg. Aug. pr. pr. c(larissimo) v(iro) cos. des.]. – before 184; *AE 1955, 137* = Horster, *Bauinschriften*, 425: 'Imp(erator) Caesar L. Septimius Severus Per[ti]nax Aug. p.p. pont. max. trib. pot. II imp. III cos I[II] / per [[leg. III]] Aug(ustam) opus amphitheatr[i] / refecit exornavitque / C. Iulio Lepido Tertullo leg. Aug. pr. pr. c(larissimo) v(iro)'; see also *CIL III 1562* = *ILS 3896* = *IDR III/1, 56* (Dacia, Băile Herculane) : 'Dis et numinib(us) / aquarum / Ulp(ius) Secundinus / Marius Valens /⁵ Pomponius Haemus / Iul(ius) Carus / Val(erius) Valens / legati Romam ad / consulatum Seve[ri]ani c(larissimi) v(iri) missi incolu[?]mes reversi ex voto' – around 153; cf. *CIL III 7505* = *ILS 2311* = *IDR/ISM V 160*; the designation *vir clarissimus* is largely characteristic of the later period, from the 3rd century onwards, therefore J. Jung, *Fasten der Provinz Dacien*, Innsbruck 1894, 61, dated *CIL III 1566* to 'nicht wohl vor Septimius Severus, da Calpurnius Iulianus als v(ir) c(larissimus) bezeichnet wird'; on the usage of the title *vir clarissimus* earlier, i.e. in the 2nd century, see remarks in I. Piso, 'Zur Laufbahn des Calpurnius Iulianus', *Römisches Österreich* 3 (1975), 179 n. 27 and I. Piso, *Fasti Provinciae Daciae I. Die senatorischen Amtsträger*, Bonn 1993, 80 [hereinafter Piso, *Fasti I*].

mented, the line would amount to 28 letters in the square brackets, i.e. 6–7 more than in the first line. Let us note, however, that in the preserved section the letter count is 17, or 18 including the dividing mark, and thus exactly 7 letters more than in the first line, while taking up the same space.

When I was preparing preliminary report of the inscription block shortly after its discovery, I was not aware that the career of Calpurnius Iulianus, conveyed in the inscription *CIL* III 1566, was covered in a separate study by Ioan Piso,²⁹ whose findings were taken into account in the relevant volume of inscriptions from Roman Dacia.³⁰ At the time, the flow of information in the scientific circles was incomparably slower than today, in the age of computers and the Internet.

A direct examination of the stone led Piso to the conviction that the inscription never mentioned either of the Moesian provinces. He pronounced decisively that the S in the ending of line 7, thus far reconstructed as [Moe]siae, should be seen as C, therefore his reading was [Da]ciae. Thus Moesia (MOESIA), both one and the other, vanished from the inscription of Calpurnius Iulianus, while Iulianus himself became a praetorian governor of Upper Dacia (DACIA; Fig. 2a).³¹ As regards the possible dating of his tenure, Ioan Piso stipulated, although not conclusively, that he held the office in 153–156 or 164–168.³² These findings were included in *IDR* III/1.³³

Given the new reading to the inscription from Băile Herculane advanced by the Romanian researcher, supported by a very clear photograph published in *IDR* III/1³⁴, the attempts to identify Calpurnius Iulianus with P. Calpurni[us ...] from Novae³⁵ seemed at the time to have been made void and pointless. A revision of findings and conclusion made to date was necessary.

There are two more Calpurnii on the list of governors of Lower Moesia: P. Calpurnius Macer Caulius Rufus from the year 112³⁶ and (highly questionable) Sex. Calpurnius Agricola from 166/167 – 168/169.³⁷ Neither can be considered

²⁹ Piso, 'Zur Laufbahn des Calpurnius Iulianus', 175–182; cf. *AE* 1983, 878.

³⁰ *IDR* III/1, p. 89–92, no. 66.

³¹ Piso, 'Zur Laufbahn des Calpurnius Iulianus', 178 = *IDR* III/1, pp. 90–91, no. 67 = Piso, *Fasti I*, p. 79, no. 20: 'Herculi, Genio / loci, Fontibus / calidis Calpur/nius Iulianus /^s v(ir) c(larissimus), leg(atus) leg(ionis) V Mac(edonicae) / leg(atus) Aug(usti) pr(o) pr(aetore) / [pro]v(inciae) [?Da]ciae / [Sup]er[iori]s or [pro]s[e]e[t] sui[s] / v(otum) l(ibens) s(olvit)'.

³² Piso, *Fasti I*, 79.

³³ *IDR* III/1, 92: the years 153–156 (after I. Piso's publication in *Römisches Österreich*).

³⁴ Fig. 54, 91.

³⁵ Mrozewicz, 'Inscription in red painting'; Mrozewicz, 'P. Calpurnius Iulianus', 315–317.

³⁶ Stein, *Die Legaten von Moesien*, 63.

³⁷ Stein, *Die Legaten von Moesien*, 79; Fitz, *Die Laufbahn der Statthalter*, 19–21; E. Doruțiu-Boilă, 'Die Statthalter Niedermösiens zwischen 161 und 175', *Dacia* 36 (1992), 29–30 (no evidence

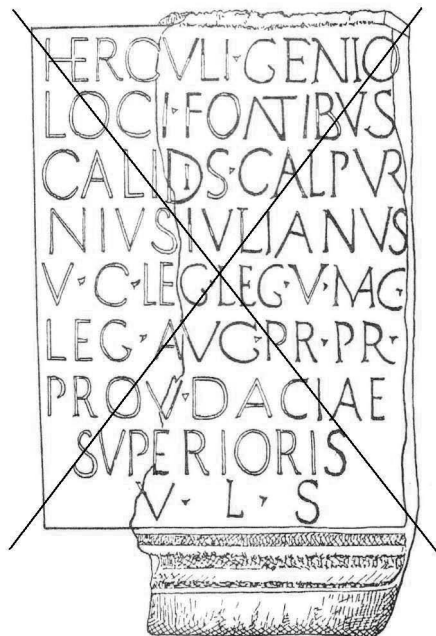


Fig. 2a. Reconstruction by Ioan Piso. A 1975. Crossing-out by LM

because of the time of their legateship, the latter also due to his *praenomen*. Thus the necessary assumption was that P. Calpurnius from Novae represented a hitherto unknown governor of Lower Moesia. Among the *viri consulares* of that period,³⁸ i.e. the 160s and 170s, the figure which deserves attention is P. Calpurnius Proculus (Cornelianus),³⁹ both in view of his *nomina* (*gentilicium* and *praenomen*), as well as earlier administrative and political activities on the Lower Danube. He is

for his governorship of Lower Moesia); G. Alföldy, *Konsulat und Senatorenstand*, Bonn 1977, 222–223 and 233: ‘Etwa 166–168 war er so gut wie sicher Statthalter Dakiens und nicht Niermoesiens’; cf. Birley, *Fasti*, 127–129.

³⁸ Mrozewicz, ‘Inscription peinte’, 159.

³⁹ CIL III 1007 = IDR III/5, 73 (Apulum): ‘Fortunae / Aug(ustae) sac(rum) / P(ublius) Calpurn[i]us / Proculus / 5 leg(atus) Augg(ustorum) / pr(o) pr(aetore)’; IGRR III 192 (Ankara); Jung, *Fasten der Provinz Dazien*, p. 28, no. 33; RE III (1897), col. 100, no. 103; PIR² 304; Stein, *Die Reichsbeamten von Dazien*, 36; P. Lambrechts, *La composition du sénat Romain de l’accession au trône d’Hadrien à la mort de Commode (117–192)*, Antwerpen 1936, p. 118, no. 698, cf. p. 135, no. 805; p. 225; A. Degraffi, *I fasti consolari dell’Impero Romano*, Roma 1952, 45; B.E. Thomasson, *Laterculi praesidum: Moesia, Dacia, Thracia*, Göteborg 1977, 39; Alföldy, *Konsulat und Senatorenstand*, 245–246; Piso, *Fasti I*, 75–77 (with further literature and extensive discussion).

presumed to have been a praetorian governor of Upper Dacia during the joint rule of Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus (161–167), perhaps in 161/162–c.164, and to have held consulship around 164.⁴⁰ Admittedly, he would have assumed the governorship of Lower Moesia after a longer hiatus, but this would have been possible considering the then situation in the Roman Empire.⁴¹ His identification with P. Calpurni[us–] was potentially admissible also to Anthony R. Birley,⁴² while Ioan Piso commented on such a possibility with the succinct: ‘At least the *praenomen* and *nomen gentile* are matching’.⁴³

The reconstruction of the *CIL* III 1566 carried out by Piso was accepted by a number of researchers as certainty,⁴⁴ being occasionally received with some reserve as well.⁴⁵ The first critical opinion was voiced by Eric Birley, who rejected the reading of the Romanian researcher regarding it as inadmissible in view of historical considerations.⁴⁶ Several years later, the thesis suggested by Ioan Piso was also questioned by Werner Eck.⁴⁷

Nonetheless, it was the opinion of Emilia Doruțiu-Boilă which carried the most weight, as she conducted her studies on the stone directly. As a result, she was able to state unequivocally that the reading [DA]CIAE is out of the question, and only [MOE]SIAE (Fig. 2b) is possible in this case. In doing so, she rejected the version argued by Ioan Piso, and upheld the view that Calpurnius Iulianus was a governor of Lower Moesia. The photograph which Piso published in *Römisches Österreich*,⁴⁸ does not offer unambiguous indications for [...]CIAE to be identified in line 8, which was validated by the material presented by Emilia Doruțiu-Boilă.⁴⁹ In such situations a genuine hands-on examination naturally prevails.

⁴⁰ Piso, *Fasti* I, 75–76.

⁴¹ Birley, ‘The Man from Mehadia’, 4–5: ‘In that case, he would still have been unusually senior as consular governor under Marcus and Commodus, sc. between 177–180. Not impossible...’.

⁴² Birley, ‘The Man from Mehadia’, 4–5.

⁴³ Piso, *Fasti* I, 81 n. 13: ‘wenigstens das Praenomen und das Nomen übereinstimmen’.

⁴⁴ Thomasson, *Laterculi praesidium*, 34 and 39; nevertheless, cf. Thomasson, *Laterculi praesidium* III, Göteborg 1990, col. 32, no. 20:97; Birley, *Fasti*, 123 n. 13.

⁴⁵ Birley, *Fasti*, 123 n. 13: ‘Some doubt remains’.

⁴⁶ E. Birley, ‘Inscriptions indicative of impending or recent movements’, *Chiron* 9 (1979), 497 (‘seems unacceptable on historical grounds’); I. Piso defended his position in the article ‘La place de la Dacie dans le carriers sénatoriales’, in S. Panciera (ed.), *Epigrafa e ordine senatorio. Atti del colloquio internazionale AIEGL (Roma 1984)*, Roma 1982 (Tituli IV), 369–395.

⁴⁷ W. Eck, *Die Statthalter der germanischen Provinzen vom 1. – 3. Jahrhundert*, Bonn 1985, 74 n. 6: ‘Doch dürfte es nunmehr feststehen, daß Calpurnius Iulianus [CIL III 1566 – LM] mit einem P. Calpurni[us...] identisch ist, der zwischen 177 und 180 konsularer Legat von Moesia inferior war’; cf. Thomasson, *Laterculi praesidium* III, col. 32, no. 20:97a.

⁴⁸ Tafel 15/1.

⁴⁹ E. Doruțiu-Boilă, ‘Legății Moesiei inferioare între 175–180 și 198–212’, *Studii Clasice* 22 (1984), 109–119, photographs and drawn reconstruction between on pp. 112–113.

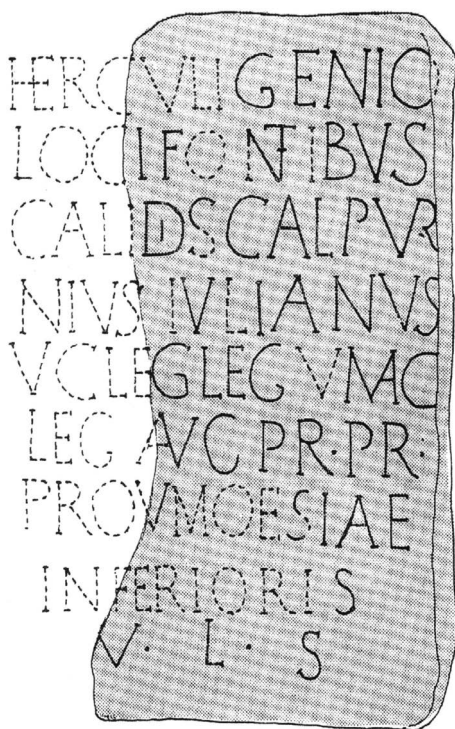


Fig. 2b. Reconstruction by Emilia Doruțiu-Boilă. A 1984

However, in the picture found in *IDR* III/1 the situation is reversed: the letter C is perfectly visible,⁵⁰ the viewer can be in no doubt about it. Such a conspicuous discrepancy in documentation engendered the suspicion that the photograph in *IDR* III/1 does not reflect the actual state of affairs. Already in 1985, Werner Eck levelled an accusation that the image had been ‘tweaked’.⁵¹ At the 1987 epigraphic congress in Sofia, I asked Emilia Doruțiu-Boilă who tampered with the inscription, to which she responded: Russu. Eventually, this was also confirmed by Ioan Piso who, on two occasions, in 1993 and 2008, admitted in his publications that I.I. Russu, ‘unfortunately had, just as in other instances [sic! – LM], “retouched” the photographs’.⁵² There is a slight overtone of indulgence to it, but the act has to

⁵⁰ *IDR* III/1, p. 91 Fig. 54.

⁵¹ Eck, *Die Statthalter*, 74 n. 6: ‘die Abbildung in *IDR* III 1, S. 91 ist durch willkürliche Retusche bzw. Ausmalung der Buchstaben irreführend’.

⁵² Piso, *Fasti* I, 80 n. 5: ‘Der Buchstabe [C] ist allerdings nicht so deutlich, wie bei Russu (*IDR* III 1, S. 91) erscheint. Leider hat hier der Autor [= I.I. Russu – LM], wie auch in anderen Fällen [sic! – LM], die Photos “retouschiert”’; I. Piso, ‘Nouvelle discussion sur la carrière de Calpurnius

be called for what it was: a blatant forgery for the sake of one's own scientific argument.

At first, Ioan Piso took the arguments of Emilia Doruțiu-Boilă lightly. 'There is no need to quibble over a single letter', he declared.⁵³ And concluded that, subject to reservations, Calpurnius Iulius should continue to be counted among the governors of Upper Dacia.⁵⁴

Still, the dispute about that one single letter proved legitimate. The breakthrough came in 2008, with the publication of Ioan Piso's findings from his renewed, direct research on the altar from Băile Herculane, conducted in 1996.⁵⁵ 'I was wrong' – the Romanian researcher conceded.⁵⁶ Now he had no doubts that the letter in line 7 was S, and in addition, he stated that letter N he identified in the following line (8) at the left edge should be treated as certain. This means that the only viable reading left is '[Moe]siae / [i]nf[e]r[i]o[r]i[s]' (Fig. 2c).⁵⁷

Thus Calpurnius Iulianus 'returned' to the list of governors of Lower Moesia, while 'leaving' the group of Dacian legates. Naturally, this ruled out any association with Upper Moesia (Moesia superior) as A.R. Birley had wished.

The suggested reconstruction of line four of the *titulus pictus* seems to be the most likely. Obviously, one has to concur with Ioan Piso that is it only hypothetical,⁵⁸ but there is no doubt either that Calpurnius Iulianus from *CIL* III 1566 is the most plausible candidate to be identified with P. Calpurni[us ---].

Let us now discuss line five of the *titulus pictus*. Letters on the left had suffered the greatest damage, therefore its reconstruction has been considerably hampered from the very beginning. However, a broken-off corner piece was available, with trace of the first three letters: ETC. After a very thorough examination of

Iulianus', in V. Spinei, L. Munteanu (eds), *Miscellanea numismatica Antiquitatis. In honorem septagenarii magistri Virgilii Mihailescu-Bîrliba oblata*, Iași 2008, 178 n. 6: 'Pourant, le C n'était pas tellement clair qu'il nous apparaît dans le dessin de IDR III/1, ad 67, où l'auteur [= I.I. Russu – LM] s'est permis de retoucher [sic! – LM] la photographie'.

⁵³ Piso, *Fasti* I, 81: 'Wegen eines einzigen Buchstaben soll man nicht streiten. Er ist so verwittert, daß jeder Zweifel verständlich ist'.

⁵⁴ Piso, *Fasti* I, 81.

⁵⁵ I. Piso, 'Nouvelle discussion', 177–181.

⁵⁶ I. Piso, 'Nouvelle discussion', 179.

⁵⁷ Piso, 'Nouvelle discussion', 179: 'Il m'a fallu constater que j'avais eu tort, que dans la l. 7 la lettre débattue était un S et que dans la l. 8 le N était sûr. Par conséquent, la lecture [Moe]siae [I]nf[e]r[i]o[r]i[s] ne fait plus de doutes...'; cf. Piso, *Fasti* II, 51: 'Zunächst musste ich Doruțiu-Boilă Recht geben, dass Z. 7 vor IAE Teile der oberen und der unteren Kurve zu erkennen seien, die nur zu einem S und zu keinem C gehören können. Zugleich stellte ich fest, dass der erste in Z. 8 erhaltene Buchstabe mit voller Sicherheit ein N ist, was keine andere Lesung als *Inferioris* zulässt'.

⁵⁸ Piso, *Fasti* II, 53.

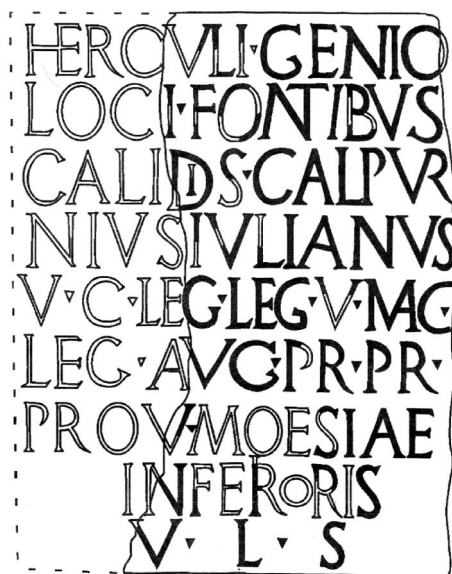


Fig. 2c. Reconstruction by Ioan Piso. A 2008

the stone, the version I suggested at the time was 'et cura(nte) Mucio Maiore [leg(ato) leg(ionis)?]'. Letters ET were found on the now misplaced corner piece, which also bore the left lower edge of the letter C; the remained was preserved on the block. Three letters are missing between C and MVCIO; in 1978 their remnants were hardly visible, but these very features convinced me, taking into account a range of analogies in the formulas of building and votive inscriptions, to adopt the reading CVRA(nte).⁵⁹ Meanwhile, the identification of the names Mucius Maior (MVCIO MAIORE) presented no difficulty, with the letters M and V forming a ligature.

However, such a reconstruction harboured an inherent error. It should have been taken into account that since Calpurni[us...] is provided with the *praenomen*, it must have been consistently used with the person of [...]mucius Maior as well. Fragments of the letter C, visible after ETC (partly on the missing corner piece) is an abbreviation of a *praenomen* C(aius), rather than 'cura(nte)'; even then, this section should have been reconstructed as:

'et C(aio) [...]mucio Maiore [-----]'

⁵⁹ CIL III 10489 = ILS 2456 = *Tituli Aquincenses* I 5 (Aquincum); CIL III 3525 = 10492 = ILS 2457 = *Tituli Aquincenses* I 12 (Aquincum); CIL III 6709 = ILS 5899 (Syria); ILS 2618 = RIB 1234 (Great Bridge); CIL VIII 2345; 2346; 2347 (Lambaesis); 2465 (Saltus Aurasius); 2488 (Mesarfelta ζ).

The year 2004 marked a turning point, when the block with the inscription underwent specialist conservation works. Their results were published in 2007–2008 (Fig. 1b, 1c).⁶⁰ Eryk Bunsch's detailed examination of the remnants of paint pigments, which were undetectable to the naked eye, revealed that C (*praenomen*) is followed by a dividing mark (*littera distinguens*),⁶¹ and then by the letters SAM. With the letters thus obtained combined into the word SAMMVCIO, with the letters AMMV written in ligature (Fig. 5). Consequently, the left side of line five must have been as follows:

ET C•SAMMVCIO MAIORE [---]

Ioan Piso disputed the above reading. Having inspected the stone, he did not determine a trace of M in line five, which in his opinion called the suggested reading of Sammucius into question.⁶² This is hardly surprising: seeing anything in this very section of line five with a naked eye is downright impossible. Besides, much has changed since 1978. First and foremost, the bottom left corner with the letters ET has been lost.⁶³ The *nomen*, which I identified at the time as MVCIVS, was legible in field conditions; it was also then that I noted the ligature of the letters MV, in which Ioan Piso might have seen a separate N preceding the V!⁶⁴ Also, due to flawed conservation concept, the surface of the stone (i.e. the inscription) was covered for protection against ambient conditions with a layer of clear varnish, with adverse results. The illustration shows (Fig. 3), that the bottom sections of the inscription suffered the most. Let us also remember that the publications from 2007–2008 were 'fresh' ones, reflecting the state after the observations and findings made in 2004, whereas Ioan Piso saw the stone (as I suspect) several years later (cf. Fig. 4), when individual letters, especially in line 5, must have become less distinct, for instance due to ordinary accumulation of dust, lack of appropriate lighting etc.

If we accept the assumption that P. Calpurni[us Iulianus] was a province governor in the rank of a consul (*vir consularis*), then it follows that the other personage participating in the ceremonial commission of a renovated edifice should be the legenary legate, as the second highest-ranking person.⁶⁵ We should there-

⁶⁰ Bunsch, 'Roman inscriptions painted on stone', 63–71; Bunsch, Mrozewicz, 'Sammucius aus Novae', 241–248, in particular 243–244.

⁶¹ Just as between P and CALPVRNI[o---] in line four.

⁶² Piso, *Fasti II*, 52 n. 15: 'In Museum in Svištov konnte ich aber feststellen, dass sich in Z. 5 wohl kein M befindet, was das Nomen in Frage stellt. Vielleicht war es ein N...'

⁶³ Therefore Piso, *l.c.*, suggests the following reading of line 5: '...ucio Maiore [---]' (without ET and C).

⁶⁴ Piso, *Fasti II*, p. 52 n. 15.

⁶⁵ As Piso rightly stresses in *Fasti II*, 52; see *ILatNovae* 13 = *IGrLatNovae* 25: 'dedicatum (...) per L(ucium) Mantennium Sabinum leg(atum) Aug(usti) pr(o) pr(aetore) et Servaeum Cornelianum leg(atum) leg(ionis)...'; *ILatNovae* 28 = *IGrLatNovae* 47: 'dedi[cante] Iul(io) Faustin[iano] co(n)s(ulari) et Val(erio) O[...]tiano le[g(ato) leg(ionis)]'.



Fig. 3. State of conservation in 1997. Photo by Eryk Bunsch



Fig. 4. State of conservation in August, 2015. Photo by Michał Duch

fore assume that C. Sammucius Maior was the commander of the *Legio I Italica* in Novae, bearing in mind, however, that this is only a hypothesis and that ultimately it may have been just one of the higher-ranking officers of the legion.⁶⁶

Considering the amount of space available after MAIORE,⁶⁷ as well as the unwillingness of the author (*ordinator*) of the inscription to use abbreviations, one

⁶⁶ This had already been suggested by Jerzy Kolendo in *IGrLatNovae*, 93 ad n. 57: 'Mucius Maior, inconnu par ailleurs, était sans doute le légat de la Ière légion Italica, mais on ne peut exclure qu'il ait exercé d'autres fonctions militaires'.

⁶⁷ The height of this line amounts to 5.5 cm, while the first is 8.3 cm high; we may therefore surmise that the title of Sammucius Maior could have been longer than 21 letters; however, the fairly inconsistent layout of the 'epigraphic space' in this inscription should also be taken into account; see Bunsch, Mrozewicz, 'Sammucius aus Novae'.

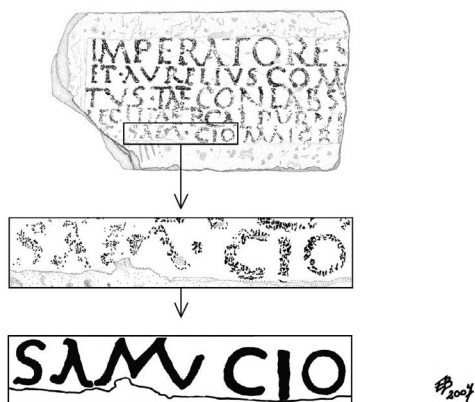


Fig. 5. Reading of line 5. Drawing by Eryk Bunsch

could hazard a following version: '[legatus legionis eiusdem]'⁶⁸ Hence line five may be envisaged as follows:

'et C. Şam̃mvcio Maiore [legato legionis eiusdem]'

Adding (in this case) only 21 letters does not fill up the entire space that the executor had at their disposal. However, one should stress again the inconsistent adherence to the template, sudden decreases of line height, as well as potential use of dividing marks or other elements masking the poor management of the epigraphic field.

Below is a reconstruction of the entire inscription, which the author provides with all reservations due to its hypothetical nature (Fig. 6):

'Imperatores[Caes. Aurelius Antoninus]
et Aurelius Com[modus Augusti --- ve]
tustate conlabsu[m a solo restituerunt per]
leg(ionem) I Ital(icam) P. Calpurni[o Iuliano leg(ato) Augustorum pr(o) pr(aetore)
v(iro) c(larissimo)]
et C. Şam̃mvcio Maiore [legato legionis eiusdem]'

The remarks of Ioan Piso I refer to above do not exhaust the inventory of critical observations with respect to the titulus pictus from Novae, and consequently the suggested reconstruction of its contents. In order to address other reservations formulated by the Romanian researcher, discussed later in the text, it is necessary to outline the thesis about the change of status of Upper Moesia during the Marcomannic Wars.

⁶⁸ See *CIL* III 3525 = *ILS* 2457 = *Tituli Aquincenses* I 12: 'et cura Aur(elii) Frontini praef(ecti) leg(ionis) eiusdem'.

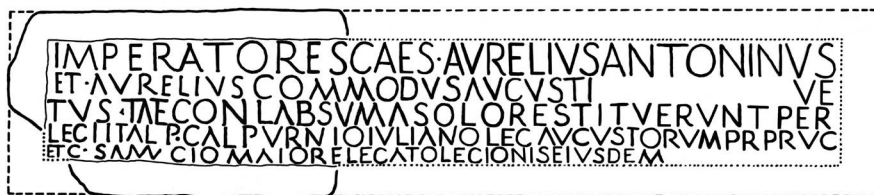


Fig. 6. Suggested reconstruction. Drawing by Eryk Bunsch

In this concept, formulated ultimately and developed by Anthony R. Birley,⁶⁹ the inscription of Calpurnius Iulianus from Mehadia (Băile Herculane) played a crucial if not the decisive role. The idea consists in the assumption that during the period of intense warfare against tribes from beyond the Danube, the status of Upper Moesia (Moesia superior) was temporarily reduced from consular to praetorian. This is surmised to have been dictated by the fact that one of the Upper Moesian legions – *Legio IV Flavia* – was deployed for military action outside the boundaries of the province; consequently, with only one legion stationed (*Legio VII Claudia* in Viminacium), it cannot have been put in charge of a former consul. Anthony R. Birley linked the information from *HA*⁷⁰ stating that Marcus Aurelius, *pro belli necessitate*, changed the status of several provinces, with: 1. changes of that kind which are certain to have taken place (Raetia and Noricum were elevated from procuratorial provinces to praetorian ones, each with one legion, previously praetorian Dacia superior became a consular province, with two legions stationed there); 2. two inscriptions which in his opinion contain (indirect) information corroborating temporary reorganisation of Moesia superior into a praetorian province; the first of those is an acephalous titulus from Mogontiacum, containing what is widely held as an unorthodox record of a senatorial

⁶⁹ Birley, 'The Status of Moesia Superior', 109–112; A.R. Birley, 'The invasion of Italy in the reign of M. Aurelius', in E. Schmidt *et al.* (eds), *Provincialia. Festschrift Rudolf Laur-Belart*, Basel-Stuttgart 1968, 219 n. 17; however, the preliminary idea had been conceived by Eric Birley and Jenö Fitz, see E. Birley, 'Beförderungen und Versetzungen im römischen Heere', *Carnuntum Jahrbuch* (1957/1958), 12 (English translation: 'Promotions and transfers in the Roman army: senatorial and equestrian officers', in E. Birley, *The Roman Army. Papers 1929–1986*, Amsterdam 1988, 103); J. Fitz, 'Der Einfall der Langobarden und Obier in Pannonien im Jahre 166/167 n. u. Z.', *Alba Regia. Annali Musei Stephani Regis I* (1960), 67 n. 45; J. Fitz, 'Legati legionum Pannoniae superioris', *Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 9 (1961), 165–166; also, W. Zwickler, *Studien zur Markussäule*, Amsterdam 1941, 165, had already assumed that the function held by [Caerellius] in Upper Moesia was that of a praetorian governor.

⁷⁰ *HA vita Marci* 22.9 (Hohl): *provincias ex proconsularibus consulares aut ex consularibus proconsulares aut praetorias pro belli necessitate fecit*.

career,⁷¹ while the second is an inscription of a Dacian locality named ad Mediam (Aquaе Herculis; Mehadia, Băile Herculane).

According to A.R. Birley, the career course of [Caerellius] from *CIL* XIII 6806, which at first glance may seem peculiar, can in fact be explained in a fairly straightforward manner. The anomaly consists in the fact that [Caerellius] successively held the governorship of Thracia, Upper Moesia, Raetia, Upper Germania, only to crown the career with the appointment to *legatus Aug. pro praetore Britanniae*. At the time, Thracia and Raetia were praetorian provinces, while Upper Moesia, Upper Germania and Britannia were consular ones. Given that the sequence in which provinces are enumerated is in chronological accordance with the career of [Caerellius], this would mean that after praetorian Thrace, he was granted governorship of consular Upper Moesia without being promoted to consul, only to become a governor of praetorian rank in Raetia, and then hold power in two consular provinces one after another: Upper Germania and Britannia. That would have been illogical and contradict the rules of *cursus honorum*.⁷² If we assume that Moesia superior was provisionally a praetorian province while Raetia became a consular one for a brief period, everything would be clear.⁷³

The altar from Mehadia (Băile Herculane) served as proof of the changed status of Upper Moesia, and thus a 'correct' interpretation of *CIL* XIII 6806. Its founder, Calpurnius Iulianus, was a legate of the 5th Macedonian Legion and subsequently the governor of province Upper Moesia, as A.R. Birley argued. However, it was a consular province, i.e. it could only be administered by a former consul; one became a consul upon completion of the praetorian career, usually

⁷¹ *CIL* XIII 6806 = Birley, *Fasti*, 132 = K. Dietz, 'Zur Verwaltungsgeschichte Obergermaniens und Rätians unter Mark Aurel', *Chiron* 19 (1989), 410: '[- co(n)s(ul)], - leg. / Aug(usti) pro pr(aetore) provinc(iarum) / Thrac(iae) Moes(iae) sup(erioris) Raet(iae) / Germ(aniae) sup(erioris) et / Britt(anniae) / et Modestinaeius / et Caerellii Mar(cianus et Germa(nilla filii)'; this is a votive inscription, the names of the deity and the governor have not survived; the *nomen gentile* [Caerellius] is reconstructed following the names of children; the inscription is assumed to have been made between 167/168 (when the last procuratorial governor of Raetia is attested) and 212/213 (final division of the province into Upper and Lower Britanniae), 'da sonst auf der Inschrift auch für diese Provinz, wie für Obergermanien und Obermösien, der dinstinktive Zusatz nicht fehlen würde' (Dietz, 'Zur Verwaltungsgeschichte', 411).

⁷² On the praetorian stage in a senatorial career see W. Eck, 'Beförderungskriterien innerhalb der senatorischen Laufbahn', *ANRW* II 1 (1975), 181–206.

⁷³ Birley, 'The Status of Moesia Superior', 109–110: 'Of the five provinces named, Thracia, and Raetia were at all periods when administered by senators, so far as is known, under governors of praetorian rank. Moesia Superior on the contrary was consular, as were also Germania Superior and Britannia. But this gives the order: praetorian, consular, praetorian, consular, consular, which is senseless. If, however, Moesia Superior was praetorian, the logical order is restored. There is a further difficulty, that before the third century, no case is known of a governor administering more than two regular praetorian provinces. An answer is at hand: Raetia can have been consular at some stage during the 170's; see also Birley, *Fasti*, 132–135.

crowned with governorship, sometimes held twice, of a praetorian province. Promotion to the position of a legate of a praetorian province followed a period of command over a legion (*legatus legionis*). The record of Calpurnius's career would indicate that having held legateship of the 5th Macedonian Legion, he immediately assumed the governorship of Upper Moesia, a consular province. This would mean that an important stage of the *cursus honorum* was skipped in this case: straight after commanding a legion, Calpurnius would have had to be granted the dignity of a consul, while bypassing the legateship of a praetorian province, thereafter becoming – as *vir consularis* – a governor of consular province. Yet the inscription does not mention Calpurnius's consulship at all. This, as A.R. Birley believes, is completely inexplicable, incomprehensible and impossible. Unless we accept that the status of Upper Moesia was transitionally reduced to praetorian rank.⁷⁴ He concluded that in the damaged section, the inscription from the altar in ad Mediam should read 'Moesiae [sup]erioris', thus becoming a crucial piece of evidence for the praetorian status of Upper Moesia which, in his opinion, would fully account for the course of Calpurnius Iulianus's career. In combination with the inscription from Mogontiacum, the theory appeared incontrovertible. Especially that the necessary condition, i.e. reduction of the local contingent to one legion, was in Birley's opinion satisfied at the time. This is attested in the inscription of A. Iulius Pompilius Piso, a 'praepositus legionibus I Italicae et III[I Flaviae cum omnibus copiis] auxiliarum'.⁷⁵ Anthony R. Birley dates his career 'with certainty to the reign of Marcus'⁷⁶ and presumes, quite legitimately, that he and the forces he commanded were engaged elsewhere than the permanent base of the legion⁷⁷. This means that during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, Upper Moesia, with the *legio IV Flavia* absent from its territory, was taken over by a praetorian governor, who was simultaneously the legate of *legio VII Claudia*.⁷⁸ Analysis of the situation on the Danube induced A.R. Birley to adopt the thesis that Iulianus, mandated by

⁷⁴ Birley, 'The Status of Moesia Superior', 111: 'But an inscription recording only two offices, those of *leg. leg. V Mac.* and *leg. Aug.pr. pr. (prov.) Moesiae ...erioris* is far more intelligible if it refers to a man who had just been promoted from being legionary legate in Dacia to being governor of a praetorian province, Moesia Superior (...)'.
⁷⁵ *CIL* VIII 2582 = *ILS* 1111 (Lambaesis).

⁷⁶ Birley, 'The Status of Moesia Superior', 111.
⁷⁷ Birley, 'The Status of Moesia Superior', 111: 'Wherever it was that he commanded this legions, they were clearly not in their permanent bases at Singidunum and Novae. Piso may have been in Dacia, or even in conquered territory beyond the frontiers'.

⁷⁸ Interestingly enough, A.R. Birley stopped short of extending the theory onto Lower Moesia: after all, in the light of the inscription of Iulius Pompilius (*CIL* VIII 2582), *Legio I Italica* was staying 'with certainty' beyond the province, while the 5th Macedonian Legion was in the East or had already arrived in Dacia; this would mean that only *Legio XI Claudia*, based in Durostorum, remained in Dacia; consequently the status of the province should have been reduced to praetorian one.

M. Claudius Fronto, could have been a praetorian governor of Upper Moesia⁷⁹ in 169/170. Since he died (was killed in action?) while holding the function, Fronto, still in 170, joined *tres Daciae* and *Moesia superior* under his command et again. After Fronto's death (late 170), praetorian governorship of Upper Moesia was assumed by [Caerellius].⁸⁰

The thesis advanced by Anthony R. Birley was received with considerable recognition, not to say enthusiasm.⁸¹ Only minor corrections and revisions were suggested.⁸² Still, critical responses were also in evidence. 1975 saw the publication of a paper by G.R. Stanton, in which the author rejected the theory of the

⁷⁹ At the time *legatus Augusti III (trium) Daciarum*; on Fronto see Piso, *Fasti I*, 94–102, no. 94; cf. also Stein, *Die Legaten von Moesien*, 46–48; Stein, *Die Reichsbeamten von Dazien*, 38–40; Zwickler, *Studien zur Markussäule*, 90–94.

⁸⁰ Birley, 'The Status of Moesia Superior', 112; Birley, *Fasti*, 133; see also G. Winkler, 'Die Statthalter der römischen Provinz Raetien unter dem Prinzipat', *Bayerische Vorgeschichtsblätter* 36 (1971), 75–76; Stein, *Die Legaten von Moesien*, 48; an analysis of the official activities of M. Macrinus Avitus Catonius Vindex and P. Helvius Pertinax, which I deliberately omit here, occupies an important place in A.R. Birley's conception; the British researcher argues that both were governors of Upper Moesia before achieving consular rank, which proves that the province was a praetorian one: see Birley, 'The Status of Moesia Superior', 110–111; Birley, *Fasti*, 142–146 (Pertinax); A.R. Birley, *Septimius Severus. The African Emperor*, London 1971, 113; J. Fitz, 'Osservazioni prosopografiche alla carriera di M. Macrinus Avitus Catonius Vindex', *Epigraphica* 28 (1966), 78–83; A.R. Birley, *Die Laufbahn der Statthalter in der römischen Provinz Moesia inferior*, Weimar 1966, 21–23 (Macrinus Vindex); Piso, *Fasti I*, 117–130, no. 25 (Pertinax); cf. Stein, *Die Legaten von Moesien*, 48–50 (both); Stein, *Die Reichsbeamten von Dazien*, 90–01 (Pertinax); Alföldy, *Konsulat und Senatorenstand*, 235 (Macrinus Vindex, Pertinax), 371–374 (Macrinus Vindex); Alföldy, 'P. Helvius Pertinax und M. Valerius Maximianus', in G. Alföldy, *Römische Heeresgeschichte. Beiträge 1962–1985*, Amsterdam 1987, 326–348; E. Doruțiu-Boilă, 'Über einige Statthalter von Moesia inferior', *Dacia* 12 (1968), 400–403 (Macrinus Vindex); E. Doruțiu-Boilă, 'Der Status von Moesia superior unter Marcus Aurelius', *ZPE* 68 (1987), 251–25 (Macrinus Vindex); E. Doruțiu-Boilă, 'Die Statthalter Niedermösens zwischen 161 und 175', *Dacia* 35 (1992), 32–33 (Macrinus Vindex); K. Rosen, 'Der Einfall der Markomannen und Quaden nach Italien 167 n. Chr. und der Abwehrkampf des M. Macrinus Avitus (Amm. Marc. 29,6,10)', in B. Scardigli, P. Scardigli (eds), *Germani in Italia*, Roma 1994; P. K. Juntunen, 'The Lost Books of Cassius Dio', *Chiron* 43 (2013), 475–479 (Macrinus Vindex).

⁸¹ Cf. Fitz, 'Osservazioni prosopografiche', 78–83 (with modifications supporting Birley's thesis); Fitz, *Die Laufbahn der Statthalter*, 21–25; Winkler, 'Die Statthalter der römischen Provinz Raetien', 75–76; Alföldy, *Konsulat und Senatorenstand*, 233, 235, 246, 371–374; *PIR V/2*, M 22 (L. Petersen); Thomasson, *Laterculi praesidum I*, 130.

⁸² For instance, G. Alföldy rejected the thesis claiming that Helvius Pertinax was a praetorian governor of Upper Moesia, see G. Alföldy, 'P. Helvius Pertinax und M. Valerius Maximianus', 333 (a reprint of article dated 1974: *Situla* 14/15, 199–215, and 206 respectively); cf. also 348 (supplement to the first edition): 'Die von mehreren Gelehrten angenommene, von Lippold anscheinend jedenfalls mit Skepsis betrachtete Möglichkeit, wonach Pertinax um 174 prätorischer Statthalter der Provinz Moesia superior war, scheint mir nach wie vor kaum plausibel zu sein'; Alföldy, *Konsulat und Senatorenstand*, 246: 'Allem Anschein nach war er nicht prätorischer Legat von Obermösien kurz vor 175, sondern nach Wiedereinführung der konsularen Verwaltung Statthalter etwa 177–178'.

British researcher altogether.⁸³ However, the new reading of the inscription from Mehadia, proposed by I. Piso, proved a veritable blow: because of just one letter the inscription of Calpurnius Iulianus ceased to be a conclusive proof which demonstrated beyond any doubt that Upper Moesia was temporarily a praetorian province. How not to argue when one letter proves that important?

The *titulus pictus* from Novae sealed the matter: if Calpurnius Iulianus from CIL III 1566 is taken to be one and the same with P. Calpurni[us ---], we obtain a proof that promotion after legionary legateship did not have to adhere to the seemingly firmly established rules. P(ublius) Calpurni[us Iulianus] could have become a consul following a spell as legate of a legion, only to assume the administration of a consular province later on. After all, P. Helvius Pertinax was elevated directly from legionary command to the dignity of consul (in absentia).⁸⁴

It was Emilia Doruțiu-Boilă, inspired by the discovery in Novae, who engaged in essential polemics with the concept presented by A.R. Birley.⁸⁵ Having analysed the arguments of the British researcher, she came to a conclusion that in the light of prosopographic studies it is impossible to prove whether any of the persons considered could have administered Upper Moesia before their consulship. Also, there is no evidence that the Upper Moesian Legio IV Flavia was stationed in Dacia during the Marcomannic Wars; on the contrary, everything suggests that it remained in its permanent quarters, in Singidunum. What is more, she aptly noted that regardless of the latter, a temporary deployment of a legion from their home province did not entail a change of its legal status. The rank of the official who governed the province did not change either.⁸⁶

If the altar from ad Mediam (Mehadia, Băile Herculane) played the key role in the argumentation of A.R. Birley, the acephalous inscription took an equivalent place in his disquisitions. However, it soon turned out that its 'probative force' cannot withstand criticism. The credit here is due to Karlheinz Dietz, who demonstrated⁸⁷ that [Caerellius] simultaneously held the governorship of Upper

⁸³ G.R. Stanton, 'Marcus Aurelius, Lucius Verus, and Commodus: 1962–1972', *ANRW* II 2 (1975), 508–509 (the case for a reduction in status of the province in the 170's is weak); see also the guarded view expressed by Eck, *Die Statthalter*, 74–75.

⁸⁴ Alföldy, 'P. Helvius Pertinax und M. Valerius Maximianus', 333; *cos. suff.* in 174 or 175, see Degraasi, *I fasti consolari*, 49.

⁸⁵ Doruțiu-Boilă, 'Legății Moesiei Inferioare', 109–105; Doruțiu-Boilă, 'Der Status von Moesia superior', 247–259.

⁸⁶ Doruțiu-Boilă, 'Der Status von Moesia superior', 258: 'Außerdem zog in der Regel der nur zeitweilige Abzug einer Legion aus einer Provinz keine Statusänderung der betroffenen Provinz nach sich. Es ist allgemein bekannt, dass während des Prinzipats in keiner Provinz, deren Legionenzahl nur zeitweilig herabgesetzt wurde, auch der Rang des Statthalters eine entsprechende Zurückstellung erfuhr'.

⁸⁷ Dietz, 'Zur Verwaltungsgeschichte Obergermaniens und Rätien', 407–447.

Germania and Raetia, most likely in 172–175.⁸⁸ He found pertinent evidence in a votive altar of a beneficiarius from *Legio III Italica*, dated to 174.⁸⁹ The legion was stationed in Castra Regina (Regensburg), while the altar was erected in Osterburken, where a sizeable dedication area of the beneficiaries was discovered; in the Roman times, that was the territory of Upper Germania. Naturally, a soldier of the 3rd Italian Legion with the function of beneficiarius consularis would be staying in Germania solely as part of his military duties, which can only be explained by the fact the legion (stationed in Raetia!) was subordinated to the legate of Upper Germania.⁹⁰ This means that [Caerellius] combined the governorship of two provinces in his hands, which at the time, i.e. during the Marcomannic Wars, was nothing unusual (*vide* the instance of M. Claudius Fronto).⁹¹ It is very likely that he had been charged with the burden of reorganising Raetia, which involved establishing the garrison of *Legio III Italica* on its territory.

Dietz's argumentation is additionally supported by his revision of a well-known foundation inscription from above the gate of the camp of *Legio III Italica* in Castra Regina.⁹² The author was able to demonstrate that a M. Helvius Clemens Dextrianus whom it mentions, hitherto considered to have been the first praetorian governor of Raetia,⁹³ was in fact a legionary legate,

⁸⁸ Which means that he was a praetorian governor of Thrace around 170 and ended his term in office with a promotion to consul (*cos. suff. designatus*), served in 170–172 as a consular legate of Upper Moesia, then Raetia and Upper Germania simultaneously (172–175), and ultimately assumed consular governorship in Britannia around 176, Dietz, 'Zur Verwaltungsgeschichte Obergermaniens und Rätien', 418; according to A.R. Birley, *The Roman Government of Britain*, Oxford 2005, 161–162, he may have held the latter office in c. 174/175 – 177?

⁸⁹ E. Schallmeyer et al. (eds), *Der römische Weihebezirk von Osterburken I. Corpus der griechischen und lateinischen Beneficiarius-Inschriften des Römischen Reiches*, Stuttgart 1990, 138–139, no. 152: 'I.O.M. / Iun(oni) Reg(inae) et / Gen(io) loci / Titius Taci/tus mil(es) leg(ionis) III Ital(icae) b(ene)f(iciarius) co(n)s(ularis) / pro se et / suis v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) l(aetus) m(erito) / Flac(co) et Gal(lo) / co(n)s(ulibus)' – dated 174 (Degrassi, *I fasti consolari*, 49).

⁹⁰ The dedication area of the beneficiaries in Osterburken yielded another altar of a soldier from the 3rd Italian Legion, but the inscription does not contain any dating elements; the authors who published it date the inscription to 185–190 solely on the basis of archaeological context (see Schallmeyer, *Der römische Weihebezirk*, 146, no. 159); officially, a *beneficiarius* was a soldier delegated to the staff of province governor (*consularis*) from among the milites of legions stationed in the province; in Upper Germania, two legions were to be found: *VIII Augusta* (Argenterate, present-day Strasbourg) and *XXII primigenia* (Mogontiacum, present-day Mainz); the presence of *beneficarii consulares* from Raetian *Legio III Italica* demonstrates that the authority of *legatus Augusti pro praetore Germaniae superioris* extended over Raetia as well; see Dietz, 'Zur Verwaltungsgeschichte Obergermaniens und Rätien', 423–424.

⁹¹ Listing of such cases from the period of the Principate in Dietz, 'Zur Verwaltungsgeschichte Obergermaniens und Rätien', 443–447.

⁹² For other evidence pointing to an administrative unification of Upper Germania and Raetia see Dietz, 'Zur Verwaltungsgeschichte Obergermaniens und Rätien', 435–438.

⁹³ Winkler, 'Die Statthalter der römischen Provinz Raetien', pp. 76–77, no. 18.

who answered to the governor of combined provinces, i.e. Upper Germania and Raetia.⁹⁴

The findings of E. Doruțiu-Boilă and K. Dietz⁹⁵ were nevertheless far from bringing an end to the discussion about the praetorian status of Upper Moesia or, in a broader perspective, about downgrading the status of a given province once its legionary contingent had been reduced. Its echoes may be found even in the most recent publications.⁹⁶

In the second volume of *Fasti Provinciae Daciae*,⁹⁷ Ioan Piso, admitting the possibility of identifying Calpurnius Iulianus from *CIL* III 1566 with P. Calpurni[us ---] from the *titulus pictus* from Novae, suggested a different position he may have held in Lower Moesia. In his opinion, P(ublius) Calpurni[us Iulianus] would have been a praetorian governor of the province and, perforce, the legate of *Legio I Italica* at the same time, whereas C. Sammucius Maior might have been a centurion of that legion. This is because opting for the reading [Moe]siae in the inscription from Mehadia and the conclusion that line 8 is certain to contain '[i]nf[e]r[i]o-r[i]s' led, as Piso believed, to the 'recurrence of the old problem, namely that the inscription mentions only the legionary command and consular governorship, but praetorian province and consulate are lacking (...). On the other hand it is hard to believe that a senator who did not forget to have the honorific v.c. mentioned in a votive inscription, fails to mention consulship, had he held it at all. In these circumstances there is no other option as to acknowledge that the governorship of Lower Moesia in the career of Calpurnius Iulianus was a praetorian office'.⁹⁸ Piso supports his thesis with the example of two legates of *Legio XIII Gemina* (stationed in the Dacian Apulum), who were promoted from that position to the praetorian office of governor of Raetia.⁹⁹ The difference is that Raetia was indeed a praetorian province while both Moesias were not.

Ioan Piso is aware that adoption of this thesis must entail the assumption that the military garrison of Lower Moesia was reduced by one legion. And since

⁹⁴ Dietz, 'Zur Verwaltungsgeschichte Obergermaniens und Rätien', 424–429.

⁹⁵ A.R. Birley seems to have accepted Dietz's view about the temporary establishment of a joint administrative entity of Germania superior – Raetia, see Birley, *The Roman Government of Britain*, 161: 'The solution was found by Dietz: that this man [Caerellius] governed Raetia and Upper Germany jointly, at a time of crisis, c. 172–175'.

⁹⁶ See Juntunen, 'The Lost Books of Cassius Dio', 475–476; P. Kovács, *A History of Pannonia during the Principate*, Bonn 2014, 117.

⁹⁷ Piso, *Fasti II*, 49–53; previously in his article 'Nouvelle discussion', 179–181.

⁹⁸ Piso, *Fasti II*, 51.

⁹⁹ *AE* 1974, 542 = *IDR* III/3, 244 = Piso, *Fasti I*, 235–237: '[C(aius) Ca]erelliu[s S]abinus leg(atus) Aug(usti) leg(ionis) XIII Gemi[n(ae)] leg(atus) Aug(usti) pr(o) pr(aetore) provinciae Raetiae'; *CIL* III 993 = *ILS* 3923 = Piso, *Fasti I*, 251–252: 'Olus Terentius Pudens Uttedianus leg(atus) Augg(ustorum) leg(ionis) XIII gem(inae), leg(atus) Augg(ustorum) pr(o) pr(aetore) [pr]ovinciae R(a)etiae'.

the *titulus pictus* offers evidence that *Legio I Italica* remained in its permanent quarters, it was *Legio XI Claudia*, stationed in Durostorum, which would have been deployed abroad. Yet Piso himself admits that we have no knowledge regarding that fact, no sources which would indicate that this actually took place.

The view that reduction of legionary complement in a province resulted in a change of status from consular to praetorian is also an unsubstantiated thesis, even more so – it remains solely a scientific speculation throughout. Emilia Doruțiu-Boilă is right in claiming that decreasing the number of legions (to one) did not cause the status of the province to be lowered not the rank of its governor to be diminished.¹⁰⁰

In 162, *Legio I Minervia*, stationed in Bonna (Bonn) in Lower Germania and commanded by M. Claudius Fronto, set out east, to the war with Parthians.¹⁰¹ The province had a second legion, XXX *Ulpia*, permanently garrisoned in Vetera (Xanten)¹⁰². Thus theoretically, following the reasoning of Ioan Piso and other adherents of the thesis, Germania inferior should have been downgraded from consular to praetorian province for the duration of absence of *Legio I Minervia*. Likewise, the rank of its governor should have been reduced from *vir consularis* to *vir praetorius*. Nothing of the kind ensued, or at least no information to that effect is available. Also, such a thesis has never been advanced in scholarly literature.¹⁰³

The inscription of 196, discovered in Novae within the area of the principia,¹⁰⁴ offers yet another interesting testimony.¹⁰⁵ *Legio I Italica* was at the time a part of the battle group which fought under the banners of Septimius Severus at Byzantium (193–195) and Lugdunum (February 197). We know that the then legate of the legion, Marius Maximus, commanded Moesian troops, which might mean that he was also in charge of the 11th Claudian Legion, in the rank of *dux exercitus*.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁰ See. Doruțiu-Boilă, 'Der Status von Moesia superior', 258: 'Außerdem zog in der Regel der nur zeitweilige Abzug einer Legion aus einer Provinz keine Statusänderung der betroffenen Provinz nach sich. Es ist allgemein bekannt, dass während des Prinzipats in keiner Provinz, deren Legionenanzahl nur zeitweilig herabgesetzt wurde, auch der Rang des Statthalters eine entsprechende Zurückstellung erfuhr'.

¹⁰¹ *CIL* VI 1377 = 31640 = *ILS* 1098: 'leg(atus) Augg(ustorum) legionis primae Minerviae in expeditionem (sic!) Parthicam deducendae'; cf. Piso, *Fasti* I, 94–102; E. Ritterling, 'Legio', *RE* XII (1924), col. 1427.

¹⁰² Ritterling, 'Legio', col. 1821–1829; T. Bechert, *Germania inferior. Eine Provinz an der Nordgrenze des Römischen Reiches*, Mainz 2007, 40.

¹⁰³ Cf. also above, n. 78.

¹⁰⁴ *IGrLatNovae* 57bis = *AE* 1993, 1364; see T. Sarnowski, 'Primi ordines et centuriones legionis I Italicae und eine Dedikation an Septimius Severus aus Novae in Niedermoesien', *ZPE* 95 (1993), 205–219.

¹⁰⁵ The suggestion comes from Jerzy Kolendo (January 2014).

¹⁰⁶ *CIL* VI 1450 = *ILS* 2935: 'L. Mario L. f. Quir. Maximo Perpetuo Aureliano ... duci exerciti (!) apud Byzantium et apud Lugdunum, leg(ato) leg. I Italica'.

However, a number of detachments remained in the camp in Novae (and most likely in Durostorum) to ensure continued functioning of the fortress. In Novae, it was those very soldiers who asserted their loyalty by erecting a monument to the emperor, either when the fighting for Byzantium was still in progress or when they received news of its fall, and the army was regrouping to march against Clodius Albinus. It seems that it was a widespread rule which applied when a legion set out for a military campaign. At the same time, it was perfectly logical, as the camp could not be left unmanned, at the mercy of whatever circumstances might have arisen. Nor did anyone think about downgrading the status of the province and the rank of the governor.¹⁰⁷

Naturally, a question remains why next to the title 'v(ir) c(larissimus)' the inscription from Mehadia mentions only the function of *legatus legionis V Macedonicae* and governorship of Lower Moesia. This cannot be accounted for at this point; the reasons might have been quite prosaic, but it certainly was not occasioned by the praetorian status of Lower Moesia. Similarly, we are unable to answer the intriguing question posed by A.R. Birley, namely why and for what purpose the governor of Lower Moesia stayed in ad Mediam.¹⁰⁸ Perhaps 'durante un'azione militare'.¹⁰⁹

The concept of Upper Moesia undergoing a change of status, which Ioan Piso has recently extended to Lower Moesia as well,¹¹⁰ stems from purist application of the prosopographic method.¹¹¹ Its underlying premise is that the rules of *cursus honorum* remained invariable, regardless of circumstances.¹¹² Originators and adherents of the theory do not take into account that faced with a crisis of the

¹⁰⁷ Cf. also above, note 78.

¹⁰⁸ Birley, 'The Man from Mehadia', 4: 'First, if the Mehadia inscription did indeed make him legate of Moesia inferior, one would have to ask: what was he doing there? (...) why was he at Mehadia?'

¹⁰⁹ Fitz, 'Osservazioni prosopografiche', 79.

¹¹⁰ Piso, *Fasti II*, 51–53.

¹¹¹ Which may prove highly misleading, as demonstrated by the well-known theory concerning *viri militares*, a group of people who through military experience gained access to the emperor's closest circles, exerting a decisive influence on the running; there is no doubt that such a group never existed, be it in the political, sociological or professional sense, see J.M. Geisthardt, 'Eine militärische Reichselite? Senatoren im Dienst des Kaisers und das Konzept der *viri militares*', in A. Rubel (ed.), *Imperium und Romanisierung*, Konstanz 2013, 37–56; as early as 1992, E. Flaig aptly observed that 'das Scheitern dieser These bezeichnet die vielleicht schwerste Niederlage der sogenannten prosopographischen Methode in der Erforschung der [römischen] Kaiserzeit' (E. Flaig, *Den Kaiser herausfordern*, Frankfurt a. M. 1992, 572); this assessment may be applied in its entirety to the concept presupposing temporary status reduction of Upper Moesia (and other provinces) from consular to praetorian.

¹¹² Also, one cannot overlook the fact highlighted by Emilia Doruțiu-Boilă, namely that *CIL* III 1566 is an altogether private inscription, which did not necessarily aim to present the full *cursus honorum*.

state, a serious threat to its territorial integrity, or even to Italy itself, being concerned with such details would be no less than irresponsible. Relocating legions from one province to another, depending on the situation at the front, sometimes for a period of several months or longer, cannot have involved temporary administrative changes (affecting the status of governance), first because it was unnecessary, and second, it would have been pointless. The emperor had much more serious problems to tackle.

Reducing the status of a province would have been tantamount to admitting defeat, a confirmation that combat capacity of the Roman state was diminished. This was out of the question. In contrast, elevating the importance (status) of a province was a different story: it meant an increase of its fighting force and constituted a manifestation of the military potential of Imperium Romanum. This was the case with Dacia, Raetia and Noricum. Moreover, these changes were not a response to current circumstances and the dictate of short-term considerations, but a permanent solution resulting from actual administrative and military reform.

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