

Enlistment in the Legio II Adiutrix at the Time of Hadrian and Thereafter

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G. Forni, who conducted the most accurate and comprehensive research on the subject of the recruitment of soldiers into the legions, gives 17 epitaphs of soldiers of Italian origin who were recruited between the time of Hadrian and the end of the 3rd century A.D.¹ I have already shown that Italian recruitment into the Legio II Parthica was considerably greater than Forni maintains,² and although in this article I do not intend to deal with Italian recruitment into the legions as a whole during the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D., I believe that on the subject of recruitment to Legio II Adiutrix in Italy during the period under consideration, I can produce evidence that enlistment in Italy was greater than indicated by Forni's research. Forni produces in his table only two inscriptions of soldiers recruited in Italy to the Legio II Adiutrix after the time of Trajan.³ It is my intention in this article to show that there are a greater number of epitaphs than those cited by Forni of Italian soldiers serving in the legion during this period.

In Aquincum in Lower Pannonia, where the Legio II Adiutrix was stationed for several centuries until its disbandment,⁴ a group of gravestones was found of legion soldiers who were recruited in Italy.⁵ To estimate when they

1 G. Forni, *Il reclutamento delle legioni da Augusto a Diocleziano* (Milan and Rome 1953) 187–188.

2 Y. Shochat, *SCI* V (1979/80) 245–249.

3 *CIL* V 915, *CIL* III 3544, op. cit., p. 187.

4 Mention in *Itin. Anton.* 245, 7 as follows: Aquinco leg II Adiutr.

5 Ritterling, *P.W. I*, 24, legio Col. 1445. The inscriptions are: *CIL* III 3549, 3565, 3567, 14349, 14349/1, 14349/2, 14349/7, 14349/9.

were made, we need to find out when the legion arrived at the camp, so as to determine the *terminus post quem* for their creation. It must be said at once that the information we have concerning the time of the legion's arrival in Aquincum is minimal, so that precise statements cannot be made in this regard. Nevertheless, a consideration of the subject would not be entirely futile, since the available information is sufficient to show that the legion arrived at that camp no earlier than at the beginning of the 2nd century A.D. It is not impossible that it arrived even later.

The legion, which had been created by Vespasian⁶ from members of the fleet during the civil war,⁷ was transferred from Britain to the region of the Danube during the eighties of the 1st century A.D.⁸ Literary sources do not indicate to which army this legion was seconded, whether to that of Moesia or Pannonia. W. Pfitzner⁹ was the first to propose that the legion was initially encamped in Upper Moesia and only later moved to Lower Pannonia. This conclusion is based on a passage from the biography of Hadrian¹⁰ which informs that Hadrian, who subsequently became emperor, was a military tribune in Legio II Adiutrix, and that in the last days of Domitian he was transferred to Lower Moesia. Pfitzner assumed from this that before his transferral to Lower Moesia, Hadrian served as a military tribune in Upper Moesia, which was where Pfitzner thought that the legion was stationed. Ritterling accepted Pfitzner's view, but added a new particle of information, when he established that the camp of the legion was located in Acuminium in Upper Moesia. In this he based himself on only one epitaph: CIL III 10224,

6 Dio 55. 24, 3.

7 It can be understood from Tacitus that the legion was made up of men from the fleet of Ravenna; See Tac. *Hist.* 3. 36; 40. Similarly, Tacitus connects the legion with the *recens conscriptae* of 70 A.D.; see *Hist.* 4.68.

8 Ritterling, P.W. I, 24, legio Col. 1433 is of the opinion that the transfer occurred probably in 85–86 A.D. In his opinion, Filow's assertion that the transfer was in 88–89 is a little too late. On the other hand Pfitzner's date of 82–83 for the transfer is too early (Col. 1440–41).

9 W. Pfitzner, *Geschichte der römischen Kaiserlegionen von Augustus bis Hadrianus* (Leipzig 1881) 77, n. 225.

10 S.H.A. Hadr. 2.2–3

the epitaph of a centurion who had served in the legion.¹¹ The inscription was found in Sirmium near Acuminium and, according to Ritterling's calculation, dates from about 100 A.D., so that the legion was stationed in Upper Moesia at least until that year. A. Mócsy maintains that the legion was stationed in Sirmium, but he considers this to be a reasonable supposition and not a certainty.¹² In my view the evidence is not sufficient to reach a definite conclusion in the matter. At all events, our purpose is to determine when the legion was transferred to Aquincum, and not where it had been stationed prior to being moved there.

Ritterling made the interesting observation that no inscriptions whatever of the legion were found in Upper Pannonia. He concluded from this, reasonably enough, that the legion was transferred to Lower Pannonia in connection with the division of Pannonia into two provinces which took place after 103 A.D.¹³ Pfitzner maintains that the legion was transferred to Lower Pannonia in 107 A.D. (which is to say after Trajan's Wars), basing himself on an inscription from which we learn that the legion fought in Trajan's Dacian wars.¹⁴ However we cannot conclude from this that the legion was therefore transferred to Lower Pannonia immediately after the end of the war. The date of the division of the province and the Second Dacian War can only serve as the *terminus post quem* for the time in which the legion was moved to Lower Pannonia.

Mócsy, however, is certain that the legion moved to Aquincum only after Trajan's Parthian War. He maintains with some certainty that Legio III Flavia transferred to Aquincum in 89 A.D., or somewhat later,¹⁵ and that during the Dacian War the Legio X Gemina was stationed there, having been

11 Op. cit., Col. 1443-44; he is of the opinion that the five legions which are mentioned in CIL X 135, and which fought in the Swabian and Sarmatian War of 92-93 A.D., are those that were stationed in both Moesias, and that among them was the II Adiutrix and not the legions stationed at Pannonia. But there is no basis for this assumption, since neither the names of the legions nor their camps appear in the inscription.

12 A. Mócsy, *Pannonia and Upper Moesia* (London and Boston 1974) Translation edited by S. Frere, p. 82.

13 op. cit., Col. 1445-46.

14 The inscription: Orellius 3048, and reads: Auridio, P.F. Nicepharo primpilo leg II Adiut in bello contra Dacos ab invictissimo Imp. nostro Traiano...

15 op. cit. p. 86.

transferred from the region of the Rhine. In his opinion the latter legion was stationed in Aquincum for a long period. His evidence for this is that veterans of the Legio X Gemina had settled near the legion's camp.¹⁶ He is therefore sure that the Legio X Gemina was encamped there even after the end of the Dacian Wars. Similarly, it is clear to him that the Legio II Adiutrix replaced Legio X Gemina at Aquincum.¹⁷ He does not speak of the period with certainty, but he does indicate that Legions Adiutrix I and Adiutrix II took part in Trajan's Parthian War and only subsequently arrived at Pannonia.¹⁸ That is to say that, at the very earliest, *Legio II Adiutrix* arrived in Aquincum at the beginning of Hadrian's rule.

Ritterling regards the epitaphs of the Italian soldiers found at Aquincum¹⁹ as evidence that the Legio II Adiutrix was stationed in Lower Pannonia already in the first decade of the 2nd century A.D. These inscriptions are, in his opinion, among the earliest of those found in that camp. He is particularly impressed by inscription CIL III 14349/2, which is of an Italian soldier called Marcus Turbo, who served as a centurion. Ritterling identifies this centurion as the celebrated commander and the friend of Hadrian. On the evidence of the epitaph, he is sure that the friendship between the two went back as far as the days when Hadrian was a military tribune in Legio II Adiutrix. But is there really any proof that the Turbo in the inscription is the same man as the one who served under Trajan and Hadrian?²⁰ As for the rest of the inscriptions, as we have seen the legion may have arrived at Aquincum only at the end of the second decade of the 2nd century A.D. It is therefore possible that the *terminus post quem* of their arrival is later than the first decade of the century. Moreover Ritterling offers no real justification for his conviction that these inscriptions are the earliest among those found at Aquincum that date from the first decade of the 2nd century. Apparently he was basing himself on the accepted view in his day that recruitment into the legions had ceased in Italy after the rule of Trajan. Nevertheless, since evidence does exist that would

16 op. cit. p. 92.

17 op. cit. p. 99.

18 op. cit. p. 99; in A.E. 1978, p. 187, is given B. Lörinez's view that the legion arrived in Aquincum in 118 A.D.

19 The inscriptions which are mentioned by Ritterling are: CIL III 3459, 3567, 14349, 14349/1, 14349/2, 14349/9. In regard to CIL III 14349/1; there is an error in P.W., where it appears as CIL III 14349/4.

20 See n. 34.

indicate that there was recruitment in Italy to the legions also in the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D.,²¹ Ritterling's assumption is no longer tenable.

On the other hand, the fact that the legion was stationed at Aquincum for at least two centuries provides a sound basis for assuming there to be a wide chronological distribution in both the inscriptions referred to by Ritterling as well as those inscriptions of Italian soldiers found in the camp, to which he makes no reference.²² In any case, the claim that the inscriptions belong to the early years of the legion's presence in Aquincum is arbitrary, and it seems unwarranted to assume that they were all made in the same years and immediately following the legion's arrival in Pannonia. Moreover, the added arguments that the inscriptions were located in more or less the same area and are in a similar style seem to me to be tenuous, and indicate nothing about the date of the inscriptions. The issue of location appears to me to be insignificant, since the fact that the graves are in proximity does not preclude the possibility that considerable time had lapsed between burials. At all events, the proximity of the graves is no indication of their age. As to the second argument, apart from its inaccuracy, since not all the inscriptions are alike, there is one epitaph which is not of an Italian soldier, and which dates from the period of the Emperor Hadrian at the earliest²³ and bears a strong resemblance to a number of them. From this we can conclude that these latter, as well, are at the earliest from the period of Hadrian.

Let us first consider the question of the similarity of the inscriptions. It is evident that inscription CIL III 14349, mentioned by Ritterling, differs from the others. No mention of the soldier's town of origin, as it is in the others; however, reference is made to *natione Italo*, which does not appear in other inscriptions. Nor is the century mentioned in which the soldier served, whereas the century is recorded in the epitaphs CIL III 3567, CIL III 14349/2, and CIL III 14349/9. As to the time of the inscription, there is no justification whatever in dating it as belonging to the first decade of the 2nd century A.D. A comparison with other inscriptions in which the designations *natio(ne) italus* or *na[ti]one]italic[o]* appear indicates a high probability that inscription CIL III 14349 dates from the time of Hadrian onward. The inscriptions in which this formula appears are CIL VIII 3026, CIL VIII 21053, and CIL III 6611; all three of them are indicated in Forni's table as dating from the time of

21 See notes 1 and 2.

22 He does not mention CIL III 3565, 14349/9.

23 CIL III 3530.

Hadrian onward.²⁴ Most probably this is correct. Inscription CIL VIII 3026 was found in Lambaesis, which is in the province Africa. The inscription is of a soldier who served in Legio III Augusta, which has been moved to Lambaesis in one of the early years of the reign of Hadrian.²⁵ From then on the legion was stationed at the same camp for the whole period of its existence, apart from fifteen years during the 3rd century.²⁶ Accordingly, the beginning of Hadrian's reign is the *terminus post quem* for this inscription, and it may even date from much later. Inscription CIL III 21053, of a soldier who served in a legion established by Trajan, the Legio XXX Ulpia, dates in Ritterling's opinion from the time of Antoninus Pius.²⁷ The third inscription CIL III 6611, of a soldier who served with the legio II Traiana, is dated by Ritterling as belonging to the beginning of the 3rd century A.D.²⁸ Concerning the dating of this inscription, J.C. Mann observes, "the designation Italus can hardly date before the third century."²⁹ But even if the inscription is not as late as is thought, the fact that it was found in Egypt, and that the earliest evidence for the presence of Legio II Traiana in that country dates from 19 April 127 A.D.,³⁰ clearly demonstrates that the inscription is at least later than that date. Hence from the comparison of the three inscriptions we can deduce that CIL III 14349 was made later than the first decade of the 2nd century A.D. The formula *natione italo* does not appear in any one of the dozens of inscriptions of soldiers who were recruited in Italy during the Flavian-Trajanic period. It is therefore odd that Forni should date CIL III 14349 to that period,³¹ and that it should appear so in his table without explanation.

24 op. cit. p. 188.

25 CIL VIII, p. XIX, the first evidence of stationing in Lambaesis is CIL VIII 2591, found outside the camp and dated 123 A.D. The earliest inscription found in the camp itself is CIL VIII, 2533, dated 129 A.D.

26 Ptolem 4. 3,7; inscription CIL XIII 3162 is of the 3rd century. See also Ritterling, op.cit. Col. 1497.

27 Op. cit. Col. 1826. J.C. Mann, "The Raising of New Legions during the Principate," *Hermes*, 91 (1963) does not mention the inscription, perhaps because he thinks the soldier was recruited after the creation of the legion.

28 op. cit. 1487.

29 J.C. Mann, op. cit., p. 485.

30 CIL III, p. 42.

31 op. cit. p. 179.

Inscription CIL III 14349/2, which Ritterling also mentions, is fragmented and it is impossible to determine if its style is the same as that of the others, or not. Nor is inscription CIL III 3549 similar to CIL III 14349/9, CIL III 14349/2 and CIL III 3567, inasmuch as neither the tribe nor the legion to which the soldier belonged are mentioned in it. Forni, at all events, asserts³² that the man served in the legion referred to. Yet, though it can be argued that the three inscriptions, CIL III 3567, CIL III 14349/2 and CIL III 14349/9, are similar and therefore belong to the same period, this period need not necessarily be the first decade of the 2nd century A.D. Inscription CIL III 3530 is similar to the three mentioned above. It belongs to a soldier who served in the Legio II Adiutrix and was of Macedonian origin. The last we learn from the fact that his native city is given as Pela(gonia). His cognomen was Mestrius, and his nomen Aelius. Mestrius is not a Latin name but a local one.³³ The inscription could therefore belong to a man from a province who had received Roman citizenship from Aelius Hadrianus. By the same token he may have inherited the nomen Aelius, so that it was his father or even his grandfather who had received citizenship from Hadrian. The similarity between the inscription of the Macedonian soldier and those of the three Italian soldiers is very striking. All the inscriptions reveal the same order of praenomen, nomen, reference to the father (which does not appear on CIL III 14349/2,), tribe, cognomen, service with II Adiutrix, the century in which the soldier served, his age and length of service. It is therefore almost certain that they are all of the same period. As we have observed, the name of the centurion Turbo appears in the inscription CIL 14349/2. However, we have no supporting evidence to confirm that the commander was a centurion in Legio II Adiutrix, or that he was a centurion at all.³⁴ The text of the Macedonian soldier's inscription and of the three Italian soldiers is as follows:

32 op. cit. p. 179, the soldier is from Vicetia.

33 Forni notes that this name is Thracian; op.cit., p. 200.

34 As to the uncertainty of the identification of the centurion with the commander, see R. Syme, "The Wrong Marcus Turbo", *JRS* 52(1962) 91.

C.I.L. III 3530
 D.M.
 P. AEL. P.F. MECIA
 MESTRIUS PELA(gonia)
 OPT LEG II AD
 >ATTEI DEXTRI
 ANN XXVIII STIP
 XVIII H.S.E. OPTI
 ONES LEG EIUSD

C.I.L. III 14349/9
 M. VALERIUS
 M(F) ANIENSIS
 MARCELUS
 VERCELIS
 MIL LEG II AD
 > POSTUMI
 VALENTIS
 AN XL STIP XVIII

C.I.L. III 3567
 L. VALERIUS
 L.F. ANI CRESCENS
 .VERC MIL LEG II
 AD P.F. > COMINI
 PRULINI AN XXIII
 STIPENDIORUM XV
 T.F.I. H.F.C. H.S.E.

C.I.L. II 14349/2
 C. CASRICIUS
 OFF VICTOR
 COMO MIL
 LEG II AD > M
 TURBONIS AN
 XXXVIII STIP XIII
 H.S.E. L. LUCILIUS
 ET HERES POSUIT

Another inscription found in Aquincum, CIL III 3544, is that of a soldier from Luceria Appia. It is interesting that Ritterling, who knew of the inscription and mentions it in the rubric *Heimatsangaben der Soldaten*,³⁵ did not find it necessary to mention the inscription in his survey on the legion. Possibly he realized that it belonged to a period later than that of Trajan; at least this is the opinion of Forni.³⁶ Inscription CIL V 915, of a soldier who served in this legion, is dated by Forni as after Trajan.³⁷ There is no indication in the inscription that the soldier was a native of Aquileia, where the inscription was found. Forni, however, believes that this was the case.

Two more inscriptions of Italian soldiers were found at Aquincum, they are mentioned by neither Ritterling nor Forni: CIL III 14349/7, of a soldier recorded as being from *Opter*, i.e. Opitergium; and CIL III 3565, of a soldier who is Taurinis from Augusta Taurinorum. One could say of these as well that their *terminus post quem* is the beginning of Hadrian's reign, in other

35 op. cit. Col. 1455.

36 op. cit. p. 187.

37 op. cit. p. 187.

words at the time that Legio II Adiutrix arrived at Aquincum. But of course they could well be of a later time.

Two inscriptions of soldiers of the legion which were found in Northern Italy, CIL V 6422 and CIL V 811, are of the 3rd century A.D.³⁸ The first is of an ordinary soldier and was found near Ticinum, and the second is of an *optio* and was found near Aquileia. Their origins are not mentioned, but this is a common feature of 3rd-century inscriptions. It is also possible that they were buried in their native towns, in which case such a reference was unnecessary. On the other hand, we should not ignore the possibility that they were killed in battle in northern Italy, and were not of Italian origin. As for the *optio*, we might add that inscription CIL V 915, which was also found at Aquileia, does not state that the soldier came from that town, although Forni, as we have seen, asserts that he was recruited there. Moreover, since there is clear evidence of the recruitment of soldiers in Aquileia in the 3rd century,³⁹ it is possible that the *optio* too was a native of this town.

In fine, although Ritterling mentions no inscriptions of soldiers who served in Legio II Adiutrix subsequent to the first decade of the 2nd century, and Forni makes mention of only two such inscriptions — namely, CIL V 915 and CIL 3544 — nevertheless we can attribute inscriptions CIL III 3549, 3565, 3567, 6422, 14349, 14349/2, 14349/7, 14349/9, and CIL V 811 to the period of Hadrian and later. But though I would not say that all eleven of the soldiers — i.e. the two referred to by Forni and the 9 I have mentioned — were recruited in Italy during the time of Hadrian or subsequently, even if only four or five of the nine I have added were recruited subsequent to the time of Trajan, then the picture of the Italian recruitment to this legion during the 2nd and 3rd centuries changes.

38 Ritterling op. cit., Col. 1451.

39 The inscriptions from the 3rd century of the soldiers from Aquileia are: CIL V 850, 951, see Ritterling op. cit. Col. 1722; CIL V 888, see Ritterling op. cit. Col. 1400. CIL V 984 — Ritterling o.c. Col. 1394 is sure that this is from the end of the 3rd century or the beginning of the 4th, but he does not elucidate. CIL V 893 — in the commentary on the inscription in CIL it is established that the inscription is of the 3rd or early 4th century. CIL V 895, 944 — from the latter half of the third or early 4th century, see commentary in CIL V 893; CIL 944 — in regard to CIL 944, see Ritterling op.cit. col. 1700.

Forni has furnished sixty-six inscriptions mentioning soldiers recruited from the provinces for Legio II Adiutrix after the time of Trajan.⁴⁰ In these there are seventy-four soldiers referred to. To these another nineteen inscriptions can be added, and it is clear that the soldiers mentioned in them were recruited into the legion from the provinces.⁴¹ The total number of soldiers in this category known to us is therefore less than one hundred, and the total of soldiers known to be recruited in Italy is between seven and eleven. Both sets of figures are too small for the purposes of a statistical study, so that it is impossible to determine, in percentages, the contribution of Italy to the legion in manpower. Nevertheless we can state on the basis of the figures in our possession that recruitment in Italy to the legion was not negligible, and that Italians constituted a contingent in the legion, whose presence cannot be ignored.

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40 *op. cit.* p. 218.

41 The inscriptions are: A.E. 1953/5; A.E. 1964/260; A.E. 1965/43; A.E. 1965/44; A.E. 1965/48; A.E. 1967/367; A.E. 1967/370; A.E. 1967/372; A.E. 1967/373; A.E. 1968/433; A.E. 1968/439; A.E. 1969-70/482; A.E. 1969-70/490; A.E. 1971/347; A.E. 1972/382; A.E. 1972/383; A.E. 1972/438; A.E. 1976/553; A.E. 1976/641.