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VETERANS OF THE PRAETORIAN GUARD IN THE CENTRAL BALKAN PROVINCES*

ABSTRACT: Praetorian veterans living in the central Balkan provinces fall into two distinct groups, according to the motives that guided them to settle there. The majority had simply decided to return to their homes. The second group consists of soldiers originating in other parts of the Empire. Some of them might have received land-grants during the first century A.D., while others possibly went back to where they had served for a certain time.

KEYWORDS: Praetorian guard, veterans, Moesia, Macedonia, Thrace

During the first two centuries of the Roman Empire, up to the reign of Septimius Severus, praetorian cohorts were recruited primarily in Italy. Soldiers originating from the provinces were few in number and the conscription was limited to Romanized areas such as Macedonia, Noricum, Narbonese Gaul or the Iberian Peninsula. During the third century, however, praetorians were for the most part recruited in the Danubian regions, especially among the Illyrians and Thracians.¹ Epigraphic evidence from Moesia, Thrace and Macedonia suggests that a number of praetorians settled in those provinces after they had been discharged from the army. The princi-

* This article is based on the paper of the same title presented at the Thirteenth Congress of Greek and Latin Epigraphy, 2—7 September 2007 at Oxford in the thematic panel *Latin Epigraphy of the Balkans: Society of the Central Balkan Provinces from the First to the Third Century AD*.

¹ Cf. M. Durry, *Cohortes prétoriennes*, Paris 1938, 240 sqq.; idem, *RE* XXII/2, 1954, 1626 sq., s. v. *praetoriae cohortes*; Y. le Bohec, *L'armée romaine*, Paris 1990, 104; B. Pferdehirt, *Die Rolle des Militärs für den sozialen Aufstieg in der römischen Kaiserzeit*, Mainz 2002, 148.

pal aim of this paper would be to determine the reasons for that choice. We shall also deal with the marital and social status of the praetorian veterans living in the central Balkan provinces.

Veterans of the praetorian guard usually went back to their homes after being discharged from military service. Those who had served in other units before joining the guard might have decided to return to their former camps and fortresses. Some former praetorians received land-grants and participated in settlement *iussu principis* in Italy or the provinces.² Epigraphic evidence implies that the majority of praetorian veterans attested in Moesia, Thrace and Macedonia had chosen to return to their homes. Such cases are most numerous in Thrace and they all date back to the first half of the third century A.D. Judging from the find-spots of military diplomas, seven veterans returned to the areas in which they had been recruited — to the territories of Serdica, Philippopolis (called *Trimontium* in *CIL XVI 139*),³ and Pautalia. Two diplomas were found in the territory of Serdica: *RMD 75* issued in 222 A.D. in the village of Planinica near Piroto;⁴ *RMD 77* issued in 236 A.D. in the village of Sohače near Vraca.⁵ The exact find-spots of two diplomas are not known. *RMD 473*, issued in 247 A.D., was discovered between the rivers Ogošta and Isker in Bulgaria and *RMD 193*, issued in 223 A.D., was discovered in Bulgaria. The recipients of these two constitutions gave their *origo* as Serdica, and they probably returned to their hometown or to its territory. Two diplomas were discovered in the territory of Philippopolis: *CIL XVI 139* issued in 221 A.D. was found in the Roman fortress between the villages of Karagatsch and Sarnitsch, some 60 km south-west of Plovdiv and *CIL XVI 189* issued in 224. A.D. was found near the village of Michilzi, near Kar-

² On various motives for settling in particular cities or provinces cf. Durry, *Cohortes prétoriennes* (as in n. 1), 302; id., *RE XXII/2*, 1629 sq.; H. Lieb, *Die constitutionen für die stadtrömischen Truppen*, in H. Wolff/W. Eck (eds.), *Heer und Integrationspolitik. Die römischen Militärdiplome als historische Quelle*, Köln/Wien 1986, 327 sq.

³ Philippolis is called Trimontium in Plin. *HN* 4, 41 and Ptol. *Geogr.* III, 11, 7.

⁴ On Planinica as part of the territory of Serdica cf. S. Dušanić/P. Petrović, *Epigraphic Contributions from the National Museum of Niš*, *Živa antika* 12, 1963, 385. Б. Геров, Проучвания върху западнотракийте земи през римско време II (= Untersuchungen über die westthrakischen Länder in römischer Zeit II), *Годушник на Софийския университет* (= *Annuaire de l'Université de Sofia*), 61/1, 1967, 71 states that the territory of Serdica extended to the border between Thrace and Upper Moesia.

⁵ M. M. Roxan, *RMD* p. 99 ad n° 77 states that Sohače is not within the territory of Serdica. Геров, *Проучвания II* (as in n. 4), 72 believes that the whole middle course of the river Isker, as well as the area around Vraca belonged to the territory of that city.

lovo, north of Plovdiv.⁶ Finally, one diploma was discovered in the village of Leško that is ascribed to the territory of Pautalia (*RMD* 76 issued in 224 A.D.).⁷ All seven recipients of the diplomas found in Thrace seem to have returned to their homes after their discharge from the praetorian guard: four went back to Serdica, two to Philippopolis, and one to Pautalia.

Two veterans attested on these diplomas were of Thracian origin, as is shown by their names. M. Septimius Maeticus, discharged in 221 A.D., who had returned to the area of Philippopolis, bears a Thracian cognomen (*CIL* XVI 139). The name (in the form *Meticus*) is recorded on a diploma issued in the year 99 A.D. to an auxiliary recruited among the Thracian tribe of Bessi.⁸ Our veteran owed his citizenship to Septimius Severus. Since he had been conscripted in 205 A.D. or even earlier, it is possible that he had begun his service in one of the Danubian legions and had gained citizenship on entering the army. Transfers from the legions to the praetorian guard were fairly common in the third century.⁹ M. Aurelius Mucianus, from Pautalia, discharged in 224 A.D., also bears a Thracian cognomen, derived from the widespread name *Muca* (*RMD* 76).¹⁰ His family derived citizenship from Marcus Aurelius or Caracalla. The recipient of the diploma found at Sohače — M. Aurelius Vellicus, discharged in 236 A.D. — deserves special attention (*RMD* 77). His cognomen *Vellicus* might be an Iberian name. Holder considers it to be of Celtic origin, but the feminine form *Vellica* could be Iberian, according to his opinion.¹¹ The element *-vellicus* is found in the name of *Endovellicus*, a deity worshiped in Lusitania and other Iberian provinces.¹² We might, therefore, presume that M.

⁶ On the wide territory of Philippopolis extending to the outskirts of Mount Haemus in the north cf. A. H. M. Jones, *The Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces*, 2nd ed. Oxford 1971, 21.

⁷ Roxan, *RMD* p. 98, ad n° 76. On the territory of Pautalia cf. Геров, Проучавания върху западнотракийте земи през римско време I (= Untersuchungen über die westthrakischen Länder in römischer Zeit I), *Годишник на Софийския университет* (= *Annuaire de l'Université de Sofia*), 54, 1959/1960, 307 sqq.

⁸ *CIL* XVI 45. Cf. D. Detschew, *Die Thrakischen Sprachreste*, Wien 1957, 280; W. Tomaschek, *Die Alten Thraker. Eine ethnologische Untersuchung II/2*, Wien 1980, 24.

⁹ Durry, *RE* XXII/2, 1627.

¹⁰ V. Beševliev, *Untersuchungen über die Personennamen bei den Thrakern*, Amsterdam 1970, 38 sqq. The name *Mucianus* is also attested in Latin onomastics: cf. I. Kajanto, *The Latin Cognomina*, Helsinki 1965, 151.

¹¹ A. Holder, *Alt-celtischer Sprachschatz* III, Leipzig 1916, 152 (*Vellica*), 153 (*Vellicus*).

¹² Holder, *Sprachschatz III* (as in n. 11), 1436 sq.; Ihm, *RE* V/2, 1905, 2555, s. v. *Endovellicus*.

Aurelius Vellicus was of Iberian origin. Unfortunately, it is not possible to determine why or in what circumstances his family came to Thrace and the region of Serdica. One possibility is that he hailed from a family, whose ancestors came to Thrace as soldiers. The remaining four veterans attested on diplomas found in Thrace bear common Latin names and nothing can be presumed about their ethnic origin.

Besides the recipients of the seven diplomas discovered in Thrace, one more former praetorian apparently returned to his native province. P. Aelius Iulianus was recruited in the territory of Serdica. He served under Caracalla and went back to his homeland, where he set up a dedication to Sabazios with his two brothers, Aelius Marcus and Aelius Heraclides (*IGBulg* 2023).

Five praetorian veterans hailing from Moesia Inferior decided to return to their native province after *honesta missio*. Four of them took home their diplomas. Two documents, issued in 226 A.D. and 228 A.D. respectively, were found in the villages of Dragiševo (*CIL* XVI 143) and Butovo (*RMD* 132). Their recipients give their *origo* as *Nicopolis*. It is quite certain that they had been recruited on the territory of *Nicopolis ad Istrum*,¹³ the town founded by Trajan in 102 A.D. to commemorate his victory over the Dacians.¹⁴ The villages of Dragiševo and Butovo lie in the vicinity of that ancient city. One praetorian, discharged in 230 A.D. (*RMD* 469), went back to his hometown of Marcianopolis, another Trajanic foundation.¹⁵ Two veterans from *Nicopolis* bear common Latin *gentilicia* and *cognomina*. The ethnic origin might be presumed only in the case of M. Aurelius Bithus (*RMD* 469). His cognomen *Bithus* and the fact that he was recruited in Marcianopolis imply that he was probably a Thracian.¹⁶

The fifth veteran hailing from Moesia Inferior also returned to his native province. His epitaph is dated to the second century, or

¹³ И. Боянов, *Римските ветерани в Долна Мизия и Тракия* (I—III в.), София 2008, 250 states that, in Thracia and Moesia Inferior, the name of a town given as *origo* in the military diplomas denotes the town territory and not the city itself.

¹⁴ Amm. Marc. XXXI 5, 16; Jord. *Get.* XVIII 101. Cf. G. Kazarow, *RE* XVII/1, 1936, 520, s. v. *Nicopolis*, n° 4; K. Strobel, *Untersuchungen zu den Dakerkriegen Trajans. Studien zur Geschichte des mittleren und unteren Donaupraumes in der Hohen Kaiserzeit*, Bonn 1984, 178 and n. 117.

¹⁵ Jones, *Cities* (as in n. 6), 19; M. Fluss, *RE* XIV/2, 1930, 1506, s. v. *Marcianopolis*.

¹⁶ The name *Bithus* is considered as Thracian by Detschew, *Thr. Sprachr.* (as in n. 8), 66 sqq. and A. Alföldy, *Zu den Schicksalen Siebenbürgens im Altertum*, Budapest 1944, 40, n° 7—10. Holder, *Sprachschatz* I (as in n. 11), 442 has listed it among Celtic names.

possibly to the beginning of the third century (*CIL* III 13743).¹⁷ Aurelius Dalenus was recruited in the *vicus* Amlaidina, located on the site 23 August, lying in the territory of Callatis,¹⁸ but he chose to settle in the territory of Tomi. His tombstone was found at the site of Urluchioi by the lake Techirghiol at the southern border of the city's χώρα.¹⁹ He might have decided to live in the *vicus* where his wife, Aurelia Uthis, had been born. The veteran Aurelius Dalenus and his wife both were of Thracian origin. Their cognomina *Dalenus* and *Uthis* are considered as Thracian names.²⁰

Epigraphic evidence implies that two praetorians chose to return to their native province of Moesia Superior after they had completed service in the guard. C. Valerius Pudens, who had served in the third century,²¹ was recruited in the town of Scupi (*IMS* VI 34). His tombstone, set up by his mother, also commemorates his brother (a member of the praetorian guard, as well) and a son in law, who was an *augustalis* of the colony.²² The other discharged praetorian, M. Aurelius Augustinus, possibly originated from the *vicus* around the fort of Timacum Minus or its vicinity (*IMS* III/2 27). He should be identified with the homonymous veteran, who buried his wife in Timacum Minus (*IMS* III/2 55). In Moesia Superior, the cognomen *Augustinus* has been attested only on these two inscriptions from Ravna.²³ Tentatively accepting the proposed identification, S. Dušanić presumed that Augustinus and his wife hailed from Asia Minor and came to Timacum Minus through Rome.²⁴ However, Augustinus' epitaph seems to indicate that he was born in Timacum Minus. It was set up by his brother, his son and a third person, probably a friend. It offers no evidence that the brother — Aurelius Candidus — was in fact a brother in arms, a comrade from the prae-

¹⁷ I. Stoian, *Inscriptiones Scythiae Minoris graecae et latinae II*, București 1987, 266.

¹⁸ A. Avram, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Territoriums Kallatis in griechischer Zeit*, *Dacia* 35, 1991, 130 sq.; V. Banari, *Die Beziehungen von Griechen und Barbaren im nordwestlichen Pontos-Gebiet, Untersuchungen zu Handel- und Warenaustausch vom 7. bis 3. Jh. v. Chr. auf Grundlage der archäologischen Funde und schriftlichen Quellen im Nordwesten des Schwarzen Meeres*, Inaugural-Disertation, Mannheim 2003, 62.

¹⁹ On the territory of Tomi cf. C. M. Danoff, *RE* Suppl. IX 1962, 1417, s. v. *Tomi*.

²⁰ Detschew, *Thr. Sprachr.* (as in n. 8), 114 (*Dalenus*), 347 (*Uthis*).

²¹ On the date cf. D. Vučković-Todorović, *Rimski dvojni grob iz Dobrog Dola kod Skoplja*, *Starinar* 7—8, 1956—1957, 295.

²² On *augustales* in Moesia Superior cf. Mócsy, *Moesia Superior*, 165 sq.

²³ *OPEL* I 227.

²⁴ S. Dušanić, *Dve rimske stele iz Srbije*, *Zbornik Narodnog Muzeja u Beogradu* 8, 1975, 134.

torian guard. Therefore, we suppose that Candidus and Augustinus were *fratres germani*, whose family had lived in Timacum Minus. We might, however, trace the origin of the family to the eastern reaches of the Empire, namely to Phrygia or Bithynia. A basket for spinning wool, a common symbol of feminine diligence in the Greek world, was represented on the upper part of the tombstone of Trebia Marcellina, married to the veteran Augustinus. Representations similar to the one from Ravna are quite frequent on the monuments from Phrygia and Bithynia.²⁵ Eastern settlers in Moesia Superior, especially in Ratiaria and Singidunum, are attested as early as the beginning of the second century A.D.²⁶ It should be pointed out that M. Aurelius Augustinus is the first praetorian, who came from Timacum Minus or its vicinity. The fort does not appear as the *origo* of Moesian praetorians in the *laterculi* or inscriptions from Rome.²⁷

Turning to Macedonia, we presume with a fair amount of certainty that two veterans of the praetorian guard decided to return to their native province. M. Geminius Priscus was buried in Thessalonica by his heir C. Iulius Firmus (*CIL* III 7328 = *IG* X II/1 661). According to the onomastic formula containing *tria nomina*, filiation and the tribe, the term *hic situs est*, as well as the absence of the dedication *Dis Manibus* his tombstone should be dated to the first century A.D.²⁸ Priscus' ethnic is given as *Macedo*. It is obvious that he went back to his native province after having been discharged from the praetorian guard. But did he return to his hometown or did he choose Thessalonica for some other reason? As capital of the province of Macedonia, Thessalonica certainly offered ample business opportunities and a comfortable way of life. M. Aurelius Dioscorides was discharged in 227 A.D. (*RMD* 313). Since his diploma was discovered in Macedonia, it is conceivable that he went back to his homeland, taking the imperial constitution with him. Dioscorides gave his home as *Estrium*, a town in eastern Paenonia.²⁹ It remains unknown whether he returned to his hometown or

²⁵ R. Lattimore, *Themes in Greek and Latin Epitaphs*, Urbana 1962, 293.

²⁶ A. Mócsy, *Gesellschaft und Romanisation in der römischen Provinz Moesia Superior*, Budapest 1970, 192.

²⁷ The most frequent *origo* is Scupi, followed by Ratiaria and Viminacium. Naissus and *Horreum Margi* are attested once each (cf. *CIL* VI 2525, 2730, 32515a, 32533, 32536, 32624, 32625, 32626, 32640, 32634).

²⁸ P. Petrović, *Paleografija rimskih natpisa u Gornjoj Meziji* (= *Paléographie des inscriptions romaines en Mésie Supérieure*), Beograd 1975, 73 sqq.

²⁹ A. Antonaras/P. M. Nigdelis, Ein neues Militärdiplom im Museum Byzantinischer Kultur von Thessaloniki, *ZPE* 121, 1998, 285; F. Papazoglou, *Les villes de Macédoine à l'époque romaine*, Athènes 1988, 333 sqq.

decided to settle in some other region or city of Macedonia, because the exact find-spot of the diploma is not known.

Epigraphic evidence implies that the praetorian veterans, discussed above, returned to their native provinces or towns after having been discharged from the army. Since the majority of diplomas and inscriptions date from the III century A.D. (cf. Table 1), it is clear that the reorganisation of the praetorian guard under Septimius Severus strongly influenced the patterns of veteran settlement in Thrace, Macedonia and Moesia. Disbanding the existing cohorts, the emperor replaced them with units enlisted among the former legionaries. From his reign onward, praetorians were primarily recruited among the Illyrians and Thracians.³⁰ This change brought about the increase in number of former praetorians returning to their homes in our provinces. We might presume the same in the cases of nine more soldiers,³¹ despite the lack of direct evidence, since former members of the guard usually decided to return to their homes.³² However, a certain rather small number of men originating from other parts of the Empire also decided to settle in Moesia and Thrace. The reasons for such a choice are in most cases hard to establish.

Table 1: Praetorian veterans returning to their homes

Praetorian veteran	Hometown	Province	Date	Testimony
C. Aurelius Valens	Serdica	Thracia	January 7th, 222	<i>RMD</i> 75
P. Aelius [— — —]	Serdica	Thracia	January 7th, 223	<i>RMD</i> 193
M. Aurelius Vellicus	Serdica	Thracia	January 7th, 236	<i>RMD</i> 77
M. Aurelius Iovinianus	Serdica	Thracia	January 7th, 247	<i>RMD</i> 473
Π. Αἴμιος Ἰουλιανός	Serdica	Thracia	after 217	<i>IGBulg</i> 2023
M. Septimius Maeticus	Philippopolis	Thracia	January 7th, 221	<i>CIL</i> XVI 139
M. Aurelius Potens	Philippopolis	Thracia	January 7th, 224	<i>CIL</i> XVI 189

³⁰ Durry, *RE* XXII/2, 1627. On the impact of military reforms under Septimius Severus on the veteran settlement in Thrace cf. Боянов, *Римските ветерани* (as in n. 13), 233 sq.

³¹ *AE* 1975, 764 (Džigurovo); *IG* X 2/2/1 236 (Belovodica), 251 (environs of Prilep); *ILJug* 1246 (Stobi); *AE* 1952, 230; *IG* X 2/1 705 (Thessalonica); *AE* 1998, 1140 (Sacidava); *ILGR* 191 (Dium); *ILBulg* 66 (Gigen).

³² Durry, *Cohortes prétoriennes* (as in n. 1), 302.

M. Aurelius Mucianus	Pautalia	Thracia	January 7th, 224	<i>RMD</i> 76
M. Aurelius Marcus	Nicopolis ad Istrum	Moesia Inferior	January 7th, 226	<i>CIL</i> XVI 143
M. Aurelius Secundus	Nicopolis ad Istrum	Moesia Inferior	January 7th, 228	<i>RMD</i> 132
M. Aurelius Bithus	Marcianopolis	Moesia Inferior	January 7th, 230	<i>RMD</i> 469
Aurelius Dalenus	vicus Amlaidina (Callatis)	Moesia Inferior	end of II/beginning of III century	<i>CIL</i> III 13743
C. Valerius Pudens	Scupi	Moesia Superior	III century	<i>IMS</i> VI 34
M. Aurelius Augustinus	Timacum Minus	Moesia Superior	after Marcus Aurelius	<i>IMS</i> III/2 27
M. Geminius Priscus	unknown	Macedonia	I century	<i>CIL</i> III 7328
M. Aurelius Dioscorides	Estrium	Macedonia	January 7th, 227	<i>RMD</i> 313

First we will discuss the case of Antonius Marius, veteran of the second praetorian cohort, who settled in Scupi (*IMS* VI 33). His tombstone could be dated to the first century A.D. Formulae *hic situs est* and *faciendum curavit* are, as a rule, coupled on the first century epitaphs from Moesia Superior. The tribe and *origo* are also almost exclusively found in the inscriptions dating to the same period.³³ Antonius Marius was born in the town of Pelagonia in the district of the same name in Macedonia. What motives brought him to Scupi in Moesia Superior? Scupi was a veteran colony, founded by one of the Flavian emperors, probably Domitian. The main body of colonists consisted of soldiers discharged from the VII Claudia legion, while some had served in other legions as well (the IV Macedonica, V Macedonica and V Alaudae).³⁴ Considering the proposed dating of Marius' epitaph and his *origo*, it is conceivable that he was among the original colonists at Scupi. Land-grants to praetorian veterans were a means of relieving the military treasury from paying the *praemia militiae* after an honorable discharge. The policy is attested both in Italy and the provinces under Augustus.³⁵

³³ Petrović, *Paleografija* (as in n. 28), 74 and 80.

³⁴ A. Mócsy, *Pannonia and Upper Moesia: A History of the Middle Danube Provinces of the Roman Empire*, London/Boston 1974, 116 sq.; J. C. Mann, *Legionary Recruitment and Veteran Settlement During the Principate*, London 1983; 37; E. Birley, The Flavian colonia at Scupi, *ZPE* 64, 1986, 212.

³⁵ Durry, *Cohortes prétoriennes* (as in n. 1), 290.

Vespasian settled praetorian veterans at Reate in Samnium.³⁶ The fragment of a diploma issued in 72 A.D. also indicates that he granted land to the former praetorians.³⁷

Next, we shall discuss the case of C. Iulius Gratus, who was buried in Philippopolis by a veteran of the IV Scythica legion (*AE* 2001, 1750). His epitaph is dated between 57 and 65 A.D.³⁸ Iulius Gratus was recruited in Berytus in Syria. His choice of Philippopolis as permanent residence is not easy to explain. He might have been allotted land in the vicinity of the city, possibly by Claudius. The Emperor established a veteran colony at Apri in order to consolidate control over the newly formed province of Thrace.³⁹ Perhaps the same motive induced him to grant land allotments to the veterans in the area of Philippopolis. The town was situated on the territory of the Bessi, a branch of which were the Dii that initiated the two Thracian revolts in 21 and 26 A.D.⁴⁰ It should be pointed out that the veteran's heir, discharged from the IV Scythica legion, bears the same name: C. Iulius Gratus. This implies a close kinship between the soldiers — perhaps they were father and son. A similar case is attested in Stobi in Macedonia. A veteran of the IV Scythica legion C. Sentius Saturninus set up a tombstone with a bilingual epitaph (Latin and Greek) for his son C. Sentius Saturninus, soldier of the praetorian guard, as well as his wife and a freedwoman (*ILJug* 1252).

Two praetorian veterans originating from Italy and Asia Minor respectively were living in Greek colonies on the west coast of the Black Sea. L. Ennius Ferox, discharged in 76 A.D. as *speculator*, hailed from Aquae Statiellae in Liguria (*CIL* XVI 21). It is hard to explain why he chose to settle down in Tomi. He might have received a land-grant on the city's territory from Vespasian or he could have stayed where he had served. Praetorians are known to have been detached to serve in the provinces as *stationarii*. Their duties varied: they acted as police force, keeping the peace among

³⁶ *CIL* IX 4682.

³⁷ *CIL* XVI 25: *quos agros a me acceperint*. On the date of the diploma cf. W. Eck, *Die Legaten von Lykien und Pamphylien unter Vespasian*, *ZPE* 6, 1970, 65 sqq.

³⁸ Бояанов, *Римските ветерани* (as in n. 13), 397, n° 252.

³⁹ Ritterling, *RE* XII 1924, 1253, s. v. *legio*; Mann, *Recruitment and Settlement* (as in n. 34), 36.

⁴⁰ C. M. Danov, *Die Thraker auf dem Ostbalkan von der hellenistischen Zeit bis zur Gründung Konstantinopels*, *ANRW* II 7. 1, Berlin — New York 1979, 142 sqq. On veteran settlement in Thrace under the Flavian emperors cf. B. Gerov, *Römische Bürgerrechtsverleihung und Kolonisation in Thrakien vor Trajan*, *Studii clasice* 3, 1961, 112 sqq.

the local population, they participated in the collection of *annona* and fought the *latrones*. Emperors often entrusted special tasks to praetorian *speculatores*.⁴¹ Ennius Ferox could have performed some task or duty in Tomi and might have chosen to return or remain there, on being discharged from the army. Similar reasons possibly induced Aelius Aurelius Atticus, born in Dorylaeum in Phrygia and discharged in 233 A.D., to settle down in Histria on the lower Danube (*CIL* XVI 145). He served in the guard under Macrinus, Elagabalus and Alexander Severus. The latter emperor inspected the garrisons of Illyricum on his way to the eastern front in 231 A.D. He might have passed through Scythia Minor and visited Histria.⁴² He was perhaps accompanied by Aurelius Atticus, who decided to settle in the area after having been discharged from service.

Finally, we shall discuss the cases of two more veterans, who settled in Macedonia. The tombstone of M. Petronius Pudens (*AE* 1975, 764), dated to the years 67—76 A.D., was discovered on the site of Dabičkata to the south-east of the village of Džigurovo in Bulgaria. According to Gerasimova-Tomova, who published the inscription, Pudens had received a land allotment in the vicinity of ancient Zapara under Vespasian.⁴³ However, his presence in the area of Sandanski could be explained in another way. He might have performed some task or duty in the region and remained there after *honesta missio*. We must not entirely discard even the possibility that he was recruited in the area. Archaeological and epigraphical evidence testifies to the existence of a large urban centre at Sandanski.⁴⁴ It is conceivable that Pudens was born in the town or its vicinity and had returned there. The first recruits from Macedonia in the praetorian guard are attested by the middle of the first century A.D.⁴⁵ Finally, a praetorian veteran from Firmum Picenum in Italy is attested in Dium (*ILGR* 189). His fragmentary inscription, dated to the mid-second century A.D.,⁴⁶ offers no clues as to why he had decided to settle down in Macedonia.

⁴¹ Durry, *Cohortes prétoriennes* (as in n. 1), 27; idem, *RE* XXII/2, 1617 sq.; J. Nelis-Clément, *Les beneficiarii: Militaires et administrateurs au service de l'Empire* (I^{ers}. a.C. — VI^e s. p.C.), Bordeaux 2000, 104 sqq.

⁴² Cf. R. Vulpe/I. Barnea, *Din istoria Dobrogei II: Romanii la dunărea de jos*, București 1968, 214.

⁴³ V. Gerasimova-Tomova, Le monument funéraire d'un prétorien du village de Dzigurovo, arrondissement de Sandanski, *Studia in honorem Veselini Beševliev*, Sofia 1978, 200 sq. stating that land-grants in the valley of the Struma river reinforced the Italic element.

⁴⁴ Papazoglou, *Villes* (as in n. 29), 373 sq.

⁴⁵ *CIL* VI 2654, 2767. Cf. Durry, *Cohortes prétoriennes* (as in n. 1), 241.

⁴⁶ M. Šašel-Kos, *Inscriptiones Latinae in Graecia Repertae. Additamenta ad CIL III*, Faenza 1979, p. 83 ad n^o 189.

It seems that most of the praetorian veterans attested in Moesia, Thrace or Macedonia returned to their homes after having been discharged from the army. We must point out, however, that their number amounts only to 11% of the praetorians recruited in our provinces. As for soldiers originating from Italy and other parts of the Empire, it is difficult to determine why they chose to settle in the central Balkan provinces. Some of them might have received land-grants from the emperors, while others possibly stayed where they had served.

Inscriptions found in the central Balkan provinces yield scant evidence about the marital and social status of former praetorians. Veterans whose diplomas were found in Moesia Inferior and Thrace had received *conubium*, but the names of their wives are not stated in the constitutions. Epitaphs and votive inscriptions do not give much information either. In fact, they testify to the marital status of only seven discharged praetorians. Two of the veterans' wives — Aelia Procla (*IG X/2/1/1*, 236) and Trebia Marcellina (*IMS III/2* 55) — bear common Roman names offering no clues to their origin. It would seem that two women belonged to the Thracian population. The wife of Aurelius Dalenus, who had settled on the territory of Tomi in Moesia Inferior, bears a Thracian cognomen *Uthis* (*CIL III* 13743).⁴⁷ Thracian origin is also surmised for the cognomen *Sispiris*. The element *πυρις/πυρος* is found in various Thracian names (e.g. *Επηπυρις*, *Νεστοπυρις*, *Σεραπυρις*).⁴⁸ Aurelia Sispiris was married to Aurelius Marcus and lived at the fort of Sacidava on the lower Danube (*AE* 1998, 1140). The wife of M. Aurelius Bithus, living in Thessalonica, bears the Latinized Greek name *Philice*.⁴⁹ Her family owed citizenship to Hadrian or Pius, as is implied by the name *Aelia*. The origin of Aurelia Lycaro, wife of Aurelius Dionysius, who lived on the territory of Dium, remains obscure. M. Šašel-Kos considers the name *Lycaro* to be Greek, connected to *Λυκάριος*.⁵⁰ To our knowledge, *Lycaro* is not attested elsewhere and nothing could be inferred about its origin.

Epigraphic evidence from the central Balkan provinces offers little information on the social status of former praetorians. It was

⁴⁷ Detschew, *Thr. Sprachr.* (as in n. 8), 347.

⁴⁸ Detschew, *Thr. Sprachr.* (as in n. 8), 385 sq. The alternation of vowels *y* and *i* is rather common in Latin inscriptions, especially in the Balkan provinces (cf. H. Mihăescu, *La langue latine dans le Sud-est de l'Europe*, Bucureşti/Paris 1978, 183 sq., § 130).

⁴⁹ W. Pape/G. E. Benseler, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Eigennamen*, Braunschweig 1911³, 1619; *LGPN* I 461; II 449; III A 450.

⁵⁰ Šašel-Kos, *ILGR* (as in n. 46), p. 83 ad n^o 191.

commonly acknowledged that they were well-respected in the towns where they had chosen to retire. They often participated in administration as magistrates or decurions.⁵¹ Discharged praetorians as magistrates are attested in Macedonia and Moesia Inferior. A *signifer*, recruited in Firmum Picenum, held the offices of *aedilis* and *duovir* in the colony of Dium around the middle of the second century A.D. (*ILGR* 189). A former *campidoctor* is attested as a *quinquennialis* in Oescus during the second century A.D. (*ILBulg* 66). The fact that praetorian veterans (or members of their families) had been able to set up tombstones or votive monuments implies that they were comparatively wealthy. L. Dexsius Longinus, who had been living in Stobi (*ILJug* 1246) dedicated a marble statue with a bilingual inscription to Liber Pater, i. e. Dionysos in the Greek text, for the welfare of Hadrian in A.D. 119. The dedication should be connected to the unsuccessful attempt on the emperor's life in the previous year. Avidius Nigrinus conspired with prominent men of consular rank to kill him but their plot was uncovered and they were put to death.⁵²

Two votive inscriptions testify to the deities worshiped by former praetorians, in addition to the statue of *Liber Pater*. Ti. Claudius Rufus set up a dedication to the serpent god *Draco* on a natural rock above the village of Trojanci, near Pletvarje in the vicinity of Prilep. The inscription, with the relief representing a snake rising above a bowl containing an egg, is dated to the first half of the first century A.D.⁵³ The snake cult was widespread in northern Macedonia,⁵⁴ and well attested in the area of Prilep by bracelets ending with serpent heads, as well as by votive reliefs representing snakes.⁵⁵ The other testimony concerning the religious beliefs of the praetorian veterans comes from Thrace, from the territory of Serdica. Aelius Iulianus and his two brothers dedicated a column, and possibly a sanctuary,⁵⁶ to *Sabazios* in the village of Maslovo

⁵¹ Durry, *Cohortes prétoriennes* (as in n. 1), 302 sq.

⁵² *HA Hadr.* 7, 2. Cf. A. R. Birley, *The Cambridge Ancient History XI: The High Empire, A.D. 70—192*, Cambridge 2000, 134 sq.

⁵³ M. Riel, *IG X/2/1/1*, 251.

⁵⁴ M. Šašel-Kos, *Draco and the Survival of the Serpent Cult in the Central Balkans*, *Tyche* 6, 1991, 183 sqq.; S. Düll, *Die Götterkulte Nordmakedoniens in römischer Zeit*, München 1977, 137 sqq.

⁵⁵ M. V. Garašanin, *Bracelets à extrémités en têtes de serpents de la Macédoine*, *Artibus Asiae* 15, 1952, 268 sqq.; Düll, *Götterkulte* (as in n. 54), n° 257, 260, 261.

⁵⁶ G. Mihailov, *IGBulg IV* p. 93 ad n° 2023.

(*IGBulg* 2023). The cult of the Thraco-Phrygian Sabazios is well attested in Serdica and its territory.⁵⁷

Praetorian veterans attested by epigraphic evidence as living in the central Balkan provinces fall into two distinct groups, according to the motives that guided them to settle there. The majority had simply decided to return to their homes. Their choice is easily understandable: they preferred to go back to the environment they had known, instead of staying in Rome, where life was rather expensive. The second group consists of soldiers originating in other parts of the Empire (Italy, Macedonia and Asia Minor). Their decision to retire to the towns of Moesia, Thrace and Macedonia is not easily explained. Some of them might have received land-grants during the first century A.D., while others possibly went back to where they had served for a certain time. Veteran inscriptions from the central Balkan provinces yield little information on the marital and social status of former praetorians. The scarcity of evidence in that respect seriously impedes any conclusions concerning their families, citizenship and origin or their wives, or their role in the administration and economic development of the towns in which they chose to live.

Table 2: Praetorian veterans settled *iussu principis* or remaining at the place of service

Praetorian veteran	Hometown	Province	Place of retirement	Date	Testimony
C. Iulius Gratus	Berytus (Syria)	Thrace	Philippopolis	57—65	<i>AE</i> 2001, 1750
L. Ennius Ferox	Aquae Statiellae (Liguria)	Moesia Inferior	Tomi	76	<i>CIL</i> XVI 21
M. Petronius Pudens	unknown	Macedonia	Zapara (Sandanski)	67/76	<i>AE</i> 1975, 764
Antonius Marius	Pelagonia (Macedonia)	Macedonia	Scupi	I century	<i>IMS</i> VI 33
[— — —]	Firmum Picenum (Picenum)	Macedonia	Dium	mid-second century	<i>ILGR</i> 189
Ael. Aurelius Atticus	Dorylaeum (Phrygia)	Moesia Inferior	Histria	January 7th, 233	<i>CIL</i> XVI 145

⁵⁷ Геров, Проучавания върху западнотракийте земи през римско време III (= Untersuchungen über die westthrakischen Länder in römischer Zeit III), *Годишник на Софийския университет* (= *Annuaire de l'Université de Sofia*), 62, 1968, 189 sqq.

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ВЕТЕРАНИ ПРЕТОРИЈАНСКЕ ГРАДЕ
У ЦЕНТРАЛНО-БАЛКАНСКИМ ПРОВИНЦИЈАМА

Резиме

Епиграфска грађа из Тракије, Македоније, Доње и Горње Мезије сведочи да су се некадашњи преторијанци током Принципата (I—III век нове ере), после часног отпуста из војске, насељавали у поменути провинцијама. Већина ветерана припада групи војника који су се вратили у завичај. Такви случајеви су најбројнији у Тракији и Доњој Мезији, а посведочени су и у Горњој Мезији и Македонији. Како је већина војника служила у III веку, треба их повезати са реорганизацијом преторијанске гарде под Септимијем Севером. Од владе овог цара, преторијанске кохорте су регрутоване превасходно у дунавским провинцијама, пре свега међу Илирима и Трачанима. Ова промена је свакако утицала на повећање броја ветерана који су се после завршетка војне службе вратили у завичај у поменути провинцијама. Њихов избор је лако објаснити — више су волели да се врате у окружење које су познавали, него да остану у Риму или Италији, где је живот био скуп.

Известан број бивших преторијанаца регрутованих у другим областима Царства одлучио је да се насели у Мезији и Тракији. Њихов избор није лако објаснити. Могуће је да су неки од њих учествовали у насељавању *iussu principis*, док су други остали на месту службе. У прву категорију би по свој прилици требало уврстити Антонија Марија из друге преторијанске кохорте, регрутованог у Пелагонији у Македонији. Он је могао бити међу ветеранима насељеним на територији Скупа приликом оснивања колоније под Флавијевцима (*IMS VI 33*). Гај Јулије Грато, регрутован у Бериту у Сирији, можда је под Клаудијем добио земљу на територији Филипополиса у Тракији (*AE 2001, 1750*). Судећи према месту налаза војничких диплома, двојица ветерана из северне Италије (*CIL XVI 21*), односно Фригије (*CIL XVI 145*), настанила су се у Томима и Хистрији у Доњој Мезији. Могуће је да су одлучили да остану у градовима у којима су извесно време боравили као активни војници, вршећи одређене дужности. У случају двојице ветерана настањених у Македонији (Сандански: *AE 1975, 764*; Дијум: *ILGR 189*), није било могуће утврдити разлоге који су их подстакли на тај избор после отпуста.

Епиграфска грађа из Мезије, Македоније и Тракије пружа мало података о породичном и социјалном статусу некадашњих преторија-

наца. Иако су заснивали породице, о пореклу њихових супруга може се мало тога закључити. Судаћи према ономастици, две жене су биле трачког порекла (*CIL* III 13734; *AE* 1998, 1140). Епиграфски споменици указују да су ветерани преторијанске гарде уживали велики углед у градовима и заједницама у којима су живели. Неки од њих су учествовали у градској управи, као магистрати. Такви случајеви посведочени су у II веку у Ескусу (*ILBulg* 66: *aedilis, duovir*) и Дијуму (*ILGR* 189: *quinquennialis*). Чињеница да су некадашњи преторијанци подизали надгробне споменике, посвећивали жртвенике и светиштва римским и трачким божанствима указује да су припадали релативно имућним слојевима становништва.

