

LEGIO II TRAIANA FORTIS AND JUDAEA UNDER HADRIAN'S REIGN

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Abstract: This paper is dedicated to a controversial issue with regard to both the history of the *legio II Traiana Fortis* and the history of Judaea, that are tightly connected. Attested for the first time in Judaea in 119/120 A.D., *legio II Traiana* is left without any base prior to this date. Its presence in Judaea proves this province had been raised to consular rank the latest by this date. We advance a theory previously proposed by the German scholar Werner Eck that is the transfer of the *legio II Traiana* in Judaea since 107/8 A.D. Therefore we assume Judaea had been given consular rank in the aftermath of Trajan's Dacian War and the annexation of the Nabataean Kingdom.

keywords: *Caparcotna, consularis, legio II Traiana, legio XXII Deiotariana, procurator, vexillatio.*

Despite the increasing number of epigraphic and papyrological documents on *legio II Traiana*, the data offered by these sources did not provide new information on the history of the legion. In these circumstances, all we are left to do is to try to reconstruct by the the documentation we have the picture of the distribution of the Roman legions in the East during Trajan's and Hadrian's reign. The history of the *legio II Traiana* in its first two decades of existence is closely intertwined with that of the province of Judaea. As a imperial province of praetorian rank, in which only one legion stationed *i. e. X Fretensis*, Judaea became a province of consular rank. This promotion was accompanied by the coming of a second legion, *II Traiana*. The information available helps us to date the Judaea's elevation in rank in the early years of Hadrian's reign. However, there are indications that in Judaea were appointed governors of consular rank from the time of Trajan. That argument, rejected by most researchers, is however worthy, in my view, to be taken into account. This thesis would provide a plausible explanation on the province in which the legion stationed in its first decade. We consider that such a working hypothesis lies entirely in the field of speculation and may be altered at any time by the eventual discovery of new archaeological or epigraphic evidence.

The first source confirming the presence of legion II Traiana in Egypt is the work of Cassius Dio¹. The creation of this unit, together with *legio XXX Ulpia* was dated by E. Ritterling during Trajan's Dacian war². In our view, this hypothesis is right in the case of *legio XXX Ulpia*, while the creation of *legio II Traiana* must be related to the annexation of Arabia, in 106, and perhaps to the emperor's plans to start a vast offensive against the Parthian Empire³.

In the absence of any evidence, different assumptions were made about the province in which the legion stationed in its first life years. The great British historian R. Syme has placed the legion in the Danubian provinces. According to Syme, between 103-105 A.D.

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¹ Cassius Dio LV, 24, 3.

² E. Ritterling, RE XII, 1925, 1484.

³ Syme 1964, 345; Strobel 1984, 98. This theory was rejected by Freeman 1996, 91-94 (see bibliography).

the legion would have been stationed in Moesia Inferior⁴. In terms of its participation in the Dacian war of Trajan, direct references are missing.

One of the few documents relating to this legion that dates most probably from the reign of Trajan is an inscription found at Ephesus, dedicated to *M. Arruntius Claudianus*, an equestrian officer promoted in the senatorial order *inter aedilicios* by Domitian. After the praetorship he was appointed legate of the proconsul Achaia then served for two successive years as a legate of the province of Asia, and later he took command of *II Traiana*, and in 115-116 he was appointed proconsul in Macedonia⁵. Therefore, the legio II Traiana command can be dated to the years between 105-115 A.D. A more precise dating is impossible due to lack of reliable information on his promotion in the senatorial order. K. Strobel dated this command in its first years of existence and, cautiously, has proposed the hypothesis of a possible participation in the second expedition of Trajan's Dacian war followed by a settlement of the legion in the Danube area⁶.

Another inscription dating from the time of Trajan or the early years of his successor is dedicated to [*L. Cosso]nius Gallus Vecilius Crispinus Mansuanus Marcellinus Numisius Sabinus*, who has been entrusted, *inter alia*, the command of two legions: ... *leg (ato) legionum I et II Italicae Traianae fortis* ... ⁷. Earlier in his career, Gallus was a laticlave tribune of the legion *XXI Rapax*. About the legion was supposed to have been destroyed during the war with the Sarmatians, around 92 AD⁸. The French researcher F. Bérard attributed the disappearance of the legion to a decision of Domitianus, who dissolved it as a punishment for supporting the usurper *L. Antonius Saturninus*, in 89 AD⁹. In all these situations, the command held by Gallus over the legions *I Italica* and *II Traiana* dates from the time of Trajan, is dated around 106 A.D. (R. Syme), 109/110 A.D. (W. Eck), 113/114 (K. Strobel). However, R. Syme have serious doubts that the legion played any part in Trajan's Dacian war¹⁰. K. Strobel believes that the legion was in Syria in 113/114 under the command of Gallus to participate to the Trajan's Parthian war. W. Eck and K. Strobel make a parallel between the case of [*L. Cosso]nius Gallus* and *P. Tullius Varro's*. Varro successively commanded two legions, *legio VI Victrix* the being the latter¹¹. He held this command around the year 122 A.D., when the legion was transferred from Germany Inferior to Britannia, having previously commanded the *legio XII Fulminata* in Cappadocia¹². A similar case that bears noting is that of *T. Julius Maximus* who commanded, successively, the legions *I Adiutrix* and *III Flavia*¹³. These assignments have been dated between 104-108 A.D. To conclude, *T. Julius Maximus* commanded *legio I Adiutrix*, that belonged to Pannonia, during the second campaign of Trajan in Dacia (105-106 AD). After the conquest of Dacia, he took

⁴ Syme 1971, 91-3; Mann 1963.

⁵ IGR III 615 = ILS 8821 = TAM II 1 282. On his career: PIR² C 753; H. Devijver, PME A 166; Franke 1991, 41-43, 366, no. 21; IDRE II 373 with full bibliography.

⁶ Strobel 1988a, 271-3.

⁷ CIL III 6813 = ILS 1038; PIR² G 71; C 1541; T. Franke, *op. cit.*, p. 20-2, nr. 12. About this inscription: E. Ritterling, RE XII, 1925, 1485-6; Syme 1971, 91, 106; Strobel 1984, 98, especially no. 77; Eck 1984, 59-61.

⁸ Ritterling 1893, 233; E. Ritterling, RE XII, 1925, 1736, 1788-9; R. Syme 1936, p. 177; Mócsy 1974, 83-4; Strobel 1986, 217; Strobel 1988b, 216; Strobel 1989, 84 *et passim*; Wilkes 1983, 269-70 (especially nos. 74 and 78); Jones 2002, 149, 152. The conclusions of the modern scholars are based on ancient sources: Suetonius, *Domitianus*, VI, 1: *Expeditiones partim sponte suscepit, partim necessario: sponte in Chattos, necessario unam in Sarmatas legione cum legato simul caesa...*; Eutropius, VII 23, 4: *Multas tamen calamitates isdem bellis passus est; nam in Sarmatia legio eius cum duce interfecta est et a Dacis Oppius Sabinus consularis et Cornelius Fuscus, praefectus praetorio, cum magnis exercitibus occisi sunt.*

⁹ Bérard 2000, 55-60.

¹⁰ Syme 1971, 91; W. Eck 1984, 60; Strobel 1984, 98; Strobel 1988a, 273-5.

¹¹ CIL XI 3364 = ILS 1048.

¹² Alföldy 1967, 26f., no. 34; 78f.

¹³ CIL XII 3167 = ILS 1016.

command of *III Flavia*, which was part of the garrison of this new province¹⁴. From the career study of *T. Julius Maximus* and *P. Tullius Varro* we conclude that these officers who previously commanded a legion, received a second legion command – an unusual situation – in particular situations, such as the establishment of a new province such as Dacia, respectively the transfer of the legion VI Victrix from Germany Inferior to Britannia. We presume that *T. Julius Maximus* and *L. Cossonius Gallus* were about the same age and they started their senatorial career almost at the same time. Gallus's career development, however, was slower. On the basis of such parallelism, it results that *L. Cossonius Gallus* commanded two legions within 106-110 A.D. After taking part to the second expedition of Trajan in Dacia, this senator took command of *II Traiana* when this unit recently established was transferred to Judaea, around 108 A.D. The command over the legions *I Italica* and *II Traiana* has been dated between 110-115 A. D. based on the dating of his governorship in Galatia, Pisidia and Paphlagonia (117-119 AD). Previously, he served as proconsul of Sardinia, at some date throughout 110-114 A.D.¹⁵. Certainly, this construction is speculative, but we believe it merits consideration as a plausible working hypothesis.

E. Ritterling also noted a funerary inscription discovered at Sidon, dedicated to a Roman soldier, dated to the year 118 A.D.¹⁶. The great German scholar assumed that the legion was already in the East as a part of the garrison of a province (Syria?), or as a part of an expeditionary force sent in Trajan's Parthian war¹⁷.

In order to conclude we may say that any attempt to accurately date the creation of *legio II Traiana Fortis* and to find out the province where it was encamped in the first decade of its existence are doomed to fail because of insufficient information. This issue is closely intertwined with the debate on the date on which Judaea became a consular province. An inscription found in Rome dating from the reign of Marcus Aurelius includes a list of legions and their dispositions. The inscription dated after 165 A.D. (the list includes the legions II and III Italica Italica, then created by the emperor), but before the year 168 AD, as *legio V Macedonia* is mentioned along with the legions *I Italica* and *XI Claudia* in Lower Moesia, before to be transferred to Potaissa in Dacia. On the list is *legio VI Ferrata* is mentioned after *legio XVI Flavia Firma* and before *legio X Fretensis*. This proves that as late as 160 A.D., *legio VI Ferrata* was stationed in Judaea and the governor of the province had consular rank¹⁸. Moreover, a military diploma dating from 139 A.D. shows that Judaea had a governor of consular rank, a fact which demonstrates that in Judaea were stationed two legions¹⁹.

Mommsen has questioned the veracity of the information given by Cassius Dio, according to which *legio VI Ferrata* would be stationed in Judaea²⁰. E. Ritterling noted that in the year 152 A.D. at the latest, the legion stationed at Caparcotna, also called *Legio* in Eusebius' *Chronicon*²¹. The first author who has dated the arrival of the legion in Judaea during the rebellion led by Simon Bar-Kochba (132-135 AD) was the German

¹⁴ On his career: Alföldy (1969), 247-8; Syme 1971, 99, 108; Pflaum 1978, 317f; Piso 1982, 50f; Piso 1993, 210-13.

¹⁵ Sherk 1979, 168, no. 3; Hillebrand 2006, 250-1.

¹⁶ CIL III 191.

¹⁷ E. Ritterling, RE XII, (1925), 1486.

¹⁸ CIL VI 3492 = ILS 2288.

¹⁹ CIL XVI 87.

²⁰ See note at CIL III 6641; Cassius Dio, LV, 23, 3.

²¹ Ritterling 1903, 633-635; idem, RE XII, 1925, 1591-1592. About Caparcotna as a camp of *legio VI Ferrata*: CIL III 6814-6816; Ramsay 1916, 129-31; Levick 1958, 75-6; AE 1920 78. Ancient sources which mention Caparcotna: *Caparcotani* (*Tabula Peutingeriana*, X, 1-2); Kaparkotnei (Ptolemaios, *Geographia*, V, 15, 4); Eusebius, *Onomasticon*, *passim*. It comes in the Jewish sources under the name Kefar 'Otnay. In later sources: *urbis Maximianopolis*: Eusebius, *Patrologia Latina*, XXV, col. 1591, ed. J. P. Migne, Paris, 1845; in Arabic: el-Lejjûn.

scholar P. von Rohden²². According to his hypothesis *legio VI Ferrata* remained in Judaea, which would have become a consular province in 135 AD under the name *Syria-Palaestina*.

Subsequently, it was noted that the governor of Judaea at the time of Simon bar Kochba rebellion outbreak, in 132 AD, was *Q. Tineius Rufus, consul suffectus* in 127 A.D.²³. Different ancient literary sources points to Tineius Rufus as the only Roman commander who led operations against the Jews²⁴. E. Groag²⁵ and E.M. Smallwood²⁶ suggested that Tineius Rufus remained in Judaea after *Cn. Minicius Faustinus Sextus Julius Severus* took the command of the Roman troops on the judaeen theater of operations and was again appointed governor after the suppression of the uprising. This allegation is without foundation as epigraphic sources relating to Sextus Julius Severus's career demonstrates that he was appointed governor of Judaea and then to Syria²⁷.

In a publication on the careers of some governors and a procurator of Judaea, H.-G. Pflaum suggested that the change in status of the province occurred around 123 A. D. His demonstration relies on the the replacement of the centenary procurator with a ducentarian one to this date²⁸.

But in 1908, R. K. McElderry advanced a new hypothesis according to which Judaea would have become a province of consular rank in 117 AD²⁹. The British researcher based his assumption on the information provided by a passage of Cassius Dio's work, that the Moorish-born general Lusius Quietus ruled Judaea as *vir consularis* (consulate held, certainly *in absentia*)³⁰. Some historians believed that this transformation was not defining for the status of the province and that his appointment was unusual being due to Quietus' energy and hardness³¹. The Israeli scholar M. Avi-Yonah defended McElderry's hypothesis and refined it³².

This thesis comes to be confirmed by other inscriptions dedicated to some senators who ruled Judaea as *virii consulares*³³. *L. Cossonius Gallus* (cos. 116 A.D.), ruled Judaea from 118-120 A.D., as demonstrated by an inscription from *Caesarea Maritima*³⁴. *M. Paccius Gargilius Antiquus, consul suffectus* in 119 A.D., is attested in Dor between 122-125 A.D.³⁵. It follows that Judaea became a consular province no later than 117 A.D., a fact associated with the arrival of a second legion. The identity of the legions generated heated disputes among scientists.

The first indubitable proof of the presence of *legio II Traiana* in Judaea is dated by the early years of the reign of Hadrianus in the form of a milestone discovered on July 4, 1978. The milestone has been discovered by B. Isaac and I. Roll and the students of the Absalom Institute from Tel-Aviv University in the course of a survey carried on the road

²² Rohden 1885, 30f.

²³ E. Groag, RE VI A, (1937). s. v. *Tineius Rufus*, 1376f.; *Fasti Ostienses, Inscriptiones Italiae*, XIII, I, 205; Schürer 1973, 518; Syme 1962, 90; Smallwood, 550; Eck 1970, 18, no. 88.

²⁴ See discussion at Applebaum 1989, 117-23.

²⁵ RE XII, 1937, s. v. *Tineius*, 643.

²⁶ ²⁶ Smallwood 1976, 550-1.

²⁷ Judaea: CIL III 2830; Syria: CIL III 199 = ILS 1056.

²⁸ Pflaum, 1969, 232-3; Pflaum 1982, 33f., no. 103.

²⁹ McElderry, 1908.

³⁰ Cassius Dio LXVIII, 32, 5; Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica*, IV, 2, 5, 2; idem, *Chronicon*, CCXXIII Olympias, an. XVII, 115; Orosius, *Adversus Paganos*, VII, 12, 7; E. Groag, RE XIII, 1927, s. v. *Lusius Quietus*, 1874f.; PIR² L 439; Syme 1958, 9.

³¹ Syme, 1958, *loc. cit.*; Schürer 1973, 518; Keppie 1973.

³² Avi-Yonah, 1973.

³³ Pucci, 2006, 101.

³⁴ Cotton- Eck, 2001, 219-23.

³⁵ Gera-Cotton, 1991, 258-266, nr. 1. A few years later A Dabrowa demonstrated that *Dor* belonged to Judaea: Dabrowa 1995, 100.

connecting *Ptolemis* (Acco) and *Diocaesarea* (Sepphoris). On the milestones is an inscription engraved on the two researchers have provided the following reading³⁶:

*[Imp(erator) Caesar divi Traiani
Part<h>ici fil(ius) D[ivi Nervae] nepos
Hadrianus Aug(ustus) pontif(ex)
max(imus) trib(unicia) potestas (sic)
iiii co(n)sul iii Leg(io) ii T(raiana)
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According to this reading, the inscription is dated by Hadrian's fourth tribunician power (10 dec. 119-9 dec. 120 AD). This epigraph proves that the legion was in Judaea at the latest at the beginning of Hadrian's reign, at *Caparcotna* (Kefar 'Otnay), later called *Legio*. The way from *Ptolemis* to *Diocasarea* was a part of the intricate road network built by this emperor as attested by the discovery of several military terminal, dating from 129-135 A.D.³⁷ However we can suppose that Judaea became a consular province the latest in 117 A.D. *Legio II Traiana* stationed since its very arrival in Judaea at *Caparcotna* (Kefar 'Otnay), called later *Legio*³⁸.

Another proof of the coming of a second legion in Judaea by Hadrian's early years is the twofold number of the auxiliary units in this province. According to Tacitus, the number of auxiliary troops of a province were equal to those serving in the legions of that very province³⁹. This rule has not proved valid in all provinces and throughout the period of the Principate. It applies, however, to Syria and Cappadocia⁴⁰. According to a military diploma issued in 86 A.D., six auxiliary units, about 5,000 soldiers, stationed in Judaea⁴¹. In a diploma dating from 139 AD, there were 3 *alae* and 12 *cohortes*, two of them milliary. So in Judaea renamed Syria-Palaestina after the the suppression of the uprisal led by Simon Bar-Kochba, were at least 8,500 auxiliaries. The real figure was certainly larger, as not all the auxiliary units were listed in this diploma. It is possible that a *reductio* might have taken place before the year 186 A.D., since a diploma dating from this this year lists only two *alae* and seven *cohortes*, two of them milliary, with a total strength of 5,500 auxiliaries, less than in 139 A.D., but more than in 86 A.D.⁴². This development should be considered with caution, since there in no certainty that these diplomas mention all the existing auxiliary units in Judaea at that time.

A papyrus discovered at Dura-Europos, dating from 232 AD, mentions a *cohors Palaestinorum XII*⁴³. According to a hypothesis issued by D. L. Kennedy, the serial number is equal to that of auxiliary cohorts stationed in Judaea at the time at which this unit was created. According to this view, later, at an unknown date, the cohort was transferred to Syria⁴⁴.

Legio II Traiana is still left unassigned throughout the 106-117 A.D. period. However, from a few documents emerge some clues that allow us to locate the legion in the East. Certainly, this approach is speculative, but due to the the lack of datable documents throughout the period 106-118 A.D., the presence of the *legio II Traiana* in Judaea may be taken into account as a hypothesis. The hypothesis was first issued by W. Eck in 1984. The German historian argues that the legion would have been in this province since 107/108

³⁶ Isaac-Roll, 1979a. Their reading was rejected by Rea 1980. The authors demonstrated again in Isaac-Roll 1982a that the initial restading was correct.

³⁷ Isaac-Roll, 1979b, 55, no. 17.

³⁸ Isaac-Roll, 1982a, index; Tsuk; Isaac 1990, 432-33.

³⁹ Tacitus, *Annales*, IV, 5, 6.

⁴⁰ Isaac, 1990, 37-8; 106.

⁴¹ CIL XVI 33. On the roman troops that stationed in Iudeea: M. Mor 1986a.

⁴² RMD I, 69; Lifshitz 1976. About RMD I, 60 see Reeves 1979.

⁴³Excavations Dura Europos 1959, no. 30.

⁴⁴ Kennedy, 1983.

A.D.⁴⁵. Simultaneously, Judaea, who, since 70 A.D., had praetorian rank, became a province of consular rank, as shown by two inscriptions relating to the career of *Q. Roscius Murena Coelius Pompeius Falco*. Eck noted the unusual fact that after the government of Lycia-Pamphylia, this senator governed a second praetorian province, Judaea, combined with the command over its legion, *X Fretensis*⁴⁶. For such an appointment there is no precedent and the next recorded case came a few decades later in Marcus Aurelius' time. The governor of a praetorian province was the commander of the legion and therefore the two functions are not listed separately. The fact that the government of Judaea and the consulate come together in ILS 1036 is a clear indication, says the German researcher, of the change of status of Judaea. Eck assumed that Falco held the consulate *in absentia* while he was governor in Judaea⁴⁷.

We disagree, however, with Eck's thesis according to which, due to the "exceptional circumstances", Pompeius Falco held the command of the *legio X Fretensis* upon becoming a consular⁴⁸. In the year 108 A.D. there were no disturbances in Judaea and its rise to the rank of consular province was not an act dictated by circumstances that lead to atypical situations. Trajan planned in advance this change of status that was accompanied by the arrival of the *legio II Traiana*, commanded by its own legate, a *vir praetorius*.

Although we support the view that Pompeius Falco governed Judaea as a consular at least in the last part of his office, Eck's analysis seems less convincing when it comes to construe the fragment relating to the martyrdom of Simeon, the bishop of Jerusalem from Eusebius' *Historia Ecclesiastica*⁴⁹. The martyrdom took place *epi Traianou Kaisaros kai epi hypatikou Attikou*. The fact that the governor of Judaea at that time, Atticus, was a *consularis* is mentioned twice in the text. In the early fourth century AD, when *Historia Ecclesiastica* was written, this title didn't involve the owner was a senator of consular rank, but was an unofficial, popular title for senatorial governors, whether they were of consular rank or only expecting that honour as *vir praetorii*⁵⁰. Eck mentions that the source used by Eusebius was the chronographer Hegesippos, who lived in the second century AD (*floruit* 150-190 AD). The German scholar argues that the texts dating from the second century A.D., the term of *consularis* was used in its own meaning, a former consul⁵¹. This sentence is, in my view, incorrect. In the second century A. D. the term *hypatikos* = *consularis* had a much broader sense as governor of senatorial rank, not a senator of consular rank⁵². An evidence of this is offered by a letter of a soldier from *legio III Cyrenaica*, Julius Apollinaris, addressed to his father, Julius Sabinus, dating from 19/20 February 108 AD⁵³. The governor is mentioned twice: *Klaudion Severon hypatikon* (l. 26-27) and *tou tes hypatikou legeonos* (l. 32-33). In

⁴⁵ Eck, 1984, This hypothesis is rejected by Schwartz 2006, 25, nr. 4. Eck brought new arguments: Eck 2007, 114-5.

⁴⁶ CIL X 6321 = ILS 1035: *leg. Aug. pr. pr. provinc. [Iudaeae e]t leg. X Fret.*; CIL III 12117 = ILS 1036: *leg Aug. leg. X Fret. et leg. pr. pr. [pr]onvinciae Iudaeae consularis*.

⁴⁷ Eck, 1984, 56-61. *Q. Roscius Coelius Murena Pompeius Falco* took office as consul suffectus at July 1, 108 A. D. (Vidman, *Fasti*, 47, no. 103; Birley 1981, 98f; Birley 2005, 117, nr. 74). E. Groag, RE XIII 1883, assumed that Pompeius Falco held his consulate *in absentia*; the hypothesis has been rejected by Syme 1958, 4. The great British scholar noted that neither ILS 1035 nor AE 1957 336 mention the title *consularis*, attested in ILS 1035 and attributed it to a lapicide error.

⁴⁸ Eck, 1984, 60-1.

⁴⁹ Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica* III, 32, 3.

⁵⁰ Speidel, 1977, 689.

⁵¹ Eck, 1984, 60-3.

⁵² Stein, 1940, 54; on the term *consularis* in II A.D.: Speidel 1970, especially 152, no. 16. Syme 1958, 4f. Advanced a different version.

⁵³ Michigan Papyri 465-466. On the interpretations generated by these documents: Speidel 1977, 691-7; Kennedy 1980, 289-92; Freeman 1996, 98 (he dated the beginning of *C. Claudius Severus* office in Arabia in 111 A.D.); Gatier 2000, 342-3.

fact, C. Claudius Severus, who, as the first governor of Arabia, also commanded *legio III Cyrenaica*, held the consulate *in absentia*, in 112 A.D.⁵⁴. Therefore, Eck's argument according to which the occurrence of the term *hypatikos* in *Historia Ecclesiastica* proves that Atticus was a senator of consular rank cannot stand.

Another error was committed by identifying Atticus with *Ti. Claudius Herodes Atticus*, the father of the famous sophist Herodes Atticus from the time of Antonius Pius and Marcus Aurelius⁵⁵. It turned out later that this identification is incorrect. *Ti. Claudius Herodes Atticus* was *adlectus inter praetorios* in the early years of the reign of Hadrianus and assumed the suffect consulate at some date throughout the period 28-138 A.D.⁵⁶, that's why he can't be identified with Atticus from *Historia Ecclesiastica*.

Another argument put forward by W. Eck on rise of Judaea to consular rank during Trajan's reign is an inscription from Sidon dedicated to a procurator, *L. Sempronius Senecio*⁵⁷, whose career has been studied by H.-G. Pflaum⁵⁸. According to the great German-born French epigraphist, the status of a province is given not only by the governor's rank but also by the rank of the financial procurator. Thus, as a consequence of the coming of a second legion in Judaea the praetorian governor was replaced by a consular one and the centenarian procurator centenary was replaced by a ducenarian procurator. Before being named *proc(urator) provinc(iae) Iudaeae*, *L. Sempronius Senecio* served as *proc(urator) monetae* at Rome, with the rank of *centenarius*. As Pflaum argued „la procuratèle de la monnaie appartient aux fonctions de l'échelon supérieur des postes centenaires et 'sert de tremplin' vers les fonctions ducénaires....Ce qui pose alors un problème, c'est que la procuratèle financière de Judée à l'époque des Flaviens et de Trajan, ne rapporte que 100 000 sesterces à ses titulaires.... Il paraît donc invraisemblable que l'ont ait promu Senecio en faisant fides réglements en vigueur à l'époque: il aurait dû avancer à un poste ducénaire.”⁵⁹ Pflaum has dated the procuratorship of Sempronius Senecio in 123 A.D., a year that he considers as a *terminus ante quem* for the change of the status of Judaea. W. Eck has suggested a different timeline. Sempronius Senecio served first as *pro(urator) Aug(usti) a censib(us) provinc(iarum) Thrac(iae) et Aquitan(iae)*. According to the German researcher, Sempronius Senecio would have held his procuratorship in Thrace when this became an imperial province of praetorian rank, that is around 107/108 A.D. Then, the procuratorship of Aquitania would date around 110 A.D., followed by the assignment as *proc(urator) monetae* and, a little later, as *proc(urator) provinc(iae) Iudaeae*. Therefore, concludes W. Eck, there is very likely that Sempronius Senecio served as procurator of Judaea in the last years of Trajan's reign, *i.e.* 110-117 AD⁶⁰.

From all this facts we may conclude that the rise of Judaea to consular rank in 107/108 A.D. is not well-documented, but can be accepted as a working hypothesis. In support of this view we can raise as an additional argument the broader context of Trajan's very dynamic policy throughout the period years 105-106 A.D. Trajan. R. Syme believes that the appointment of the experienced *vir militaris Q. Roscius Murena Coelius Pompeius Falco* as governor of Judaea can be related to some disorder that

⁵⁴ PIR² C 1023; Vidman, *Fasti.*, 48; Sartre 1982, 78-80; Eck 1982, 343f; Strobel 1988a, 261-4, especially 263.

⁵⁵ PIR² A 1338; *Ti. Claudius Atticus Herodes* as governor of praetorian rank in Judaea: Smallwood 1962, especially 132, no. 17, with bibliography; Schürer 1973, 516; Eck 1982, 334f.; Syme 1958, 4; Halfmann 1979, 122f., alleged that Atticus governed Judaea as a consular legate.

⁵⁶ On the military diploma that led to the invalidation of this hypothesis: Pietsch 1990; AE 1990 763 (*cf.* AE 1991 763); RMD III 159, 278f. See discussion in Birley 1997.

⁵⁷ AE, 1975, 849.

⁵⁸ See no.a 26.

⁵⁹ Pflaum Paris, (1982), 34f.

⁶⁰ Eck, 1984, 65-67. This thesis has been shared by other scholars such as Demougin 1997.

would have occurred in this province or a potential parthian threat. The British historian has quoted the annexation of the Nabataean Kingdom as one of the possible reasons for this appointment, a view that was shared by W. Eck⁶¹. P.-L. Gatier placed the annexation of Arabia and the coming of its first legion that remained in the province in the broader context of the imperial strategy in the East⁶². According to B. Isaac⁶³, the main mission of the Roman troops in Arabia and Judaea was in a lesser extent dedicated to defensive tasks against a foreign enemy, having rather internal police tasks. The concept of "grand imperial strategy" presented in the works of eminent historians such as B. H. Liddell Hart⁶⁴ and E. N. Luttwak⁶⁵ are obsolete and anachronistic when applied to political and military realities of the Roman Empire. There was not effective border defense system, although some authors have tried to promote the idea that the gains made by Trajan in the East have had such an objective⁶⁶.

However, a closer analysis of the events of 106-107 A.D. will shed light on the significant changes in the distribution of the legions amid the Dacian war and the annexation of the Nabataean kingdom. The creation of the two new provinces, Dacia and Arabia, and the split of Pannonia into two new provinces, Pannonia Superior and Pannonia Inferior, have forced Trajan to reconfigure the roman defense system according to the new strategic imperatives. The annexation of Dacia led to the deployment of three legions in Pannonia - *I Adiutrix* and *XIII Gemina*, which were sent to Dacia and *XV Apollinaris*, who was transferred to Egypt. In Pannonia Superior, a province of consular rank, where it remained only *legio XIII Gemina*, based at *Carnuntum*, were brought *legio XXX Ulpia*, recently created, which settled to *Brigetio*, and *X Gemina*, which in the first years after its transfer from *Noviomagus*, in *Lower Germany*, was stationed at *Aquincum*. After its return from Trajan's Dacian war, *legio II Adiutrix* was stationed at *Aquincum*, the residence of the governor of Lower Pannonia.

After its departure from *Carnuntum*, *legio XV Apollinaris* was transferred at the double legionary base from *Nikopolis*, near Alexandria, where were stationed the legions *XXII Deiotariana* and *III Cyrenaica*⁶⁷. *Legio XV Apollinaris* replaced *III Cyrenaica*, which, in turn, has been transferred in the new province Arabia⁶⁸.

While *legio XXX Ulpia Victrix* strengthened the garrison of Pannonia Superior after the conquest of Dacia, *legio II Traiana* played a similar role in East, where a new province has just been created. We also cannot exclude Trajan's intention, since this period, to start a war against the Parthians in the near future⁶⁹. The unprecedented mobility of the legions and the transformations occurred in the structure of the Roman military system during 101-107 A.D. coincides with the operations that resulted in the creation of two new provinces, Dacia and Arabia. All these operations demonstrate a plan whose coherence and method were consistent with Trajan's way of operating. We must not forget that Trajan began preparations for the Dacian war since 101 A.D. The fact is that the annexation of the Nabataean kingdom was the result of an imperial plan

⁶¹ Eck, 1984, 60.

⁶² ⁶² Gatier, 2000, 343.

⁶³ Isaac, 1990, 372.

⁶⁴ Liddell Hart, (19540.

⁶⁵ Luttwak, 1979.

⁶⁶ Dyson, 1985. Against: Mitchell 1986; Rich 1986, 29f. (*non vidi*).

⁶⁷ Wheeler, 2000.

⁶⁸ Préaux, 1950-1951; Dussaud 1955, 154; Petersen 1967, 160, nr.3; Speidel 1977, 689-93; Kennedy 1980, 289-92; Strobel 1988a; Freeman 1996; P.-L. Gatier 2000. Strobel 1988b, 196; Strobel 1988a, 262-3, 266-7, alleged that only *legio XXII Deiotariana* stationed in Egypt for 12 years. Wheeler 2000, 288, no. 168, considered the reaction of the legionary garrison of Egypt to a single legion during Trajan's reign as much to early.

⁶⁹ Ammianus Marcellinus XXIV, 3, 9: *Sic in provinciarum speciem redacta videam Daciam, sic Pontibus Istrum et Euphratem superem.*

rather than an initiative of the governor of Syria, *A. Cornelius Palma*, as alleged Ph. Freeman⁷⁰. Certainly, the transfer of *legio II Traiana* in Judaea was one of the many measures ordered by Trajan between 101-107 A.D. in the context of the Dacian war and the annexation of the Nabataean kingdom.

The hypothesis of the legion's participation to Trajan's Parthian war is plausible, but we still have no evidence for this. The presence of a vexillatio of *legio III Cyrenaica* at Jerusalem in 116/117 AD⁷¹ may be related to the reprisals expedition against the rebels in Judaea led by the energetic general L. Quietus⁷². The possible participation of the troops stationed in Judaea, among them *legio II Traiana*, to the operations on the Parthian front, led to a weakening of the Roman military forces in this province, which thus became vulnerable to the rebels. This could be the reason why some troops that did not belong to Judaea such as *legio III Cyrenaica* fought under the Moorish general's orders. There is no indication of *legio X Fretensis* playing a part in the Parthian war, therefore it can be assumed that this unit has not left Judea throughout the conflict⁷³.

Legio II Traiana is attested in Egypt in 127 A.D.⁷⁴. The most plausible hypothesis for the transfer of the legion of Judaea to Egypt at a time in the range 120-127 AD is its association with the significant political and military events of the period. In the year 123 AD, *Ti. Quartinus Claudius*, a former military tribune of *III Cyrenaica*, promoted by Traian in the senatorial order in 109 A.D., has received a joint command over vexillations of the legions *II Traiana* and *III Cyrenaica*, amid a threat of war with the Parthian Empire: [*praep(ositus) vex(illationum)? or leg(atus?)*] *iussu imperatoris Hadrian Aug(usti) [leg(ionis) II Traian(ae)] fort(is) et III Cyre[naica(ae) ...]*⁷⁵. It seems that the situation was serious enough, since Hadrian decided to break off his his western journey and proceeded from Hispania to Syria, but the tensions have been settled through negotiations⁷⁶. L. J. F. Keppie raised the possibility of a transfer of *legio II Traiana* in Egypt around 123 A.D., in the context of this expedition⁷⁷. According to the British historian, the command held by *Ti. Claudius Quartinus* suggests that the two legions stationed in the same province, namely Egypt. Once transferred to Egypt, *legio II Traiana* would have replaced *legio III Cyrenaica* or *legio XXII Deiotariana*. In Judaea, which had consular status at least since 117 A.D., *legio II Traiana* was replaced by another legion. We can eliminate the hypothesis of a transfer of *legio VI Ferrata*, which was stationed, since 117 /118 AD in Arabia⁷⁸, although this legion is attested later in Judaea, in a inscription from Rome dating from the time of Marcus Aurelius⁷⁹. The arrival of *II Traiana* in Egypt brought the number of legions stationed in Egypt to three, a situation we consider unacceptable. It results that one of the two legions stationed in Egypt was dispatched to Judaea.

The most likely candidate for this transfer was *legio XXII Deiotariana*. A series of inscriptions records repair of the high-level *Caesarea Maritima* by vexillations of *VI Ferrata*.⁸⁰ Other inscriptions mention similar works carried out by vexillations from *II*

⁷⁰ Freeman, 1996, 93-4.

⁷¹ CIL III 13587; Thomsen, (1921), 1-2.

⁷² See no. 23.

⁷³ Dabrowa, 2000, 320.

⁷⁴ CIL III 42 (April 19, 127); CIL III 79 = 14147(6), 2300 (February 5, 128).

⁷⁵ ILS 5919; before this assignment, *Ti. Claudius Quartinus* was a *juridicus* in Hispania Citerior when Hadrian visited the province. On his career: Alföldy 1969, 79-81; Eck 1985, 56-57; Keppie 1990.

⁷⁶ ⁷⁶ SHA, *Vita Hadriani*, XII, 8.

⁷⁷ Keppie, 1990, 60. This view was expressed for the first time by E. Ritterling, RE XII, 1925, 1486-1487; 1795; see Parker, 162; Isaac-Roll 1979b.

⁷⁸ Cotton, 2000, 354-356.

⁷⁹ ⁷⁹ CIL VI 3492 = ILS 2288.

⁸⁰ Vilnay, 1928a = AE 1928 137 = Saxer 1967, nr. 290.8; Lifshitz 1960, 109.

Traiana and *X Fretensis*⁸¹. Most of these inscriptions are dedicated to Hadrian. It was assumed that the works were carried out either after the earthquake in the year 115 A.D., or after the earthquake occurred in the year 130 A.D.⁸². One of the inscriptions has been, according to B. Isaac and I. Roll, “deliberately and carefully erased”⁸³. In our view, it is most likely that the erased number and name belong to the legion *XXII Deiotariana* which was disbanded in disgrace by Hadrian following a crushing defeat suffered during the Jewish rebellion of 132-135 A.D.⁸⁴. The hypothesis of promoting Judaea to a two-legion province following the arrival of *XXII Deiotariana* was first formulated by E. Ritterling⁸⁵, and subsequently shared by other researchers⁸⁶. This hypothesis can be accepted only if we admit that *legio VI Ferrata* still stationed in Arabia throughout 123-127 A.D. It results that *II Traiana* and *III Cyrenaica* were encamped together at *Nikopolis* in Egypt. Therefore, the presence of the *XXII Deiotariana* in Judaea at the latest in 127 A.D. becomes plausible. A different opinion issued M. Mor, which rejects any attempt to date the legion’s disappearance as a result of a military disaster inflicted by the Jewish rebels led by Simon Bar-Kochba. The Israeli researcher noted that there is no evidence of new auxiliary units coming to Syria-Palaestina after the suppression due to losses suffered during the fighting⁸⁷. Mor also argues that *legio VI Ferrata*, which stationed at *Raphanea* in Syria, was transferred to Judaea before the Second Revolt. This thesis, in my opinion, is insufficiently substantiated⁸⁸. M. Mor attributed the disappearance of the to the riots that took place in Alexandria in 121/122 A.D.⁸⁹ But neither these disorders nor the incident with the Parthian Empire in 123 A.D. were major events in military terms that would have resulted in the disappearance of an entire legion. The most plausible hypothesis about the event could have caused the disappearance of the *legio XXII Deiotariana* are the heavy casualties inflicted on by the rebels that led to disbandment⁹⁰. It is true that there is no evidence for this, but it is equally true that neither in the period 119-132 AD there are no arguments in this respect. Regarding the participation of the *legio II Traiana* to the operations that have taken place in Judaea during 132-135 A.D., there are some hints that the unit sent against the rebels at least one *vexillatio*⁹¹.

In order to draw a conclusion, we may say that *legio II Traiana*, created together with *legio XXX Ulpia* in the context of the second expedition of Trajan against the Dacians and the annexation campaign of the Nabataean kingdom – operations that took place simultaneously, in 105-106 A.D.- stationed in Judaea from the very beginning. Shortly after the occupation of the Nabataean Kingdom (108 A.D.), Judaea changed its status from a praetorian to a consular province. The first consular legate of the province was *Q. Roscius Murena Coelius Pompeius Falco*. The legion is clearly attested in Judaea in December 10. 119-9 dec. 120 A.D. at Caparcotna. In 123 A.D., vexillations from *II Traiana* and *III Cyrenaica* were formed a joint task force meant to dissuade the Parthians. This operation, which claimed the presence of emperor Hadrian in the East, was followed by the transfer of the *legio II Traiana* in Egypt, where it replaced *legio*

⁸¹ Negev 1964, 244; Negev 1972, 52-53 = AE 1973 670. 4 and 5; Vilnay 1928b, 45f. = AE 1928 136 = Saxer 1967, no. 291; Lifshitz 1963, 784 = AE 1964 189; Olami-Ringel 1975; *Scavi Caesarea Maritima*, 220.

⁸² Boatwright, 2003, 118, nr. 31.

⁸³ Isaac-Roll, 1979b, 59-61.

⁸⁴ Isaac-Roll, 1979b; Keppie 1990, 57-61.

⁸⁵ E. Ritterling, RE XII, 1925, 1795.

⁸⁶ ⁸⁶ Keppie, 1973, 863; Isaac-Roll 1979b, 61; Cotton 2000, 354.

⁸⁷ Mor, 2003, 118; cf. Eck 1999, 80-81.

⁸⁸ Mor, 2003, 118 și urm; cf. Cotton 2000; Keppie 1986, 423.

⁸⁹ SHA, *Vita Hadriani*, XVI, 1-4; Mor 1986b; Bowersock 1970, 43f.; Bowersock 1980, 139f.; MacAdam 1979, 134f.; Keppie 1973, 863.

⁹⁰ Keppie, 1990, 58.

⁹¹ Mor, 1990, 168; Mor 1986a; Negev 1964, 245; Schürer 1973, 548f.; Smallwood 1976, 447f., no. 74.

XXII Deiotariana. The latter has replaced at Caparcotna *legio II Traiana* and was probably disbanded after the heavy blow inflicted by the Jewish rebels led by Simon Bar Kochba.

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