

MILITARY TRIBUNATE IN THE CAREERS OF ROMAN
SENATORS OF THE SEVERAN PERIOD. PART 3:
HIGHER MILITARY COMMAND (*LEGATUS LEGIONIS*,
PRAEPOSITUS, *DUX*)

by

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ABSTRACT: During the 42 years of the rule of the Severan dynasty (193–235), several thousand people with the title of military tribune probably served in the army of the Roman Empire. Some of them then entered the Roman Senate, starting a public career (which was often a long-term career) and forming the core of the State government. The aim of this paper is to answer the following questions: how many military tribunes took up higher military functions in their careers: *legatus legionis*, *praepositus*, *dux*; what were the rules for assuming these functions and the competences required to perform them; whether any of the senators who held the military tribunate in the Severan period can be defined as *vir militaris* and whether the Roman army was commanded by dilettantes.

I. PRELIMINARY REMARKS

This paper is the third in a series of publications devoted to the military tribunes of the Severan period. In the previous papers (also published in “Eos”)¹, I discussed the following findings:

- The following terms were generally used to describe the office of the military tribune in epigraphic and literary material: *tribunus militum*, *tribunus legionis*, *tribunus laticlavii*.
- The title of *tribunus angusticlavii* is not found in the epigraphic material, but only in literary sources.
- The decision to appoint tribunes was formally made by the emperor, following the recommendations of people from his entourage and staff from the provinces (governors).
- The average term of office of a military tribune was two years.
- Approximately 588 *tribuni laticlavii* (from the senatorial order) and five times as many *angusticlavii* (from the equestrian order) served in the legions in the Severan period; service in one legion was the standard, but 13 of them served in two legions.

¹ OKOŃ 2019 and 2020.

- Out of the 123 tribunes known to us who subsequently became senators, 62 were from the senatorial order (including 23 descendants of consuls) and 12 were from the equestrian order; the social status of the others remains unclear.
- Comparisons of the *origo* and *ordo* of tribunes show the dominant role of favouritism in their efforts to be appointed to this office. This is explicitly mentioned in literary sources, while other sources document this phenomenon indirectly.
- Special awards (*dona militaria*, *adlectio*, *commendatio Augusti*) were granted to 49 (approx. 40%) of the military tribunes known to us.
- *Dona militaria* were granted to 8 military tribunes; most of them were *homines novi* and provincials.
- *Dona militaria* did not have any great impact on the subsequent *adlectio* or *commendatio*; they did not become a part of the senatorial mode of promotion.
- We know of 23 former tribunes who were adlected among the former magistrates; *homines novi* and provincials were the most numerous among them.
- We know of 28 former tribunes who became *candidati Augusti* for magistracies; representatives of *gentes senatoriae* and residents of Italy were most numerous among them.
- *Candidati Augusti* were people from the senatorial order, whereas *adlecti* were people from various orders.
- In the group of senators with special distinctions, those distinguished once and twice dominate.

The above conclusions result from the analysis of the *cursus honorum* of senators (former military tribunes – *laticlavii* and *angusticlavii*)² at the stage of the praetorship. It is worth emphasising that the (numerically) dominant pattern in the group under discussion was the senatorial path: vigintivir (optional) – military tribune – quaestor – plebeian tribune/aedile – praetor. The equestrian path (*tres/quattuor militiae*: *praefectus cohortis* – *tribunus militum* – *praefectus alae* – *praefectus alae milliariae*³ – and (optionally) the procuratorial path) was subject to a merger with the senatorial path at the time of *adlectio* to the senatorial order. Depending on when *adlectio* occurred, equestrians had already performed fewer or more military functions, but at the praetorian stage their careers coincided

² For full biographical entries of these senators see *PIR*² (for some of them); OKOŃ 2017 (for all of them).

³ One should bear in mind that *quarta militia*, that is the post of *praefectus alae milliariae*, was quite rare, as there were only 10–12 *alae milliariae* in the Empire as a whole. See E. BIRLEY 1988: 106. *Quarta militia* could be replaced by an office other than the prefecture of *ala milliaria*; e.g. in the career of Tib. Claudius Subatianus Proculus it was the post of *subpraefectus classis praetoriae Misenatium*. There were also more significant departures from the canon of *quattuor militiae*; e.g. P. Valerius Maximianus who after his *secunda militia* (military tribunate) became *praepositus orae gentium Ponti Polemoniani*, *missus in procinctu Germaniae expeditionis*, *praepositus vexillationum classium Misenatis et Ravennatis item classis Britanniae item equitum Afrorum et Maurorum*, *praefectus alae I Aravacorum* – and only later became *praefectus alae contariorum* (*quarta militia*). On Maximianus' career, see MROZEWICZ 1989: 192–193.

with those of senators. They held the same offices (legionary commands, provincial governorships, curatorships, etc.) and the differences were only quantitative. My research to date has shown that representatives of old *gentes* held up to four offices of the praetorian rank (with patricians holding the smallest number of offices), whereas *homines novi* held five or even more. The higher the social position of a senator, the smaller the number of praetorian offices in his *cursus honorum*⁴. These regularities, resulting from the individual's initial social status, determined who, at what age and under what circumstances could reach another office – the consulship. For the majority of senators (regardless of their origin), the consulship was the culmination of their public career. Holding this office was the confirmation of high social status, not only for the man distinguished in this way, but also for all of his *gens*. Patricians assumed the consulship at the age of 32 at the earliest, while other representatives of *gentes senatoriae* received it around the age of 35 and *homines novi* obviously later, usually after the age of 40. It should also be added that the consulship was attained by ¼ of senators, something which excluded the rest from post-consular career options. There was no reason to increase the number of consulships as there were relatively few consular offices. Two ordinary consuls and ten suffect consuls per year were sufficient to completely fulfill the needs of the imperial administration.

In this article, I will answer the question of how many military tribunes took up higher military functions in their subsequent careers – those of *legatus legionis*, *praepositus* and *dux* – and what the rules for assuming these functions and the competences required to perform them were. I will also refer to issues which are prominent in the literature on the subject: whether any of the senators who had held the military tribunate in the Severan period can be defined as *vir militaris* and whether the Roman army was commanded by dilettantes.

II. *LEGATUS LEGIONIS*, *PRAEPOSITUS*, *DUX* – RULES AND CONDITIONS⁵

The *cursus honorum* of Roman senators featured various military offices, such as *legatus legionis*, *praepositus vexillationum*, *dux vexillationum* and *dux exercitus*⁶. They could already be assumed at the praetorian stage. They are attested both for the careers of representatives of *gentes senatoriae* and for those of *homines novi*.

⁴ Obviously, this does not apply to people who were *adlecti inter consulares*, e.g. Aelius Antipater, Aelius (Decius?) Triccanus, Claudius Aelius Pollio, Marcius Claudius Agrippa, [L. Ant...?]. None of them had been a military tribune before, so they are not considered in this paper.

⁵ Those interested in the topic may consult the bibliography of the Roman army compiled by Y. LE BOHEC: <https://www.orient-mediterranee.com/spip.php?rubrique609&lang=fr>.

⁶ *Legatus* (commander, envoy, representative), *praepositus* (superior), *dux* (chief). Among the senators of the Severan period, we also find a few with the title of *comes* (*Augusti*, *Imperatoris*, *domini nostri*). This title meant a companion in an expedition. Due to the fact that being among the emperor's retinue (even during a military expedition) was not tantamount to the exercise of military functions, *comites* are not considered in my discussion.

Due to their military experience, military tribunes, whether *laticlavii* or *angusticlavii*, had greater competence than others to assume these offices. It should be remembered, however, that the interval between the tribunate and a higher command of the praetorian rank was about 10 years. Former *tribuni laticlavii* spent this time holding municipal magistracies. These functions added value to their administrative skills and were a *sine qua non* condition for nominations to praetorian offices, including a military command (*legatus legionis*, *praepositus*, *dux*). Former *tribuni angusticlavii*, depending on the time of their promotion, could also have had *tertia* and *quarta militia* in their *cursus*, which significantly increased their military experience.

At the next stage, namely the consular one, we (understandably) do not find the praetorian legionary command, while the military functions found earlier – *praepositus* and *dux* – do appear. Only a very good knowledge of the career of a specific senator (with the date of his consulship) makes it possible to determine the rank (praetorian or consular) of the command⁷. Inscriptions do not make it possible to specify the differences within the scope of *praepositus* and *dux*, and they also fail to show the boundaries between the same offices of a different rank (praetorian or consular).

Bearing these conditions in mind, I have presented the military elements of the *cursus honorum* of tribunes in tabular form below (separately for the *laticlavii* and *angusticlavii* groups).

Table 1: Military posts (praetorian and consular) of former *tribuni laticlavii*⁸

No	Nomen Origo	Tribunus Provincia	Legatus/Praepositus/Dux Provincia	Inscriptiones selectae
1.	[...]us L. f. Fab. Annian[us] Italia/Oriens	[...? et XIII ge]min(a)? Pannonia superior <i>aut</i> [...? et I] Min(ervia) Gordianarum Germania inferior	(1) missus adv(ersus) hostes publicos in re[gionem Transp] ad(anam) tir(onibus) legend(is) et arm(is) fabri(candis) in [Me]diol(ano) Italia (2) legatus legionis XXII primigeniae piaae fidelis Gordianae Germania superior	CIL XIII 6763 = ILS 1188 = ALFÖLDY 1967: 61–62

⁷ The best example was the career of Tib. Claudius Candidus, who served as *dux exercitus Illyrici* prior to his consulship (in two campaigns – *Asiana* and *Parthica*) and after his consulship (in one campaign – *Gallica*). He held the consulship probably around 196, i.e. before *Gallica expeditio* – the war with Clodius Albinus. See ALFÖLDY 1968: 139.

⁸ The names of representatives of *gentes senatoriae* are marked in bold type in the Nomen || Origo column. Posts of the consular rank are separated by a dashed line and entered in italics in the Legatus/Praepositus/Dux || Provincia column. The location of provinces where troops were stationed is indicated only in the case of tribunes and legionary legates (that is those serving in or commanding regular troops).

2.	L. Aurelius Gallus Sardinia	legio II adiutrix Pannonia inferior	legatus legionis I adiutricis Pannonia superior	<i>AE</i> 1990, 820 = <i>AE</i> 1993, 1308 = <i>TitAq</i> 251; <i>RIU</i> 709; <i>CIL</i> VI 1356 = <i>ILS</i> 1109
3.	M. Caecilius Rufinus Marianus Africa	legio IV Flavia Moesia superior	legatus legionis XIII geminae Dacia	<i>CIL</i> III 3463 = <i>ILS</i> 3638 = <i>TitAq</i> 38; <i>CIL</i> III 1142 = <i>IDR</i> III 5, 322
4.	C. Caesonius Macer Rufinianus Italia	legio I adiutrix Pannonia superior	legatus legionis VII Claudiae Moesia superior	<i>CIL</i> XIV 3900 = <i>ILS</i> 1182 = <i>Insr. It.</i> IV 1, No. 102
5.	T. Clodius Aurelius Saturninus Italia	legio XIV gemina Martia victrix Pannonia superior legio X gemina pia fidelis Pannonia superior	iuridicus [provinciae Hispaniae ci]terioris vice (legatus) legionis Hispania	<i>AE</i> 1957, 161 = <i>AE</i> 1961, 58 = <i>I. Eph.</i> III 817
6.	M. Domitius Valerianus Bithynia	legio III Gallica Syria Phoenice	(1) legatus Augusti legionis XII fulminatae certae constantis Cappadocia (2) legatus Augusti legionis VII Claudiae Moesia superior	<i>AE</i> 1957, 44; <i>SEG</i> XX 28 = THOMASSON 1975: 36
7.	L. Fabius Cilo Septiminius Catinius Acilianus Lepidus Fulcinianus Hispania Tarraconensis	legio XI Claudia pia fidelis Moesia inferior	(1) legatus Augusti legionis XVI Flaviae firmae Syria Coele ----- (2) <i>praepositus vexillationibus Illyricianis Perinthe tendentibus</i> (3) <i>dux vexillationum per Italiam exercitus Imp. Severi Pii Pertinacis Aug. et M. Aureli Antonini Aug.</i>	<i>CIL</i> VI 1408 = <i>ILS</i> 1141; <i>CIL</i> VI 1409 = <i>ILS</i> 1142; <i>AE</i> 1926, 79; <i>CIL</i> VI 31798 = 41182a
8.	M. Fabius Magnus Valerianus Latine loquens pars Imperii Romani	legio XI Claudia pia fidelis Moesia inferior	legatus Augg. legionis I Italicae Moesia inferior	<i>CIL</i> XI 2106 = <i>ILS</i> 1138
9.	T. Flavius Secundus Philippianus Oriens	legio VII gemina Hispania Tarraconensis	(1) legatus legionis I Minerviae Germania inferior (2) legatus legionis XIII geminae Pannonia superior	<i>CIL</i> XIII 1673 = <i>ILS</i> 1152 = <i>AE</i> 2006, 818

10.	M. Gavius Crispus Num[isi]us Iunior Italia	legio IV Flavia Moesia superior	legatus legionis X geminae Pannonia superior	<i>AE</i> 1975, 795 = <i>SEG</i> XXVI 1253 + inv. 3579, 3641, 3619 = <i>I.Eph.</i> III 682; <i>CIL</i> XIV 4238 = <i>Inscr. It.</i> IV 1, 141; <i>CIL</i> VI 1556a + <i>CIL</i> X 6663a + 6665b + 8292c
11.	Q. Hadius Lollianus Plautius Avitus Italia	legio XIII gemina Dacia	legatus legionis VII geminae Hispania Tarraconensis	<i>CIL</i> VI 32412 = <i>ILS</i> 1155
12.	Q. Hadius Rufus Lollianus Gentianus Italia	legio VII gemina pia felix Hispania Tarraconensis	legatus legionis X[X] II primigeniae Germania superior	<i>CIL</i> II 4121 = <i>ILS</i> 1145 = <i>RIT</i> 139 = <i>CIL</i> II ² /14, 984; <i>CIL</i> II 4122 = <i>RIT</i> 140 = <i>CIL</i> II ² /14, 985
13.	M. Herennius Faustus [...] Iulius Clemens Tadius Flaccus Italia	legio III Augusta Numidia	legatus Augusti legionis XII[I] geminae Dacia	<i>CIL</i> III 52 et add. p. 968
14.	[Iasdius] Italia	I[egio ...] ?	[leg(atus) le]g(ionis) XIII gem(inae) [et leg(ionis) ...] Pannonia superior	<i>CIL</i> VI 1428a-c = 31651 + 31805 = 39742 = 41225
15.	L. Iulius Apronius Maenius Pius Salamallianus Oriens	legio X gemina Pannonia superior	(1) legatus legionis I adiutricis Pannonia superior (2) legatus legionis III Augustae Severianae et provinciae Numidiae Numidia	<i>CIL</i> VIII 18270 = <i>ILS</i> 1196; <i>AE</i> 1917–1918, 51
16.	C. Iulius Septimius Castinus Africa	legio I adiutrix Pannonia superior legio V Macedonica Dacia	(1) legatus legionis I Minerviae Germania inferior (2) dux vexillationum quattuor legionum Germaniae VIII Augustae, XXII primigeniae, I Minerviae, XXX Ulpiae “adversus defectores et rebelles” Germania superior et Germania inferior	<i>CIL</i> III 10471 = <i>AE</i> 1890, 82 = <i>AE</i> 1977, 378; <i>CIL</i> III 10472 = <i>AE</i> 1972, 378 = <i>TitAq</i> 20; <i>CIL</i> III 10473 = <i>ILS</i> 1153 = <i>AE</i> 1972, 378 = <i>TitAq</i> 21
17.	C. Iulius (Scapula?) Lepidus Tertullus Italia/Africa/Hispania	legio II adiutrix Pannonia inferior	legatus Augusti pro praetore legionis tertiae Augustae Numidia	<i>AE</i> 1990, 817; <i>AE</i> 1955, 137; <i>AE</i> 1917–1918, 70 = <i>ILAlg</i> II 3, 7803

18.	C. Luxilius Sabinus Egnatius Proculus/ Italia	legio IIII Flavia/ Moesia superior	legatus legionis X geminae Gordianae/ Pannonia superior	<i>CIL</i> XI 6338 = <i>ILS</i> 1187
19.	L. Marius Maximus Perpetuus Aurelianus Africa	legio XXII primigenia Germania superior legio III Italica Raetia	(1) legatus legionis I Italicae Moesia inferior (2) dux exercitus Moesiaci apud Byzantium (3) dux exercitus Moesiaci apud Lugdunum	<i>CIL</i> VI 1450 = <i>ILS</i> 2935; <i>CIL</i> VI 1452 = 31658 = <i>ILS</i> 2936
20.	L. Marius Perpetuus (cos. suff. ca a. 203) Africa	legio IV Scythica Syria Coele	legatus Augustorum legionis XVI Flaviae firmae fidelis Syria Coele	<i>CIL</i> III 1178 = <i>ILS</i> 1165 = <i>IDR</i> III 5, 436
21.	L. Marius Perpetuus (cos. ord. a. 237) Africa	[leg(io) ...]trici p. f. ?	legatus legionis VII [geminae aut Claudiae aut -I Augustae] Hispania Tarraconensis aut Moesia superior aut Germania superior	<i>AE</i> 1909, 22 = <i>ILS</i> 8980 = <i>IL Afr.</i> 324 = THOMASSON 1975, 94 = BADEL 2010
22.	M. Marius Titus Rufinus Italia	legio I adiutrix pia fidelis Pannonia superior	legatus legionis I Minerviae piae fidelis Germania inferior	<i>CIL</i> IX 1584; <i>CIL</i> XIII 8017 = <i>AE</i> 1899, 7
23.	C. Memmius Fidus Iulius Albius Africa	legio II Augusta Britannia inferior	legatus Augusti legionis VII Claudiae Moesia superior	<i>CIL</i> VIII 25527 = <i>ILTun</i> 1244 = <i>AE</i> 1907, 12; <i>CIL</i> VIII 12442 = <i>ILS</i> 1110; <i>AE</i> 1953, 83
24.	Q. Petronius Melior Italia	legio I Minervia Germania inferior	(1) legatus legionis VIII Augustae Germania superior (2) legatus legionis XXX Ulpiae Germania inferior	<i>CIL</i> XI 3367 = <i>ILS</i> 1180
25.	[Rubrenus] Italia	legio II Augusta Britannia inferior	[praeses Syriae Coele aut legatus legionis in Syria (?)] Syria Coele	<i>AE</i> 1938, 177 = <i>IGLS</i> 3, 762 = <i>AE</i> 1997, 1540
26.	P. Septimius Geta Africa	legio II Augusta Britannia inferior	legatus legionis I Italicae Moesia inferior	<i>CIL</i> III 905; <i>CIL</i> III 7794; <i>AE</i> 1946, 131 = <i>IRT</i> 541, <i>IGR</i> I 970
27.	T. Statilius Barbarus incerta	[legio ...] ?	[legatus legionis (?)] aut donatus donis militaribus b]ello Parth(ico) Mesop(otameno)	<i>CIL</i> VI 1522 = <i>ILS</i> 1144 = <i>CIL</i> VI 41197
28.	M. Annaeus Saturninus Clodianus Aelianus Africa	legio III Italica Augusta Raetia	legatus legionis XI Claudiae Moesia inferior	<i>CIL</i> VI 1337 = p. 3141 = 41204

29.	M. Aureli[us ...] Numidia	[legio ...]o ?	legatus legio[nis ...] ?	<i>CIL</i> VIII 7033 = <i>ILAlg</i> II 617
30.	L. Calpurnius Proculus Galatia	legio XIII gemina Dacia	legatus legionis I Minerviae Germania inferior	<i>CIL</i> XIII 8009 = <i>ILS</i> 2458; <i>AE</i> 1930, 27
31.	L. Cestius Gallus Cerrinius Iustus Lutatius Natalis Italia	legio VIII Augusta Germania superior	legatus Augustorum legionis XX Valeriae victricis Britannia superior	<i>CIL</i> X 3722
32.	[...] Egr[ilius Plarianus Larcus Lep]idus [Flavius ...?] Italia	[legio ...]a ?	[leg(atus) le]gionis XXX Ulpia[e ...] Germania inferior	<i>AE</i> 1969–1970, 87
33.	(Fabius?)? Achaia	legio [...] ?	[legatus legionis XXX] Ul[piae?] Germania inferior?	<i>IG</i> II/3 ² 3646a
34.	P. Flavonius Paulinus Pisidia	legio X Fretensis Syria Palaestina legio XII fulminata Cappadocia	legatus legionis I adiutricis Pannonia superior	<i>SEG</i> VI 555
35.	Tib. Iulius Frugi Asia	[?]	legatus legionis VII [...] ?	<i>CIL</i> VI 31717 = <i>AE</i> 1973, 15
36.	P. Iulius Geminius Marcianus Africa	legio X Fretensis Syria Palaestina legio IV Scythica Syria Coele	(1) legatus Augusti legionis X geminae Pannonia superior (2) legatus Augustorum super vexillationes in Cappadocia	<i>CIL</i> VIII 7050 = <i>ILS</i> 1102 = <i>ILAlg</i> II 634
37.	Iulius Pompilius Piso T. Vibius [...] atus Laevillus Berenicianus Italia/Africa	legio XII fulminata Cappadocia legio XV Apollinaris Cappadocia	(1) legatus Augusti legionis XIII geminae Dacia (2) legatus Augusti legionis IV Flaviae Moesia superior (3) praepositus legionibus I Italicae et IV Flaviae Moesia inferior et Moesia superior (4) legatus Augg. pro praetore legionis III Augustae Numidia	<i>CIL</i> VIII 2582 = 18090 = <i>ILS</i> 1111; <i>CIL</i> VIII 2744 = 18272; <i>CIL</i> VIII 2745 = <i>AE</i> 1980, 952
38.	[...]anus S[...] incerta	legio VI [victrix] Britannia inferior legio XXII primigen[ia] Germania superior	(1) [...] / leg(ionis) [XIII] geminae Mar[thiae] victricis ... Pannonia superior (2) praepo]/s[itus vexi]llation[ibus ...] / [... G]allica [...] ?	<i>AE</i> 2003, 1189 = <i>AE</i> 2004, 930 = <i>AE</i> 2011, 764

39.	Anonymus (<i>AE</i> 1950, 91 = <i>AE</i> 1974, 344) Italia	legio IIII [Flavia aut Scythica] Moesia superior aut Syria Coele	[leg. Aug. aut Augg. leg]ion. XI Cl. p. f. Moesia inferior	<i>AE</i> 1950, 91 = <i>AE</i> 1974, 344
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Table 2: Military posts (praetorian and consular) of former *tribuni angusticlavii*⁹

No	Nomen Origo	Tribunus Provincia	Legatus/Praepositus/Dux Provincia	Inscriptiones selectae
1.	Tib. Claudius Candidus Africa	legio II Augusta Britannia inferior	(1) dux exercitus Illyrici expeditione Asiana (2) item Parthica ----- (3) <i>item Gallica</i> (4) <i>legatus Augusti pro praetore provinciae Hispaniae citerioris, et in ea dux terra marique adversus rebelles Hispaniae hostes populi Romani item Asiae item Noricae</i>	<i>CIL</i> II 4114 = <i>ILS</i> 1140 = <i>RIT</i> 130 = <i>CIL</i> II ² 14, 2, 975
2.	Tib. Claudius Claudianus Africa	legio XIII gemina? Pannonia superior	(1) legatus legionis XIII geminae et V Macedonicae Dacia (2) praepositus vexillationum Daciiscarum (3) legatus Auggg. pro praetore provinciarum et exercituum Pannoniae inferioris et superioris	<i>AE</i> 1982, 798; <i>CIL</i> VIII 5349 = <i>ILAlg</i> I 279 = <i>AE</i> 1977, 858 = <i>AE</i> 1982, 950; <i>CIL</i> VIII 7978 = <i>ILS</i> 1147 = <i>ILAlg</i> II 29
3.	Tib. Claudius Subatianus Proculus Africa	cohors VI civium Romanorum Britannia?	(1) legatus legionis VI ferratae f. c. Syria Palaestina (2) legatus Auggg. pro pr. leg. III Augustae Numidia	<i>CIL</i> VIII 4323 = 18528; <i>AE</i> 1911, 107 = <i>ILS</i> 9488
4.	C. Domitius Antigonus Macedonia	tribunus militum ?	(1) legatus legionis V Macedonicae Antoninianae Dacia (2) legatus legionis XXII primigeniae piaae fidelis Antoninianae Germania superior	Cass. Dio LXXVII 8, 1– 2; <i>AE</i> 1965, 242 = <i>AE</i> 1966, 262

⁹ Posts of the consular rank are separated by a dashed line and entered in italics in the Legatus/Praepositus/Dux || Provincia column. The location of provinces where troops were stationed is indicated only in the case of tribunes and legionary legates (that is those serving in or commanding regular troops).

5.	C. Iulius Avitus Syria	[leg(io) ...] ?	(1) leg(atus) leg(ionis) III[...] ?	AE 1921, 64 = AE 1963, 42 = AE 1979, 450
6.	M. Valerius Maximianus Pannonia	cohors I Hamiorum civium Romanorum Syria	(1) legatus legionis I adiutricis Pannonia superior (2) legatus legionis II adiutricis Pannonia inferior (3) praepositus vexillationum Laugaricione hiemantium (4) legatus legionis V Macedonicae Dacia (5) legatus legionis I Italicae Moesia inferior (6) legatus legionis XIII geminae Dacia (7) legatus Augusti pro praetore legionis III Augustae Numidia	AE 1956, 124
7.	C. Vettius Sabinianus Iulius Hospes Italia/Africa/Gallia	legio I Italica Moesia inferior	(1) legatus legionis III Italicae Raetia (2) legatus legionis XIII geminae cum iurisdicatu Pannoniae superioris Pannonia superior (3) praepositus vexillationibus ex Illyrico missis ab imperatore divo M. Antonino ad tutelam Urbis	AE 1920, 45 = ILAfr. 281

In total, the tables feature 46 people (39 *laticlavii*¹⁰ and 7 *angusticlavii*), which is just over 37% of the entire group of 123 confirmed military tribunes¹¹.

From among the *laticlavii* at the praetorian stage, 29 held only one higher military command, eight – two, one – three and one – four, so the standard was to serve one commanding function. Different tendencies prevailed among the *angusticlavii*. At the praetorian stage, one had served seven command functions, two – three, three – two and one – one. As can be seen, the standard there was to have held multiple commands, and the average number of military functions held by the more militarily experienced *angusticlavii* was higher than among the *laticlavii*.

¹⁰ M. Roscius Lupus Murena, who was *praepositus legionis* (προστάτης λεγεῶνος) IV *Flaviae*, that is the vice legate of the legion (IGR I 909 = ILS 8834a = I. Cret. IV 296), has not been included in the table because he held this position before the quaestorship, thus not yet being a senator.

¹¹ About 35% in the group of *tribuni laticlavii* (39 out of 111), about 58% in the group of *angusticlavii* (7 out of 12).

The differences between the two groups result from their different starting position. As mentioned previously, descendants of *gentes senatoriae* had to hold fewer praetorian offices in order to attain the consulship than *homines novi* did. It is no accident that in the group of *tribuni laticlavii* out of 13 representatives of old *gentes* as many as 12 held only one military command¹², whereas out of 26 *homines novi* over half (17) took one military command after the praetorship and the rest (9) took more. The more modest the origin, the more pronounced the tendency to assume military functions.

After attaining the consulship, only two senators continued their military careers: these were, from among the *laticlavii*, L. Fabius Cilo Septiminus Catinius Acilianus Lepidus Fulcinianus (*praepositus* and *dux*), and from among the *angusticlavii*, Tib. Claudius Candidus (*dux* twice). In their cases, it was not the quantity, but the quality of the offices they held and their high position in the emperor's entourage that were important. However, it is worth emphasising that Cilo, who started his career as *laticlavius*, was twice consul (193 *suffectus*, 204 *ordinarius*), while Candidus, starting as *angusticlavius*, attained only one consulship (around 195), which was a *suffect* position. It can be concluded that a given senator's social background influenced his entire career and (his various merits notwithstanding) was a criterion that could not be ignored in promotions.

*Legatus legionis*¹³

After the praetorship, the office of *legatus legionis* was held by 44 senators listed in the tables above (38 *laticlavii*, 6 *angusticlavii*), so it was by far the most common office in higher military command¹⁴. The following people did not have it in their *cursus*: T. Clodius Aurelius Saturninus and Tib. Claudius Candidus; inscriptions confirm that the former held the post of a vice legate of a legion, i.e. a substitute legate (for reasons unknown to us).

Given the collected data (see tables 1 and 2) and my analysis, it can be concluded that former tribunes' appointments to legionary legateships were governed by the following rules:

¹² The only case of multiple command among representatives of *gentes senatoriae* is Iulius Pompilius Piso T. Vibius [...]atus Laevillus Berenicianus, a tribune in two legions, and a legate of four legions. The number of military functions he held proves that his career path was due to his own personal preferences (he did not serve any civil functions at the praetorian stage).

¹³ Among the senators listed in table 1, there are also *legatus Augustorum super vexillationes* (P. Iulius Geminus Marcianus) and *missus adv(ersus) hostes publicos* ([...]us L. f. Fab. Annian[us]), who due to the scope of their duties are not considered by me to have been regular legates and are not analysed together with legionary legates. My statistics also do not include M. Roscius Lupus Murena, who became *praepositus legionis* before the quaestorship (see note 10 above).

¹⁴ The following names of this post are found in inscriptions: *leg(atus) leg(ionis)*, *leg(atus) Aug(usti) leg(ionis)*, *leg(atus) Augg(ustorum) leg(ionis)* or *leg(atus) Auggg(ustorum) leg(ionis)*. All of them refer to the same office; the differences in notation result from different numbers of rulers at a given time (AUG: one *augustus*; AVGG: two *augusti*; AVGGG: three *augusti*).

1. The correlation between the location of a legionary legateship on the one hand and the legate's *origo* combined with the type of the tribunate he had previously held (*laticlavius*, *angusticlavius*) on the other.

None of the former *tribuni laticlavii* served as legates of legions in their home province (see table 1)¹⁵. However, the analysis of the data reveals that such a thing was possible in the case of the former *angusticlavii*. We know of three *tribuni angusticlavii* who, after being promoted to the senate, commanded legions in their home provinces: Tib. Claudius Subatianus Proculus (Numidia), M. Valerius Maximianus (Pannonia superior) and probably C. Iulius Avitus (Syria)¹⁶. It is evident that the differences between the two categories of tribunes stem from their different social status while holding the office. Senators, especially those from *gentes senatoriae*, as representatives of the elite had greater opportunities to exert influence in their home region than *equites*, so they were potentially a greater threat to the ruler¹⁷.

2. The avoidance of assigning a legate to the legion in which he had served as a tribune.

None of the former tribunes returned as a legate to a legion in which they had previously served (see tables 1 and 2). This was the way to avoid situations in which a commander would meet soldiers who remembered him as a junior officer, which could weaken his authority¹⁸. However, sometimes it happened that legates returned to the province in which they had served as tribunes, but took over the command of another legion¹⁹. There are four such cases in table 1 (*laticla-*

¹⁵ I also provide the *origo* of tribunes in the first part of my discussion: OKOŃ 2019. Let me provide a general reminder that we know the territorial origin of 89 (out of 123) tribunes: 35 came from Italy, 24 from the East, 22 from Africa and 8 from the West.

¹⁶ If we supplement the inscription containing the *cursus* of Avitus (AE 1921, 64 = AE 1963, 42 = AE 1979, 450), inserting *Gallica* or *Parthica* (both legions were stationed in Syria) in the gap *leg(atus) leg(ionis) III[...]*. Until now, researchers (e.g. PFLAUM 1960; BARBIERI 1952: n. 281; LEUNISSEN 1989: 339; Th. FRANKE, *Iulius* [II 22], DNP VI 1999, coll. 27–28) assumed that Avitus' legion was Legio IV Flavia (on the principle of avoiding additions that would suggest a command held in the legate's home province). My suggestion takes a different approach to this issue.

¹⁷ During the reign of Septimius Severus, the following legions were created: I, II and III Parthica (commanded by equestrian *praefecti*), of which Legio II was stationed in Alba near Rome. On the one hand, appointing equestrians as legates was safer for the emperor; on the other (as emphasised by LE BOHEC 2002: 211) it gave the emperor more opportunities to appoint commanders of these legions, as there were more volunteers for military service among equestrians than among senators. Additionally, it should be mentioned that both commanders of the Praetorian Guard were (usually) equestrians, which theoretically protected the emperor against their usurpation.

¹⁸ One should pay attention to other conditions – we know of two legionary legates who returned to the province of their legionary command as provincial governors: P. Septimius Geta (Moesia inferior) and C. Vettius Sabinianus Iulius Hospes (Pannonia superior). In these cases, a good knowledge of the province was seen as the governors' asset.

¹⁹ In some provinces, only one legion was stationed (Hispania Tarraconensis, Raetia, Noricum, Pannonia inferior, Syria, Phoenicia, Arabia, Numidia), so the tribune did not have an

vii only)²⁰: M. Fabius Magnus Valerianus (Moesia inferior), L. Iulius Apronius Maenius Pius Salamallianus (Pannonia inferior), L. Marius Perpetuus (*cos. suff. ca a. 203*) (Syria Coele) and Q. Petronius Melior (Germania inferior).

3. The avoidance of assigning a legate to a legion stationed in a province governed by his close relative.

One should bear in mind that a similar possibility was allowed for military tribunes who often served in a province governed by people from their immediate family (see OKOŃ 2019). These differences resulted from the principle of direct sovereignty: the legion's tribune was subject to the legion's legate, the legion's legate was subject to the governor of the province, hence the prohibition of close relatives taking over these functions. A tribune of a legion was not directly subject to the legate of the province in which this legion was stationed, so this option was admissible.

These rules resulted in migrations of representatives of elites (sometimes to locations very far from their own *civitas*), providing them with experience in service at the central level. These rules also helped to block the increasing significance of senators in their native provinces, preventing the strengthening of regional particularisms and the emergence of local factions (tribune – legionary legate – provincial legate), while forming desirable bonds across the Empire.

There remains the question concerning the mechanisms of the appointment of legionary legates. They were appointed by the emperor from a group of former praetors (18 per year) who were awaiting the consulship and who declared their will to go to a legionary camp for a longer period of time. The group was theoretically quite large, as representatives of *gentes senatoriae*, as mentioned previously, held up to 4 praetorian posts before the consulship, while *homines novi* held at least 5 such posts. However, analyses show that the majority held one military command (the other offices were of a civilian nature), which means that the emperor had to fill the vacancies of those who were willing (or able) to hold the office through the *adlectio* of experienced equestrians.

An analysis of the *cursum* of legionary commanders shows that this post was an important milestone on the path to the consulship. From among the former

opportunity to return to such a province as a legionary legate.

²⁰ Mention should be made of the tribunes who held two tribunates in succession in different legions of the same province: T. Clodius Aurelius Saturninus in Pannonia superior and Iulius Pompilius Piso T. Vibius [...]atus Laevillus Berenicianus in Cappadocia. The epigraphic material does not specify what the reason for this situation was, but it seems reasonable to assume that it was a result of an emergency situation in which they had to take over a post in a neighbouring legion which lost its tribune; alternatively, it might be simply caused by their wish for an extended military service.

tribunes who rose to the consulship (52), 34 were legionary commanders²¹, while 18 did not hold this office²².

Praepositus

Six former tribunes (three *laticlavii* and three *angusticlavii*) in the tables above held the post of *praepositus* at the praetorian or consular stage²³. Depending

²¹ L. Aurelius Gallus, *cos. ord.* 198; C. Caesonius Macer Rufinianus, *cos. suff. ca a.* 197–198; T. Clodius Aurelius Saturninus, *cos. suff. ca a.* 223; M. Domitius Valerianus, *cos. suff.* 238/239; L. Fabius Cilo Septimius Catinius Acilianus Lepidus Fulcinianus, *cos. suff.* 193, *cos. II ord.* 204; M. Fabius Magnus Valerianus, *cos. suff. ca a.* 180; M. Gavius Crispus Num[isi]us Iunior, *cos. suff. ante a.* 200; Q. Hedius Lollianus Plautius Avitus, *cos. ord.* 209; Q. Hedius Rufus Lollianus Gentianus, *cos. suff. ante a.* 193; M. Herennius Faustus [...] Iulius Clemens Tadius Flaccus, *cos. suff. ca a.* 205; [Iasdius], *cos. suff. sub Severis*; L. Iulius Apronius Maenius Pius Salamallianus, *cos. suff.* 226 aut 227; C. Iulius Septimius Castinus, *cos. suff. ca a.* 212–213; C. Iulius (Scapula?) Lepidus Tertullus, *cos. suff. ca a.* 195–197; L. Marius Maximus Perpetuus Aurelianus, *cos. suff. ca a.* 199, *cos. II ord.* 223; L. Marius Perpetuus, *cos. suff. ante a.* 203–205; L. Marius Perpetuus, *cos. ord.* 237; M. Marius Titius Rufinus, *cos. suff. post a.* 231; C. Memmius Fides Iulius Albius, *cos. suff.* 191 aut 192; Q. Petronius Melior, *cos. suff. post a.* 240; P. Septimius Geta, *cos. suff. ante a.* 191, *cos. II ord.* 203; T. Statilius Barbarus, *cos. suff.* 198 aut 199; M. Aureli[us ...], *cos. suff. sub Septimio Severo?*; L. Cestius Gallus Cerrinius Iustus Lutatius Natalis, *cos. suff. saec. II/III*; [...] Egr[ilius] Plarianus Larcius Lep[idi]us [Flavius ...?], *cos. suff. sub Commod?*; Tib. Iulius Frugi, *cos. suff. sub Severis?*; P. Iulius Geminius Marcianus, *cos. suff. ca a.* 165–167; Iulius Pompilius Piso T. Vibius [...] Iatus Laevillus Berenicianus, *cos. suff. ca a.* 178; Tib. Claudius Claudianus, *cos. suff. ca a.* 199; Tib. Claudius Subatianus Proculus, *cos. suff.* 210 aut 211; C. Domitius Antigonos, *cos. suff. ca a.* 225; C. Iulius Avitus, *cos. suff. sub Septimio Severo*; M. Valerius Maximianus, *cos. suff. ca a.* 185; C. Vettius Sabinianus Iulius Hospes, *cos. suff. ca a.* 175–176.

²² C. Aemilius Berenicianus, *cos. suff. aetate Severi Alexandri*; (M.?) Antonius Memmius Hiero, *cos. suff. ca a.* 244; C. Arrius Calpurnius Longinus, *cos. suff. aetate Gordiani III*; P. Cadius Sabinus, *cos. suff. ante a.* 210, *cos. II ord.* 216; Tib. Claudius Candidus, *cos. suff. post a.* 195; T.? Cuspidius Flaminius Severus, *cos. suff. ante a.* 238; Q. Flavius Balbus, *cos. suff. sub Severis*; M. Iuventius Secundus Rixa Postumius Pansa Valerianus[s ...] Severus, *cos. suff. sub Severo Alexandro*; P. Plotius Romanus Cassianus Neo, *cos. suff. ante Alexandrum Severum*; Tib. Pontius Pontianus, *cos. suff. sub Antonino (Elagabalo)*; L. Valerius Publicola Messalla Helvidius Thrasea Priscus Minicius Natalis, *cos. ord.* 196; C. Vettius Gratus Sabinianus, *cos. ord.* 221; M. Umbrius Primus, *cos. suff. ca a.* 185–190; L. Iunius Rufinus Proculianus, *cos. suff. ca a.* 180; Anonymus, consul (*PIR*¹ III, incerti 24; BARBIERI 1952: no. 439; OKOŃ 2017: no. 1076), *cos. suff. sub Septimio Severo?*; Anonymus, senator et consul? (BARBIERI 1952: no. 895a; OKOŃ 2017: no. 1077), *cos. suff. sub Septimio Severo?*; Anonymus (BARBIERI 1952: no. 550a; OKOŃ 2017: no. 1119), *cos. suff. sub Septimio Severo?*; Anonymus (BARBIERI 1952: no. 1771; OKOŃ 2017: no. 1606), *cos. suff. saec. II exeunte aut saec. III ineunte*.

²³ The phrase *legatus Augustorum super vexillationes*, which is found in the *cursus* of P. Iulius Geminius Marcianus, may be synonymous with *praepositus vexillationum*. The premise for this assumption is the fact that, just as in the case of *praepositi*, Marcianus was in command of a legion (X gemina) not long before he was put in charge of *vexillationes*. It is possible that his legion constituted the core of these *vexillationes*, to which detachments from other legions were added. For methods of forming *vexillatio*, see SAXER 1967: 118–119. – However, the difference in the titulature of Marcianus is significant, and this is why he has not been taken into account with other *praepositi*. M. Roscius Lupus Murena, *praepositus legionis* (προστάτης λεγεῶνος) IV *Flaviae* at the pre-quaestor stage (see note 10 above) has not been taken into account either.

on the context (i.e. in practice starting with the second, complementary part of the title) the term might refer either to a superior of auxiliary troops – *praepositus vexillationum* (L. Fabius Cilo Septiminus Catinius Acilianus Lepidus Fulcinianus, [...]anus S[...], Tib. Claudius Claudianus, M. Valerius Maximianus, C. Vettius Sabinianus Iulius Hospes) or to a legate of two legions – *praepositus legionibus* (Iulius Pompilius Piso T. Vibius [...]atus Laevillus Berenicianus). In some inscriptions, the names of the units forming *vexillatio* were given while in others only the area in which they operated was mentioned; we also know inscriptions that contained both of these pieces of information.

It should be noted that *praepositus vexillationum* is a function that appeared in the *cursus honorum* of senators both after the praetorship ([...]anus S[...], Claudianus, Maximianus, Hospes) and after the consulship (Cilo), while *praepositus legionibus* only appeared after the praetorship (Berenicianus)²⁴. *Praepositi* of the praetorian rank commanded *vexillationes* from the region in which they had held legionary command²⁵, while those of the consular rank did not have such direct links with their subordinate troops. Inscriptions do not specify whether there was a difference in the number and size of units commanded by *praepositi* of different ranks. It is worth noting that each of them performed their function only once (for details see tables 1 and 2).

The senators under discussion had various types of relationship with the emperor: Cilo and Claudianus can be considered as the emperor's *amici* and colleagues, while the others were simply reliable commanders. It should be emphasised that among the *praepositi* under discussion only [...]anus S[...] is not attested as having risen to the consulship, while the others became suffect consuls; Cilo, who attained the second consulship, served as *consul ordinarius* (204).

Dux

The tables above feature four former tribunes (three *laticlavii*, one *angusticlavus*) with the epigraphically attested title of *dux*. More specifically, the title referred (depending on the addition) to a commander of the auxiliary troops – *vexillatio* (L. Fabius Cilo Septiminus Catinius Acilianus Lepidus Fulcinianus,

²⁴ In addition to the above, we also know of other *praepositi* (but without the military tribunate in their careers): Claudius (Catulus?) Gallus, *praepositus vexillationum secunda Parthica expeditione*; C. Octavius Appius Suetrius Sabinus, *praepositus vexillariis Germanicae expeditionis*; [I]unius [...] [...]cus Gar[gilius] [Qui]ntil[i]an[us], *praepositus vexillationum [legionum trium Brita?]nnicarum*; Anonymus (CIL VI 31813 = 37057), *[praepositus vexil]lation(um) leg[(atus) ..., comes Imp. in expedit]ione ...*; Severianus, ἡγεμονεύοντος [τῆς Θρα]κῶν ἐπαρχείας, probably *praepositus* or *dux*. See ΟΚΟΨ 2017.

²⁵ The knowledge of these regularities helps in supplementing incompletely preserved honorary inscriptions. If a given senator was a *praepositus* of the praetorian rank, it is highly probable that he was *legatus legionis* prior to holding this post.

C. Iulius Septimius Castinus) or generally to a commander of the army – *exercitus* (Tib. Claudius Candidus, L. Marius Maximus Perpetuus Aurelianus).

Inscriptions also provide additional information – about the types of troops being commanded, their location and the front lines where they operated. However, there are doubts regarding the scope of the tasks performed by *duces vexillationum* and *duces exercitus*, due to the fact that these titles (although sporadically found earlier) were not commonly used until the rule of Septimius Severus and we can see them, in a way, *in statu nascendi*²⁶.

A detailed analysis of biographic entries provides tips for resolving the problem with *duces*²⁷. In the case of the commanders of *vexillationes*, we know that Cilo commanded the armies in Italy during the war with Albinus, while Castinus commanded detachments from four German legions during the pacification of some unknown rebellions. In the case of the commanders of *exercitus*, Aurelianus commanded *exercitus Moesiacus* at Byzantium and Lugdunum, while Candidus was *dux exercitus Illyrici* in three campaigns (*expeditio Asiana*, *Parthica* and *Gallica*). Probably each of them did not command the entire army of the region, but a part of it, because with the threat of war looming, it was not possible for the emperor to deprive any province of all of its garrison troops. In this context, I consider the terms *dux vexillationum* and *dux exercitus* as being similar in meaning.

It is worth noting that in the case of the commanders of *vexillationes*, Castinus held the office after the praetorship, while Cilo was a consular. As far as the commanders of *exercitus* are concerned, Aurelianus served the function after the praetorship, while Candidus commenced it as a praetorian and completed it as a consular (with the consulship held *in absentia*). Thus it may be assumed that the rank (praetorian or consular) did not affect the scope of activities assigned to the function of *dux*.

It should only be added that in the *cursus* of Candidus the title of *dux* is listed four times, in that of Aurelianus twice and in those of Castinus and Cilo only once. The title of *dux vexillationum* was awarded only once, probably due to the fact that it was interchangeable with the more popular *praepositus vexillationum*²⁸, whereas

²⁶ However, I cannot agree with SMITH (1979: 263–278) who believes that *duces* emerged as late as the Severan period. This is contradicted (for instance) by C. Velius Rufus from the Flavian period, who was *dux exercitus Africi et Mauretanici* (AE 1903, 368 = IGLS VI 2796).

²⁷ See L. Fabius Cilo Septiminius Catinius Acilianus Lepidus Fulcinianus (PIR² F 27; BARBIERI 1952: no. 213; OKOŃ 2017: no. 424), C. Iulius Septimius Castinus (PIR² I 566; BARBIERI 1952: no. 308 et 1075; OKOŃ 2017: no. 604), Tib. Claudius Candidus (PIR² C 823; BARBIERI 1952: no. 143; OKOŃ 2017: no. 291), L. Marius Maximus Perpetuus Aurelianus (PIR² M 308; BARBIERI 1952: no. 356 et 1100; OKOŃ 2017: no. 699).

²⁸ This is evidenced by inscriptions containing the *cursus* of C. Octavius Appius Suetrius Sabinus. In CIL X 5178 and CIL X 5398 = ILS 1159 he is described as *praepositus vexillariis Germanicae expeditionis*, while in AE 1982, 121 as *dux vex[illationis ... leg(ionis)] XI Claudia*,

the title of *dux exercitus*, which did not have such a substitute, was awarded frequently. It is possible that the latter was more prestigious.

All of the aforementioned *duces* were closely associated with Septimius Severus: Candidus was a compatriot and friend of Severus and his brother Geta, Aurelianus was a compatriot and former subordinate of Geta, Cilo was a friend of Severus and his sons and Castinus was a cousin. All of them became consuls, and Cilo and Aurelianus held this office twice (for the second time as *ordinarii*). It is worth noting that, without exception, they commanded armies fighting in internal struggles.

Summing up: a young representative of the Roman imperial elite who planned to follow a public career could expect to perform standard military functions: those of military tribune and legionary legate. The manner of promotion, the position and the scope of duties of these officers did not go beyond the generally applicable rules and were widely known.

The remaining functions of officers that are discussed in this paper, namely those of *praepositus* and *dux*, were governed by separate principles. What they had in common was that *praepositi* and *duces* were of the same rank, either praetorian or consular; they could also have commanded groups of troops of a similar (or even identical) size (e.g. *praepositus vexillationum* and *dux vexillationum*). The *praepositi* who are known to us performed this function only once, while *duces* could be appointed many times. All of the *duces* were the emperor's close associates, but only a few from the group of *praepositi* were. Thus it can be assumed that the title of *dux* was generally more highly valued than that of *praepositus*. However, this was not the case because of the scope of duties, but because of the connections with the emperor²⁹. It also seems likely that the actual borderline was delimited not between *duces* and *praepositi*, but between praetorians and consulars and that it had an honourable rather than a real significance.

but these titles must be considered synonymous, as they are found in the same place of the *cursus* (after the legateship of Legio XXII Primigenia, and before the legateship of the province of Raetia). For the view that the anonymous inscription AE 1982, 121 can be ascribed to Sabinus, see Eck 1985: 249, n. 25.

²⁹ In my opinion, this was not, in principle, a title of higher rank. An analysis of the epigraphic material does not allow me to accept the view that *dux* commanded an army or a group within the army, while *praepositus* commanded a separate group of soldiers, thus making *dux* a higher rank than *praepositus* (SMITH 1979; LE BOHEC 2002: 40). In the Severan period, the scope of activities prescribed for *duces* varied; e.g. C. Iulius Septimius Castinus was *dux vexillationis* of the praetorian rank and it would certainly be difficult to claim that he commanded the army. We know, however, that L. Fabius Cilo Septiminius Catinius Acilianus Lepidus Fulcinianus was *praepositus* after the consulship and that he commanded troops from the entire region of Illyria. A comparison of these two careers shows that the distinction between *praepositi* and *duces* was not yet entirely clear under the Severans. It seems that the view that *duces* stood higher in rank than *praepositi* is undoubtedly correct, but that this was the case for the period after Gallienus' reform (which is also assumed by LE BOHEC [2002: 216], who describes this reform in detail).

An analysis of the *cursus honorum* of senior military commanders shows that the posts of *legatus legionis*, *praepositus* and *dux* were essential for the consular promotion. Out of 46 former tribunes listed in the tables above, 35 rose to the consulship³⁰.

III. *VIRI MILITARES* IN THE SEVERAN PERIOD

Bearing in mind all of the aforementioned calculations, the problem of *virii militares* should be addressed once again. The concept itself is a modern construct³¹ – it is not found in senatorial inscriptions³². It is only ancient authors who wrote about some people as being particularly experienced in the field of the military (using terms such as *vir militaris*, *homo militaris*, *peritus rei militaris*, *rei militaris scientia vir* etc.)³³. In their works, the word *militaris* was generally used in a technical sense and meant simply someone serving in the army. Therefore, the word was applied to various social groups: senators, equestrians and soldiers (especially centurions), which means that there were different types of “military men”.

Modern scholars write about *virii militares* holistically, interpreting this term as referring to a person pursuing a part of his career in the army. However, it is debatable how long this part had to be in order for someone to be qualified as *vir militaris*. In addition, researchers apply this term to people of different ranks and social status (especially senators with a specific career path³⁴ and *equites* with

³⁰ In note 21 above, 34 of them (former legionary legates) are mentioned. This number should be supplemented with Tib. Claudius Candidus, *cos. suff. post a.* 195, who attained the consulship as *dux*.

³¹ The term *vir militaris* may be found in works of many scholars, including E. BIRLEY 1953: 133–135 and 1954, 197–214; SYME 1957 and 1958 (passim); CAMPBELL 1975; A.R. BIRLEY 1991; CORNELL 1993: 165–166; DOBSON 1993: 113–128; DEVIJVER 1995; ALFÖLDY 2000; BRIZZI 2012; ASSORATI 2018: 11–20.

³² There are not many instances of the use of the term *vir militaris* in inscriptions relating to people from other orders. An inscription of an equestrian Flavius Nepotianus (from 350–360, found in Leptis Magna; *AE* 1952, 173 = *IRT* 565) honours him as “v(iro) p(erfectissimo) com(iti) et praesidi (...) etiam militaris peritissimo armis consili(i)sq(ue) incomparabili” (!). A damaged and undated inscription from Bou Aftan (*CIL* VIII 16910 = *ILAlg* I 562) contains the words “virii militaris n[e]poti”, which in this case may refer to a descendant of a soldier.

³³ The model text is Sallust’s description of M. Petreius (*Cat.* 59, 6): “Homo militaris, quod amplius annos triginta tribunus aut praefectus aut legatus aut praetor cum magna gloria in exercitu fuerat, plerosque ipsos factaque eorum fortia noverat; ea commemorando militum animos accendebat”. For similar formulations, see Caes. *BCiv.* I 85, 6 about Petreius and Afranius; Sall. *Cat.* 45, 1–2 about L. Valerius Flaccus and C. Pomptunus; Liv. XXX 15, 13 about Laelius; Tac. *Agr.* 9, 2 and 40, 4 about Iulius Agricola; *Hist.* III 44 about Vespasian; *Ann.* IV 26, 3 about Corbulo; Herod. IV 12, 2 and V 2, 5 about Caracalla; *HA Max. et Balb.* 2, 7 about Balbinus; *Gall.* 20, 3 and *Tr. Tyr.* 19, 1 about Valens, 33 about Censorinus. The above examples relating to people from the imperial elite may be supplemented with instances of *virii militares* from the lower social strata: see e.g. Tac. *Hist.* III 73, 2; *Ann.* IV 42, 2; XV 10, 1 and 67, 3. More examples have been collected by A.R. BIRLEY 2000: 98 ff.

³⁴ E. BIRLEY (1954) states (with reference to senators) that *vir militaris* is a person who started his career from the vigintivirate and legionary tribunate and through standard magistracies and two

a standard career³⁵), which makes it difficult to specify the scope of experience necessary to be referred to in this way. In this situation, it should be stated that there are almost as many definitions of the term *vir militaris* as there are authors using it, although common elements of these definitions are military posts and promotions obtained through service in the army.

I am in general agreement with those who emphasise the importance of these two criteria. I have already presented the promotion paths of former military tribunes, both *laticlavii* and *angusticlavii* (in this and the preceding papers), but I believe that the criterion for holding military posts should be more precise. In the case of those whose *cursus* featured the military tribunate, the distinguishing element should be that they performed the function of a legionary commander and/or a commander of *exercitus* or *vexillationes*, that is *praepositus* and *dux*. Given such a definition of military posts, a large number of senators would be *virii militares*. However, the key to resolving the problem of who should be included in this category is to answer

praetorian offices quickly attained the consulship and consular governorship of a province with legions. According to SYME (1957), particularly privileged *virii militares* were those who attained the consulship having held two posts: a legionary command and the governorship of a praetorian province. In another study (SYME 1958: 50), he states that *virii militares* was a “paramount oligarchy” governing the most important provinces of the Empire – consular legates, especially those whose *cursus* included legionary legateship and the governorship of an imperial province. According to A.R. BIRLEY (1991: 38), *virii militares* were officers who during their career commanded more than one legion. He cites the example of Tib. Claudius Claudianus for such a career during the Severan period. The tables given in this paper list the following senators who commanded two or more legions: M. Domitius Valerianus, T. Flavius Secundus Philippianus, L. Iulius Apronius Maenius Pius Salamallianus, Q. Petronius Melior, Iulius Pompilius Piso T. Vibius [...]atus Laevillus Berenicianus, Tib. Claudius Claudianus, Tib. Claudius Subatianus Proculus, C. Domitius Antigonus, M. Valerius Maximianus, C. Vettius Sabinianus Iulius Hospes. CORNELL (1993: 165–166) states that *virii militares* were those who had military experience and commanded armies; it is difficult to disagree with this view.

³⁵ According to E. BIRLEY (1953: 133–135), *virii militares* were an extremely important group of equestrian officers who followed the path of the centurionate and primipilate. DEVIJVER (1995: 184) shows that during the Severan period the professionalisation of equestrian officers was advanced; this was particularly the case for those who attained this rank as legionary veterans (*evocati* from *cohortes praetoriae*, *ex beneficiariis*, *ex decurionibus alae*). DOBSON (1993: 113–128) points to a similar professionalisation. According to BRIZZI (2012: 251 and 288), *virii militares* were a group of civilian officers who substituted increasingly less experienced senators: “...posti da tempo di fronte al problema di una professionalità militare che andava facendosi sempre più scarsa proprio all’interno di quel ceto i cui esponenti erano invece, per tradizione e diritto, i soli abilitati a comandare le legioni, forse fino dall’età di Vespasiano gli imperatori avevano cercato di ovviare all’inconveniente facendo largo uso dell’adlectio, della cooptazione in senato [...]. Persone senza dubbio comunque grate al sovrano [...], gli adlecti si connotavano però di solito per la loro eccellenza [...], e, per questa particolare bisogna, dovevano essere scelti di solito tra i migliori soldati di origine equestre”. This path was followed by ASSORATI (2018: 11–20), who adopted the following distinguishing features for *virii militares*: *adlectio* to the senatorial order, the consulship, the continuation of a career after the consulship or a promotion connected with wars fought by the Empire. It is not difficult to notice that, according to this view, *virii militares* would only include promoted equestrians and, moreover, only those who attained the consulship; this is not justified, at least for the Severan period.

the question regarding the number of military posts held (beyond the standard). I am inclined to accept the view that two higher military functions provided grounds for qualifying a given person as *vir militaris*, as one function was a standard in the group of *laticlavii*. Assuming an average of 2–4 praetorian posts held before the consulship, exercising two commands meant that at least half of the praetorian career was spent in the army. The inclusion of additional post-consular commands (*praepositus*, *dux*) expands the group of potential *viri militares*. By taking this approach, we can assess a given person's willingness and inclination for military activity. If someone held the tribunate (+ *militiae* in the case of equestrians) and two commands, such a willingness may be assumed. Thus the determining factor for the inclusion of former tribunes in the group of *viri militares* was the way they were promoted to higher military commands and the number of commands they held. Analyses show that *viri militares* functioned as part of the social elite, although they formed a small group. I include the following in this group: [...]us L. f. Fab. Annian[us], M. Domitius Valerianus, L. Fabius Cilo Septimius Catinius Acilianus Lepidus Fulcinianus, T. Flavius Secundus Philippianus, L. Iulius Apronius Maenius Pius Salamallianus, P. Iulius Geminus Marcianus, Iulius Pompilius Piso T. Vibius [...]atus Laevillus Berenicianus, C. Iulius Septimius Castinus, L. Marius Maximus Perpetuus Aurelianus, Q. Petronius Melior, [...]anus S[...], Tib. Claudius Candidus, Tib. Claudius Claudianus, Tib. Claudius Subatianus Proculus, C. Domitius Antigonus, M. Valerius Maximianus, C. Vettius Sabinianus Iulius Hospes.

When one tries to deny the existence of *viri militares*, one faces the question of how to classify those with careers featuring several military posts between the praetorship and the consulship (bearing in mind that these were the only offices held by these men). The careers of such senators as Iulius Pompilius Piso T. Vibius [...]atus Laevillus Berenicianus, a son of a consul, who commanded four legions, and, in the group of promoted equestrians, that of M. Valerius Maximianus, a commander of six legions, performing numerous military functions even before his *adlectio*, are good examples of this situation³⁶.

However, I do not consider it incorrect to use the term *vir militaris* in modern research in the sense of “military” (serving in the army), as ancient authors did.

IV. WERE DILETTANTES IN COMMAND OF THE ROMAN ARMY?

The discussion concerning *viri militares* indirectly raises the question of whether the Roman army was commanded by dilettantes. Some researchers give a positive answer to this question³⁷, depreciating the importance of the

³⁶ Therefore, I do not agree with CAMPBELL (1975: 11 ff.), who denies the existence of a “group of specialist ‘viri militares’ with a distinctive career and special promotion”.

³⁷ See e.g. JONES 1970: 115; GAGÉ 1971: 87; SYME 1988: 31; DOBSON 1993: 113–128; CAMPBELL 1975: 11 ff. and 2002: 152; ZIÓŁKOWSKI 2009: 827–828, with the reservations voiced by HANDY 2009: 194–195.

military tribunate in the preparation of legionary commanders and underlining the lack of military training, the appointment of people without military experience to senior commands and the lack of a strictly military promotion path in the Empire.

Their opponents, giving a negative answer to the question raised in the title of this section³⁸, assume that every member of the Roman social elite was well qualified to take up military commands due to their upbringing and home training, the instruction they were offered by private teachers (e.g. former legionaries as teachers of fencing) and access to adequate books (military treatises or diaries of commanders).

I would like to address the above question through an analysis of the careers of senators who were former tribunes from the Severan period. In my opinion, the problem should be viewed from a different perspective. When a threat emerged at the borders, the emperor sent *vexillationes* or *exercitus* to help the legions and their commanders. The *duces* and *praepositi* who commanded them were chosen from among the most talented members of the elite (of the praetorian or consular rank). It is also worth noting that the governors of the provinces on the Limes (often of the consular rank) were experienced officials, most of whom had held legionary commands in their earlier careers. It can be assumed that when the borderland was under attack, they were able to organise the defence of the province and even a retaliatory expedition. In the case of a conquest expedition, in addition to meticulous logistical preparations, the staff was selected from among those who had previously demonstrated military talents.

As a matter of fact, the army was commanded by the best of the best with the widest possible competence and experience. It may be a matter of debate whether the military tribunate and legionary legateship were necessary for senators to gain this experience, but logical consideration leads one to answer this question in the affirmative, as there were no other regular posts directly related to the military. It should be noted that people who failed to prove themselves as tribunes and legionary legates were shifted to perform civil functions. Reliable people with an above-standard number of commands constituted a fully qualified military personnel.

One should also address the common claim that there was no need to professionalise military personnel in the Roman Empire due to the absence of an opponent threatening the existence of the state. In the Severan period, the external threat was great – both on the Rhine-Danube line as well as in Britain and in the East. This period also abounded in internal conflicts, so the number of people

³⁸ See e.g. E. BIRLEY 1988: 93–115; LE BOHEC 2002: 37–38; FRÉZOULS 1995: 157–166; A.R. BIRLEY 2003: 1–18. To quote LE BOHEC (2002: 38): “Chaque fils de sénateur ou de chevalier possédait dans sa bibliothèque des traits consacrés à l’art de la guerre, et s’adonnait régulièrement à l’exercice: ces lectures et cette pratique faisaient partie de l’éducation normalement dispensée à jeune homme de bonne famille. Comme la technique militaire du temps ne présentait pas une bien grande complexité, quelques semaines de commandement effectif suffisaient pour en assimiler l’essentiel...”.

with military experience was constantly on the rise. In this situation, the professionalisation of the army progressed (even in partly unintended ways) and ultimately resulted in Gallienus' reforms.

The answer to the question of whether the Roman army during the Severan period was commanded by dilettantes must be negative. The issue of making emperors qualified for the position of commander-in-chief is a topic for another, completely different paper.

CONCLUSIONS

- 46 former tribunes (approx. 37%) held higher military commands – *legatus legionis*, *praepositus*, *dux*.
- For former *tribuni laticlavii* the standard was one higher command, while for former *tribuni angusticlavii* – at least two.
- The most frequently assumed command was legionary legateship (44 former tribunes: 38 *laticlavii* and 6 *angusticlavii*).
- Appointments of former tribunes to legionary legateships were governed by the following principles:
 1. The correlation between the location of their legionary legateship on the one hand and the legate's *origo* combined with the type of the tribunate he had previously held (*laticlavius*, *angusticlavius*) on the other.
 2. The avoidance of assigning a legate to the legion in which he had served as a tribune.
 3. The avoidance of assigning a legate to a legion stationed in the province of his close relative.
- Only few of the former tribunes became *praepositi* (6: 3 *laticlavii* and 3 *angusticlavii*) and *duces* (4: 3 *laticlavii* and 1 *angusticlavius*).
- *Legati legionis*, *praepositi* and *duces* were of the praetorian rank, *praepositi* and *duces* were also of the consular rank.
- All of the *duces*, and only some of the *praepositi* were close associates of the emperor.
- Out of 46 senior commanders who had held the military tribunate (39 *laticlavii*, 7 *angusticlavii*), 35 rose to the consulship.
- A former military tribune may be defined as *vir militaris* if during his subsequent career he held at least two higher military commands.
- The Roman army was commanded by well qualified military staff that cannot be considered as a group of dilettantes.

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