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Socialising soldiers in the north: Military communities and Romanization in Britain, 43 AD - 212 AD

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Socialising soldiers in the north

Military communities and Romanization in Britain, 43 AD – 212 AD

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FIG. 1.—MILITARY STATIONS, CIVIL SITES AND ROADS OF ROMAN BRITAIN (ROMAN NAMES APPEAR IN PARENTHESES)

Figure 1: Military stations, civil sites and roads of Roman Britain¹

¹ Image taken 04/01/2022 from <https://www.britannica.com/place/Roman-Britain>.

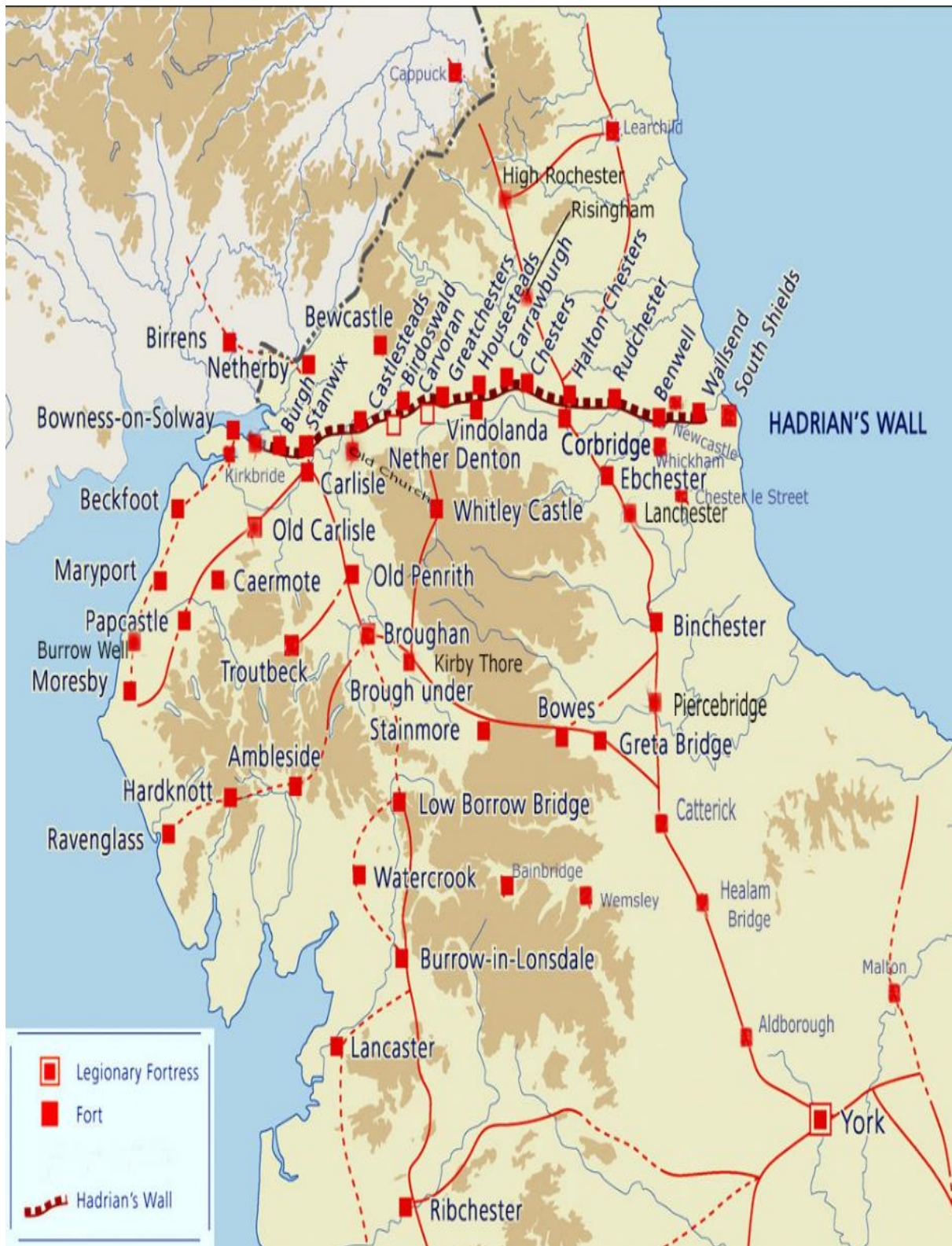


Figure 2: Roman forts of Hadrian's Wall and northern Britain²

² Image taken 19/11/2021 from <https://www.u3ahadrianswall.co.uk/wordpress/map-of-the-northern-roman-frontier/>

Introduction

The conquest of Britain and cultural change

The Roman chapter in the history of Britain traditionally commences in 43 AD with the Claudian invasion, incorporating the island into the Roman Empire nearly one century after Caesar's expeditions.³ The emperor himself would cross the sea in 47 for a short stay of sixteen days to join his army on the final march to the major tribal centre of Colchester (*Camulodunum*). Here he received the formal surrender of eleven British kings, marking the end of the invasion.⁴ The conquest of Britain was completed 40 years afterwards with the victory of Agricola in 83 at Mons Graupius, north-eastern Scotland.⁵ Roman forces had established control over a region up to the Roman road from Carlisle (*Luguvalium*) to Corbridge (*Coria*) between the Tyne and the Solway, a territory equating modern Wales and England.⁶ Accompanying the new regime (43-410) came the package of Roman culture which would become more common in society, mostly visible to the public in Roman architecture and goods. The presence of Roman material culture can be attested prior to this moment as the export of Roman goods to the island increased after Caesar's expeditions.⁷

³ D.J. Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession: Britain in the Roman Empire, 54 BC – AD 409* (London 2007) 87. Caesar sailed for Britain twice, see Caesar, *De Bello Gallico*, books 4 and 5. Caligula also made preparations to invade Britannia only to redirect his war efforts against the sea itself. Osgood has suggested that Claudius made good use of Caligula's preparations for his own project. Dio 59.25; Suet., *Claudius*, 17. Suetonius refers to Caesar's attempts but not to that of Caligula, in line with the *damnatio* of his name. J. Osgood, *Claudius Caesar: image and power in the early Roman empire* (Cambridge 2011).

⁴ Dio 60.23. See Dio 60.19-23 for the Claudian invasion. Jones, *Roman Lincoln*, 31. Inscription CIL 06, 920 concerns the text on the Arch of Claudius celebrating his triumph.

⁵ Cf. Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 87. The exact location of this battle remains contested. For Tacitus' account on the years 47-54, see *Ann.* 12.31-40; for the years 57-60, see 14.29-30. The Boudica Revolt can be found in 14.31-39, and in Dio 62.1-12. For the campaigns of Agricola in the years 77-83, see *Tac., Agri.* 18, 20, 22-23, 25-27, 29-38. See also W.S. Hanson, *Agricola and the Conquest of the North* (London 1987).

⁶ G. de la Bédoyère, *The Real Lives of Roman Britain* (New Haven 2015) 72-73. The northern border is known as the Stanegate. See Potter, *Roman Britain* (London 1983) 12; D. Shotter, *Romans and Britons*, 25-27, 31: forts of Corbridge, Newbrough, Vindolanda, Carvoran, Nether Denton, Brampton and Carlisle were all in place by the late 80's; J. Huskinson, 'Culture and social relations in the Roman province', in Salway (ed.), *The Roman Era*, 107-140, there 117; R.D. Giles, *Roman Soldiers and the Roman Army* (Oxford 2012) 6; B. Hoffman, *The Roman invasion of Britain: archaeology versus history* (Barnsley 2013) 149; De la Bédoyère, *The Real Lives of Roman Britain* (New Haven 2015) 72-73; Cunliffe, *Greeks, Romans and Barbarians*, 163.

⁷ P. Salway, *A History of Roman Britain* (Oxford 1993) 7. These wares had already found their way to the region prior to the arrival of the general, and finds have been unearthed which could be dated to at least 75 years before Caesar would reach Britain. Elite burials, notably in south-east England, have yielded a wide range of imported luxury goods from Roman Belgium. For elite burials see B. Cunliffe, *Greeks, Romans and Barbarians: spheres of interaction* (London 1988) 150-152; T.W. Potter, 'The transformation of Britain: from 55 BC to AD 61', in Salway (ed.), *The Roman Era. The British Isles: 55 BC – AD 410* (Oxford 2002) 11-38, there 16. Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 25.

High value coins imitating a Roman style have been recovered from different tribes.⁸ The connections between Romans and Britons consisted of more than trade as several leading British families became bound to Rome in a system of clientage and diplomacy.⁹ Woolf and Creighton have both argued that the Roman period of Britain might as well have started earlier. By the time of Augustus Britain saw a significant increase in imports involving material culture, burial rites, and the type of settlement known as *oppida* (major ‘tribal centres’) emerged in the landscape inspired by those in Roman territories.¹⁰

To fully understand cultural change the focus should not be fully placed on material culture. While objects and structures reveal the presence of cultural change, the process is facilitated and stimulated the most through human agency. Aspects of Roman society and culture preceded the establishment of Roman rule in Britain by decades. The direct presence of the Romans however would make these features increasingly become the norm and more accessible to many others, mostly in the urbanized regions.¹¹ The inhabitants of Roman Britain would be confronted with many new elements introduced with the arrival of the Romans involving customs, services and goods generally different and uncommon to them. The growing rate in which the native people participated in the new political setting and the increasing consumption of Roman goods have often been ascribed to the process of cultural change called Romanization.¹² The discourse on cultural change and identity in the Roman provinces has seen much debating. Since the late 90’s and the early years of 2000 three major developments can be attested. First, a desire in the majority of Anglo-Saxon scholarship to see the term Romanization removed from the discourse still exists.¹³ This movement gained much momentum with the publication of two post-colonial volumes on Roman imperialism about three decades ago, both aimed against the use of Romanization as an outdated

⁸ I. Haynes, ‘Britain’s First Information Revolution. The Roman army and the transformation of economic’, in P. Erdkamp (ed.), *The Roman Army and the Economy* (Amsterdam 2002) 111-126, there 116.

⁹ Cunliffe, *Greeks, Romans and Barbarians*, 158. See Dio 60.19. A pretext to the Claudian invasion was provided potentially because of this system with the expulsion of king Verica from Britain who subsequently sought refuge with Rome. Verica does not seem to have been reinstated, and it appears that Togidubnus was chosen client ruler instead, see Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 95, 100.

¹⁰ G. Woolf, ‘The formation of Roman provincial cultures’, in J. Metzler, M. Millett, N. Roymans, and J. Slofstra (eds.), *Integration in the Early Roman West: The Role of Culture and Ideology* (Luxembourg 1995) 9-18, there 10; J. Creighton, *Britannia: the creation of a Roman province* (London 2006) 19-20. Creighton mentions *Calleva*, *Verulamium* and *Camulodunum* as *oppida*.

¹¹ See D. Perring and M. Pitts (eds.), *Alien Cities: Consumption and the origins of urbanism in Roman Britain* (Portslade 2013).

¹² Woolf, ‘Beyond Romans and natives’, *World Archaeology* Vol.28.3 (1997) 339-350, there 339.

¹³ M.-J. Versluys, ‘Understanding objects in motion. An archaeological dialogue on Romanization’, *Archaeological dialogues* Vol. 21 (2014) 1-20, there 4-5. First, to remove Romanization is very much restricted to Anglo-Saxon scholarship. Second, this sentiment is not automatically shared by newer generations ‘who regard themselves as confronted by a dogma rather than by a discussion that they can participate in’.

paradigm reflecting one-sided cultural change.¹⁴ Despite many efforts and energy spend on breaking free from the term, it seems to be remarkably tenacious.¹⁵ Second, it has become more fashionable to address cultural change with the focus on ‘the common man’ (or woman) in contrast to individuals belonging to the elite. Lives and experiences of the non-elites, the vast majority of the provincial peoples, have been (fragmentally) pieced back together and studied. This has been achieved involving the growing use of archaeological evidence in the reconstruction of life and identity in provincial societies in frontier studies.¹⁶ Third, the Roman army is more commonly studied as a ‘military community’ in contrast to traditional studies which treated soldiers mainly as agents of the state.¹⁷ Wells, James, and Goldsworthy and Haynes (editors) stressed the significance of the army to provincial societies as a community with a well-defined ‘military identity’.¹⁸ It was James who popularized the notion of military community, ‘(...) a major and well-defined identity-group which constituted a recognized and self-aware empire-wide ‘imagined community’’.¹⁹ The army does not fully equate military community. The former consists of all individuals in military service. The latter incorporates a civilian group part of this community: their wives and family, veterans, and tradesmen (includes artisans) supplying individual soldiers and the army alike.²⁰

Mattingly’s book on cultural change in Roman Britain made a clear division between ‘military’, ‘civil’ and ‘rural’ communities, with the military part deliberately creating an identity ‘to reinforce its sense of oneness and to differentiate it from other groups in Britain’.²¹ More recently Haynes has examined the role of auxilia within the military

¹⁴ Mattingly, ‘Dialogues of power and experience in the Roman Empire’, in idem (ed.), *Dialogues in Roman imperialism* (Portsmouth 1997) 7-24, there 8-9. The volumes are J. Webster and N. Cooper (eds.), *Roman Imperialism: Post-Colonial Perspectives* (Leicester 1996); Mattingly (ed.), *Dialogues in Roman imperialism*.

¹⁵ Cf. Versluys, ‘Understanding objects in motion, 1-9.

¹⁶ See R. Roth and J. Keller (eds.), *Roman by Integration: Dimensions of Group Identity in Material Culture and Text* (Portsmouth 2007); S.T. Roselaar (ed.), *Processes of Cultural Change and Integration in the Roman World* (Leiden 2015); T. Ivleva, J. de Bruin and M. Driessen (eds.), *Embracing the Provinces. Society and Material Culture of the Roman Frontier Regions* (Oxford 2018). Versluys, ‘Understanding objects in motion; De la Bédoyère, *The Real Lives of Roman Britain*.

¹⁷ G. Webster, *The Roman Imperial Army of the First and Second Centuries A.D.* (third edition, Norman 1998) 269; S. James, ‘Writing the legions: the development and future of Roman military studies in Britain’, *Archaeological journal* Vol.159 (London 2002) 1-58, there 1-33; Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 199; idem, *Imperialism, Power, and Identity: Experiencing the Roman Empire* (Princeton 2011) 221.

¹⁸ P. Wells, *The Barbarians speak. How the conquered peoples shaped Roman Europe* (Princeton 1999) 16. S. James, ‘The community of soldiers: A major identity and entre of power in the Roman Empire’, in P. Baker et al. (eds.), *TRAC 98: Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Theoretical Archaeology Conference, Leicester* (Oxford 1999) 14-25. A. Goldsworthy and I. Haynes (eds.), *The Roman Army as a community* (Portsmouth 1999).

¹⁹ A spiritual predecessor can be found in R. MacMullen, ‘The Legion as a Society’, *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* Vol.33.4 (1984) 440-456.

²⁰ Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 199.

²¹ Idem, 174, 199.

community and their role in shaping provincial society.²² Modern studies have presented fascinating insights concerning the people who were often overlooked and their part in the creation of provincial societies in the Roman Empire. Among them were the soldiers, who often played a vital role in political and military history yet received little attention as human agents. The military community and its accompanying identity has been a successful tool in enhancing the understanding of soldier's life outside of combat and campaigning.²³ The current direction of such studies often present such communities isolating themselves from the rest of society by consciously differentiating themselves from civilians. The Roman (sub)culture of the army is vastly different than that of civilians. The role of soldiers as a significant factor in the diffusion of Roman culture in provincial societies has been correspondingly adjusted to a more humble one. This more separated position of this group in society should however not be treated in such a detached matter from the rest of society, a sentiment shared by Haynes, Alston and Revell.²⁴ For the arguments of this paper Mattingly's *An Imperial Possession* shall generally be referred to because it reflects the perceived isolation of the military communities in provincial society the strongest. This strong division between military and civilian should be questioned in the light of the overarching narrative of cultural change. The aim of this study is therefore to demonstrate what function the army could have fulfilled regarding Romanization in the frontier province. Britannia has been selected for investigation because it housed the greatest number of garrisoned forces throughout the Roman Empire.²⁵ If soldiers were to have had an impact on provincial society, it would presumably become more profound depending on the number of stationed troops. Based on the three aforementioned observations, the following leading question has been postulated: 'what role did the Roman army fulfil in the Romanization of Britain between 43 AD – 212 AD?' Because the Claudian invasion serves as the starting point of this study, all mentions of dates and dating should henceforth be accounted for as AD unless stated

²² Haynes, *Blood of the Provinces: the Roman auxilia and the making of provincial society from Augustus to the Severans* (Oxford 2013).

²³ See footnote 17, as well as V.M. Hope, 'Inscriptions and Identity', 285-302 and Haynes, 'Identity and the Military Community in Roman Britain', 448-463 in M. Millett, L. Revell and A. Moore (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Britain* (Oxford 2016); R. Collins, 'Power at the periphery: Military authority in transition in late Roman Britain', in R. Varga and V. Rusu-Bolindet (eds.), *Official Power and Local Elites in the Roman Provinces* (New York 2017) 127-144.

²⁴ Haynes, 'Identity and the Military Community, 449; R. Alston, 'The ties that bind: soldiers and societies', in Goldsworthy and Haynes (eds), *The Roman Army*, 175-196; Revell, *Roman Imperialism and Local Identities* (Cambridge 2009)

²⁵ B. Dobson, 'The Roman Army: Wartime or Peacetime Army', in W. Eck and H. Wolff (eds.), *Heer und Integrationspolitik. Die römischen Militärdiplome als historische Quelle* (Cologne 1986) 10-25, there 18; Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 131.

otherwise. It is first required to explain the use of Romanization here due to its contested and somewhat ambiguous nature, after which the methodology will be discussed.

Romanization: outdated or useful?

The notion of ‘Romanizing’ influences can be traced back to the work of Mommsen from the mid-nineteenth century. Romanization itself was first coined by Haverfield in 1915 (*The Romanization of Roman Britain*). On one side it generally refers to the incorporation of provinces into the political system of Rome; on the other side it concerns cultural transformation.²⁶ The colonial and imperial tones of Romanization as a process of civilizing barbarians, with Roman culture replacing or marginalizing non-Roman cultures, turned cultural change into the simple acceptance of a superior lifestyle by native peoples.²⁷ The period of decolonization saw objections against this view intensify until a new trend would dominate scholarship by the 70’s. Key concept was resistance, the opposition from provincials to cultural influences from Rome and holding on to the native practices which would remain (largely) unaffected.²⁸ Versluys has adequately summarized the main problem within the two traditions. The ‘colonial’ discourse focussed too much on the role of the emperor, elites, and high culture, whereas the ‘post-colonial’ deliberately neglected this and devoted itself almost exclusively to the periphery and resistance from native side. Sharing his opinion, the post-colonial here can better be accounted for as ‘anti-colonial’.²⁹

The ‘real’ start of post-colonial discourse can be found in the seminal work of Millett’s *The Romanization of Britain* which changed the perspective on Romanization. He hypothesized that it was an active elite-driven process of cultural change which not imposed but voluntarily adopted. Native elites would accommodate themselves in the changing political setting and

²⁶ Revell, *Roman Imperialism*, 6. For Haverfield and Mommsen, see P.W.M. Freeman, ‘British imperialism and the Roman Empire’, in J. Webster and N. Cooper (eds.), *Roman Imperialism: Post-Colonial Perspectives* (Leicester 1996), 19-34, there 19-20; idem, ‘Mommsen through to Haverfield: the origins of Romanization studies in late 19th-c. Britain’, *Dialogues in Roman imperialism* 27-50, there 31, 45; Mattingly, ‘Being Roman: expressing identity in a provincial setting’, *JRA* Vol.17 (2004) 5-25, there 5. See also R. Hingley, ‘Not so Romanized? Tradition, reinvention or discovery in the study of Roman Britain’, *World Archaeology* Vol.40.3 (2008) 427-443 for a more extensive take on Romanization outside of Mommsen and Haverfield.

²⁷ Woolf, ‘Beyond Romans and natives’, 339-340; J. Webster, ‘Creolizing the Roman Provinces’, *American Journal of Archaeology* Vol.105.2 (2001) 209-225, there 213.

²⁸ Woolf, ‘Beyond Romans and Natives’, 339, Webster, ‘Creolizing the Roman Provinces’, 211. Influenced by this train of thought are the works of R. Reece, ‘Town and Country: The End of Roman Britain’, *World Archaeology* Vol.12.1 (1980) 77-92 and *My Roman Britain* (Cirencester 1988), in particular 74.

²⁹ M.-J. Versluys, ‘Understanding objects in motion’, 2-3.

their lead would eventually be imitated by the non-elites.³⁰ This work would see the debate on the use of Romanization reignited again spearheaded by the publication of the two volumes on Roman imperialism. Scholars either abandoned the term or made some modifications to keep it sustainable.³¹ Mattingly and Hingley have criticized it for assuming that cultural change was a unilateral nature barring multidirectional and bilateral approaches and predefining the outcome. Additionally it downplays unequal relations between Roman authorities and native peoples.³² Woolf and Barrett have remarked that the binary opposition between Roman and native was kept alive by maintaining this word.³³ It can be expected that the local elites had far more to gain by participating in the new political setting brought by the Romans. Wallace-Hadrill has introduced ‘code-switching’ to describe how members of the elite could draw from different sets of culture (both Roman and native) and thus present themselves in different ways to advance in the Roman system without losing their standing with their own people.³⁴ The identity of the individual consists of multiple aspects which does not fit in the mold offered by one-sided identity. The increasing use of archaeology has shown a more nuanced story which also illuminated more about the lives of non-elites. But the presence of Roman material culture is not necessarily a marker for wish to appropriate a Roman lifestyle. The use of Roman pottery or the consumption of wine and fish oil might as well occur out of sheer pragmatic reasons.³⁵ Physical objects help in reconstructing cultural change, but in the end it remains a process which primarily took place in the mind.³⁶

³⁰ M. Millett, *The Romanization of Britain* (Cambridge 1990); R. Roth, ‘Introduction: Roman culture between homogeneity and integration’, in idem and J. Keller (eds.), *Roman by Integration: Dimensions of Group Identity in Material Culture and Text* (Portsmouth 2007) 7-10, there 7; Revell, *Roman Imperialism and Local Identities*, 7. Webster, ‘Creolizing the Roman Provinces’, 213. Woolf’s *Becoming Roman: the origins of provincial civilization in Gaul* (Cambridge 1998) seems to be a spiritual successor in regards to Gaul, although Woolf prefers to continue the decolonization of the discourse.

³¹ See for example S. Keay and N. Terrenato (eds.), *Italy and the West. Comparative Issues in Romanization* (Oxford 2001).

³² Mattingly, ‘Dialogues of power and experience in the Roman Empire’, *Dialogues in Roman imperialism*, 7-24, there 8-9; idem, ‘Being Roman’, 5; idem, *An Imperial Possession*, 13-16; Hingley, ‘The ‘legacy’ of Rome: the rise, decline, and fall of the theory of Romanization’, in Webster and Cooper (eds.), *Roman Imperialism*, 35-48, there 39, 44; Hingley, *Globalizing Roman Culture* (London 2005) 40-46.

³³ Woolf, ‘Beyond Romans and natives’; J.C. Barrett, ‘Romanization: a critical comment’, *Dialogues in Roman Imperialism*, 51-64, there 60. Despite the valid point made here the use of native is maintained in this study as a referencing point to the majority of the people from the (mostly) rural areas where Romanization would have little effect on daily life during the period discussed in this paper.

³⁴ A. Wallace-Hadrill, *Rome’s Cultural Revolution* (Cambridge 2008) 63-64: ‘(...) by communicating to different groups of people with their cultural aspects -material and in values- to advance in a socio-political setting’.

³⁵ Cf. Revell, *Roman Imperialism and Local Identities*, 8, 193; Mattingly, *Imperialism, Power, and Identity*, 210

³⁶ B. Hoffmann, ‘Tacitus, Agricola, and the role of literature in the archaeology of the first century AD’, in E.W. Sauer (ed.), *Archaeology and Ancient History: Breaking Down the Boundaries* (London 2004) 151-166, there 163; Lulic, ‘Theorizing Romanization’, 25.

Several authors have suggested alternative approaches to replace Romanization, for example ‘discrepant experiences’ and ‘discrepant identities’, ‘creolization’, ‘Mediterraneanization’, ‘globalization’ and ‘glocalization’.³⁷ None of the alternatives, however, have been convincing enough to see the problematic term permanently depart from scholarship. One might wonder to what degree attempts to see Romanization removed are the result of some form of tiredness about the continuing debate and ever-growing bibliography. Studies about cultural change in the Roman world see the justification or rejection of its use on equal measure nowadays.³⁸ True enough, a consensus still has to be reached about the precise meaning which can be considered an obstacle to comparative studies.³⁹ This is on the contrary possibly part of its strength rather than its weakness. That is of course easily remarked from the privileged position of hindsight, but the alternatives have highlighted the inherent flaws of the concept. Therefore new studies have always required consistent adjustments to the notion of Romanization in order to reflect modern and updated conceptions of cultural change.⁴⁰ Despite the lack of a singular and exact definition, scholars draw from a shared notion of the topic and are able to understand one another despite the many ‘individualized’ versions. Neither can it be reasonably expected that the complexity of cultural change in the Roman world can be capsulated in a single ‘correct’ definition.

This paper addresses the Romanization of the army in Britain, which has a two-fold character. On one side it assumes that the soldier in the Roman army adhered to Roman culture or would do so during his service. On the other side it considers these soldiers as contributors to the diffusion of Roman culture during their career and retirement. Adherence to a cultural group does not define the individual completely. Instead, it has been commonly accepted that the ‘Roman’ culture does not exist. There is little homogeneity to be attested here as it involves practices from cultural groupings as Celtic, Greek, Near Eastern, Egyptian

³⁷ Mattingly, *Dialogues in Roman imperialism*, 14; idem, ‘Vulgar and weak ‘Romanization’, or time for a paradigm shift?’, *JRA* Vol.15.1 (2002) 536-540, there 537-538: discrepant experiences and identities refer to the expression of the individual through acceptance or rejection of certain cultural practices. Webster, ‘Creolizing the Roman Provinces’: creolization allows for a bottom-up approach yet the focus on lower ranks limits further exploration. I. Morris, ‘Mediterraneanization’, *Mediterranean historical review* Vol.18.2 (2003) 30-55: inspired by the theme of connectivity of Horden’s and Purcell’s *The Corrupting Sea*, Mediterraneanization regards the convergence of different provincial cultures within the empire into a shared Mediterranean culture. Hingley, *Globalizing Roman Culture*: continues on connectivity on a broader scale.

³⁸ Cf. Woolf, ‘Romanization 2.0 and its alternatives’, *Archaeological dialogues* Vol. 21, 45-50, there 47.

³⁹ This problem was first addressed in Keay and Terrenatio, *Comparative Issues in Romanization*. For a critique on this work see Mattingly, ‘Vulgar and weak ‘Romanization’’, 536.

⁴⁰ Cf. J. Lulic, ‘Theorizing Romanization. Cognition and Cultural Change in Roman Provinces: A Case of Religious Change in Roman Dalmatia’, in S.T. Roselaar (ed.), *Processes of Cultural Change and Integration in the Roman World* (Leiden 2015) 20-38, there 23.

and other Mediterranean forms. New hybrid phenomena which emerged as a result of Roman influences in the regions are also the result of the presence of the Roman culture and thus included in Romanization.⁴¹ There are many shapes in which 'Roman' culture and identity can manifest itself, and there is a myriad of ways in which this was adopted, imitated or appropriated. Therefore Romanization in this paper is defined as the increasing use and participation of people regarding Roman cultural practices, both material and immaterial.

Studying the Roman army in Britain

The province Britannia saw the greatest concentration of military personnel across the Empire with ten to twelve per cent of the total armed forces covering some four per cent of all territories combined.⁴² This sizeable force was a small but significant minority in the province. Three legions and over 50 auxiliary regiments would be garrisoned here since the late first century, usually estimating to a combined number of some 55.000 troops by the second century.⁴³ Following the calculations as presented by Mattingly, the army constituted some two to three per cent of the total population of around two million.⁴⁴ Romanization was not quite as effective on the island compared to other provinces, suggesting that the size of the garrisons should not be put on par with an accompanying rise in cultural change in provincial society. Outside of the south-east, which was more involved with Roman Europe pre-conquest, Romanization can be attested more sparsely in Britain where the military is not garrisoned if the Roman character of the province is based on urbanization and the presence of Roman institutions. Davies has shown that Wales in particular lagged behind following this form of measurement.⁴⁵

Why then should the Roman army in Britain be discussed if the army apparently did not contribute much to Romanization? The military community are generally not considered in

⁴¹ Roth, 'Introduction', 7. Versluys, 'Understanding objects in motion', 15-16.

⁴² Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 166; idem, *Imperialism, Power, and Identity*, 221.

⁴³ P. Wells, *The Barbarians speak. How the conquered peoples shaped Roman Europe* (Princeton 1999) 15; Mattingly, 'Being Roman', 15.

⁴⁴ Millett, 'Coloniae and Romano-British studies', in H. Hurst (ed.), *The Coloniae of Roman Britain: New Studies and a Review* (Portsmouth 1999) 191-196, there 194-195 (estimate of 55.000); Haynes, 'Britain's First Information Revolution', 116; Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 166, 356, 368; idem, *Imperialism, Power, and Identity*, 219-221. Holder has put the auxiliary forces in Roman Britain to fourteen units of *alae* and 42 *cohortes* (with potentially an additional three cohorts) by the time of Hadrian, a conclusion drawn from surviving diplomas. See P.A. Holder, 'Auxiliary deployment in the reign of Hadrian', in Wilkes (ed.), *Documenting the Roman Army*, 101-146, there 118.

⁴⁵ Cunliffe, *Greeks, Romans and Barbarians*, 162; J.L. Davies, 'Soldiers, peasants, industry and towns. The Roman army in Britain: a Welsh perspective', *The Roman Army and the Economy*, 169-203, there 169-170.

the light of Romanization. As remarked before, modern studies tend to take the military community as a group that consciously distanced itself from the rest.⁴⁶ More recently Haynes and Alston have warned that soldiers could maintain a separate identity but also assimilated with local policies and maintained ties with civilians, facilitating easier integration in the locality.⁴⁷ While it is plausible to believe that in the wake of the conquest soldiers would keep their distance more from the local population, as logically bad blood would have existed, it is very unlikely that soldiers would separate themselves as strong from civilians in later decades and centuries. Their influence on cultural exchange within provincial setting depends on interaction between the two parties, nor does a stronger adherence to a singular collective identity completely end all other established relations and connections in general. This paper shall address the military community of Britain in the light of Romanization, breaking a perceived stronger barrier between soldier and civilian in the Roman northern frontier. It shall however refer to communities rather than community. Just as the Roman army was constructed from several armies, the several legions with accompanying auxiliary regiments each, so too is the military community of Britain divided in smaller communities. These are the varying garrisons divided across the island, each maintaining their (sub)identities with their own customs and traditions. Differences might not have been significant, but comparing units will reveal that these did exist, both within and between legions and auxilia

This study is guided by the question how soldiers influenced cultural change in Roman Britain from the Claudian invasion to the early reign of Caracalla. The year 43 marked the launch of the Claudian invasion, when Roman control would be established overseas, intensifying -not introducing- the presence of Roman culture on the island by a significant amount. The formal ending point has been set with the year 212, just before the province was split in two in the following year.⁴⁸ More important, it also witnessed the declaration of the *Constitutio Antoniniana* by Caracalla which granted citizenship to all free men of the Roman Empire. This is relevant to the study of identity and the Roman army as the reward of citizenship to auxiliaries would therefore become obsolete.⁴⁹ In contrast to the legionaries,

⁴⁶ Notable is Mattingly's division in military, urban and rural communities in *An Imperial Possession*. Also remarked upon by Haynes (see next footnote).

⁴⁷ Haynes, 'Identity and the Military Community', 448-449; Alston, 'The ties that bind', 194-195.

⁴⁸ A.R. Birley, 'The Frontier Zone in Britain: Hadrian to Caracalla', in L. de Blois and E. Lo Cascio (eds.), *The Impact of the Roman Army (200 BC – AD 476): Economic, Social, Political, Religious and Cultural Aspects* (Leiden 2007) 355-370, there 365.

⁴⁹ There were in fact non-civilian legions: Legions I and II *Adiutrix*, raised from peregrine soldiers of the Italian fleets. These are however the rare exception. See M. Lavan, 'The Army and the Spread of Roman Citizenship', *JRS* Vol.109 (2019), 27-69, there 39.

auxilia can be considered as either non-Roman or Roman by legislative status - obtaining citizenship would have had a major impact on the social position and identity of the soldier. Outside of the army citizenship was only rarely extended to individuals, a valuable aspect in a world of prestige where its possession was not the rule.⁵⁰

A few words need to be said about the auxilia before the sources and chapters will be addressed. This paper does not intend to investigate the whole organization of the forces for there are several works which have treated the army as such to great extent.⁵¹ First, the focus is placed on the army garrisoning and operating in the mainland, thus excluding the British fleet (*Classis Britannica*) from main discussion. Second, there have been auxiliary regiments which were raised and maintained as Roman citizens, but it is unlikely that these ever served in Britain.⁵² Thus in general members of the auxilia are considered non-enfranchised provincials unless explicitly stated otherwise. Third, the auxilia eventually included *numeri* (*cunei* for cavalry), irregular troops from native origins which were not formally incorporated in the Roman army during the period of this study. Because these units are a relative late phenomenon, remained a small fraction of the auxilia up to 212, and with their contribution to the impact of Romanization being virtually non-existent, they shall not be involved any further.⁵³

Methodology: sources and chapters

The literary records from ancient writers are scarce and much of the reconstruction for early Roman Britain has relied on archaeological material, mostly inscriptions from Britain and other provinces, and especially so for the second century.⁵⁴ The fragmentary records of two ancient authors mostly shed light on events from the first century. The main literary sources come from the *Annales* and *Histories* of Tacitus. His works predominantly concerns the

⁵⁰ Potter, *Roman Britain* (London 1983) 37; Creighton, *Britannia*, 79. Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 166-167.

⁵¹ A. Goldsworthy, *The Complete Roman Army* (London 2003); P. Southern, *The Roman Army: A Social & Institutional History* (Oxford 2006). For Britain in particular see De la Bédoyère, *Eagles over Britannia: The Roman Army in Britain* (Stroud 2002).

⁵² L. Keppie, 'The army and the navy', in *The Cambridge Ancient History. Vol. X: The Augustan Empire 43 B.C. - A.D. 69* (Cambridge 1996) 371-396, there 379; Southern, *The Roman Army*, 122; Lavan, 'The Army and the Spread of Roman Citizenship', 37. Augustus had to quickly find troops during the Pannonian Revolt in the year 6 and after the loss of three legions in Germany in 9.

⁵³ Southern, *The Roman Army*, 124; M. Lavan, 'The Army and the Spread of Roman Citizenship', 41.

⁵⁴ S. Frere, *Britannia: a history of Roman Britain* (London 1967), 119; Hoffmann, *The Roman Invasion of Britain: Archaeology Versus History* (Barnsley 2013) 129, 138; Hurst, 'The Textual and Archaeological Evidence', *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Britain*, 95-116; Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 21.

period from Tiberius to Nero, the civil war and the Flavian period up to halfway 70.⁵⁵ His *Agricola* is a panegyric and eulogizes his father-in-law who commanded armies in Roman Britain. This work does shed light on events in Britain and has been used in the past because it would provide one of the clearest descriptions of Romanization.⁵⁶ Tacitus is a politically motivated author and his text is by no means considered unbiased, in contrast to that of Dio which has been written in a much more detached manner.⁵⁷ Dio's work complements the gaps left by Tacitus, but only little of his account on the second century has been retrieved.

The epigraphic records will serve as the dominant database for this paper to address the topic of military communities and identity. The amount of inscriptions from Roman Britain is poor in comparison to the other provinces of the Roman Empire, with the overwhelming majority coming from the military.⁵⁸ Inscriptions can be divided in two categories: monumental inscriptions and *instrumentum domesticum*. Monumental inscriptions, usually inscribed stones found at monuments, places of worship and burial places, are part of the public sphere and commemorate a person or an event, such as funerary inscriptions and religious dedications.⁵⁹ The other group belongs to the private sphere and contain personal objects intended for domestic use, including letters, military diplomas and personal religious objects like curse tablets (*defixiones*).⁶⁰ The focus will be overwhelmingly placed on monumental inscriptions as most of the material showcasing a shared military identity can be found among those objects. Funerary inscriptions will take a leading role here as the epitaphs present elaborate accounts on the identities of soldiers. For the purpose of this paper a collection of 148 funerary inscriptions has been created from which conclusions have been drawn, separating the soldiers between legionaries, auxiliaries, and veterans.⁶¹ In addition religious dedications shall be employed to approach religiosity regarding the Roman army. For the *instrumentum domesticum*, discussed to lesser degree than the monumental

⁵⁵ Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 26-27.

⁵⁶ K. Clarke, 'An Island Nation: Re-reading Tacitus' *Agricola*, *JRS* Vol.91 (2001) 94-112; Hoffmann, 'Tacitus, *Agricola*, and the role of literature', 156-157; Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 27.

⁵⁷ Shotter, *Romans and Britons in North-West England* (Lancaster 1997) 29; Hoffmann, *The Roman Invasion of Britain*, 118.

⁵⁸ R. MacMullen, 'The Epigraphic Habit', *American Journal of Philology* Vol.103 (1982) 234-246, there 289-290; Hope, 'Inscriptions and Identity', 288.

⁵⁹ Altars and other religious dedications were made by either the individual or by a collective group. Though one might argue that personal dedications are a private matter, they have been taken here as part of monumental inscriptions. Reason for this decision is the intention of the object to be dedicated in the public sphere of religion and the intention for the object to remain at a place of worship for eternity.

⁶⁰ See J. Bodet (ed.), *Epigraphic Evidence. Ancient history from inscriptions* (London 2001) and L. Allason-Jones (ed.), *Artefacts in Roman Britain: their purpose and use* (Cambridge 2011).

⁶¹ For more information on the database see footnote See Appendix 2: 'Funerary inscriptions'. Appendix 2.1 shows the funerary inscriptions where the *origo* was explicitly mentioned.

inscriptions, military diplomas shall be utilized to study military communities in the second chapter. Curse tablets shall be employed for the third chapter. The inscriptions have been taken predominantly from those published in the revised edition of *Roman Inscriptions of Britain* (henceforth RIB) volume I, volume III, and from Tomlin's *Britannia Romana*.⁶² For the *instrumentum domesticum*, see volume II.⁶³ Translations have been copied from Tomlin's work first if available for the most recent interpretation, otherwise from RIB.⁶⁴

Starting point of this study was an answer to the question what the role of the army was regarding the Romanization of Britannia between 43 - 212. Vital to achieving this is the concept of military communities. It is imperative to remember the distinction between the army and military communities to avoid confusion. The army consists of all military personnel in service. The military communities include civilians that were connected to them through marriage and family ties, complemented by tradesmen and veterans. As for Romanization, it was defined as the increasing use and participation of people regarding Roman cultural practices, both material and immaterial. This also involves the appearance of hybrid forms from native and Roman cultural practices. The province can be divided in three zones for a general analysis of cultural change which shall be involved in the chapters: the northern frontier, the western frontier, and 'civilian Britain'. The northern frontier covers the area from the legionary fortress of York (*Eboracum*) up to Hadrian's Wall, and will involve archaeological material from southern Scotland if relevant. York would become a thriving settlement more akin to a city than a legionary base at one point, but is considered a legionary fortress for this study as it presumably would have been raised in status when *Britannia* was divided in two in 213.⁶⁵ The western frontier roughly covers modern-day Wales and includes the two legionary fortresses of Caerleon (*Isca*) and Chester (*Deva*) and everything west to it.

⁶² R.G. Collingwood and R.P. Wright, (edited by R.S.O. Tomlin), *The Roman Inscriptions of Britain. I: Inscriptions on Stone* (Stroud 1995) and Tomlin, Wright, and M.W.C. Hassall, *The Roman Inscriptions of Britain. III: Inscriptions on Stone* (Oxford 2009). These inscriptions can be found in the online database dedicated to Roman inscriptions from Britain at <https://romaninscriptionsofbritain.org/>. Tomlin, *Britannia Romana: Roman inscriptions and Roman Britain* (Oxford 2017).

⁶³ This work of Collingwood and Wright has been revised by Frere and Tomlin and consists of eight fascicules released over several years. See Collingwood and Wright (edited by Frere, and Tomlin) *The Roman Inscriptions of Britain. II: Instrumentum Domesticum* (Oxford 1990-1995).

⁶⁴ Additional information, such as references to different datasets and dating of some inscriptions, has been taken from the Clauss – Slaby database (manfredclauss.de) and has been presented in line with Tomlin's work. In general at least two referencing points have been provided for each object (which will be continued in the chapters) regarding the collections of RIB, CIL and AE. The ancient name is placed in cursive behind the modern name of the place as far as this is known (unless the two names are nearly identical). For the meaning of the punctuation marks in the Latin text, see appendix 2 'Reading inscriptions'.

⁶⁵ P. Ottaway, 'York: the study of a late Roman *colonia*', Hurst (ed.), *The Coloniae of Roman Britain*, 136-150, there 146. York would be awarded with the status of *colonia* when it became provincial capital of *Britannia Inferior*.

An exception has been made for Great Bulmore which was closely related to Caerleon.⁶⁶ Civilian Britain applies to all territories which have yet to be included, grossly covering the south, east and centre of the island. In contrast to the two frontiers this area saw little military presence after the conquest of Britain.

Three chapters shall demonstrate the relation between army and Romanization in Britannia. The first chapter concerns the ‘Roman’ character of the soldiers who served in this province in relation to military identity. This will be examined with the use of funerary inscriptions, with a particular interest in those from which the origins of the soldier can be attested. How a soldier was to be remembered by others is indicative of the way he was to be presented, a not so insignificant factor to the military side of one’s identity. A quantitative and qualitative analysis of a database containing 148 funerary inscriptions shall reveal the ethnic composition of the Roman army in Britain.

The second chapter is orientated around the military communities and where these could be found. Therefore the chapter shall approach the presence of the army in Britain from a macro-level and micro-level. On a macro-level the spatial orientation of the communities across the island shall be brought into discussion. Subsequently the scope shall be narrowed to the micro-level by investigating the extramural settlements known as *canabae* and *vici* around legionary fortresses and auxiliary forts.⁶⁷ The clusters of soldiers would form the bulk of the military communities, but attention will be directed to those who were brought or attracted to these places afterwards. These are civilians who would also share in an environment of military identity and it can be assumed that they would fulfil an important part in the life of soldiers, especially wives and children. For this chapter funerary inscriptions and to some degree military diplomas will be more relevant.

The third chapter will discuss what the soldiers brought with them to the island and what subsequently was maintained by successive generations of soldiers. This chapter validates the assumption that the army and in extension military communities engaged in provincial society instead of actively distancing. It shall outline the religious beliefs which the soldiers took with them to Britannia, adopted there from fellow soldiers and the native population. Furthermore, the two cults of Jupiter Dolichenus and Mithras shall be investigated to see how

⁶⁶ Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*, 229.

⁶⁷ N. Hanel, ‘Military Camps, Canabae and Vici: The Archaeological Evidence’, in Erdkamp (ed.), *A Companion to the Roman Army* (Oxford 2007) 395-416, there 410. Fortresses exclusively refer to the three legionary bases at Caerleon, Chester, and Deva, whereas forts are used for all the auxiliary forts

far military religion reached outside of the direct vicinity of military bases. This chapter will be concluded with a small study concerning Bath as a religious meeting point between soldier and civilian, examining whether a noticeable distance between the two existed outside of the military sphere.

Chapter 1: Ethnicity and funerary inscriptions of the Roman army in Britain

The ‘Roman’ character of the army in terms of ethnic origins will function as central theme to this chapter. Here the funerary inscriptions of the army will be presented in order to show that the Roman soldiers in Britannia as a collective might perhaps be better understood as a Romanized force, especially so after the conquest. The chapter commences with an introduction to these sources and in relation to the army. This will be followed up by a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the source material, for which a database consisting of 148 inscriptions will be employed.

Military funerary inscriptions

James and Haynes refer to the legions of the Roman army as imagined communities, ‘symbolically constructed’ entities to whom the soldier would feel a strong sense of belonging.⁶⁸ Within the legions this connection would be more powerful upon narrowing the scope. The legion or auxiliary unit would become the most significant aspect of society to the individual, creating long-lasting bonds with individuals part of the same century.⁶⁹ Soldiers would spend most of their time together in service and it can be safely assumed that they continue to do so in their spare time.⁷⁰ The funerary evidence reveal bonds of solidarity between soldiers. Because the burial or cremation of soldiers was not paid for by the state, the responsibility was placed on the individual to see arrangements settled with relatives before death.⁷¹ Death in service usually meant that this responsibility was placed on fellow soldiers or his freedmen.⁷² To bury a comrade was an important matter picked up by comrades of the

⁶⁸ James, ‘The Community of the Soldiers’, 18; Haynes, ‘Introduction: the Roman army as a community’, in Goldsworthy and idem (eds.), *The Roman Army*, 7-14, there 9.

⁶⁹ Cf. Haynes, ‘Identity and the Military Community’, 453.

⁷⁰ There is some evidence revealing the existence of so-called military ‘clubs’ (*collegia*) which enhanced social bonding and maintained patronage networks. These clubs must have reached a level of considerable influence by the late second century, for Septimius Severus started to regulate these clubs and their membership (Dig.47.22.1). See Haynes, ‘Military, service and cultural identity in the auxilia’, in Goldsworthy and idem (eds.), *The Roman Army*, 165-174, there 167; Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 169; Phang, ‘Military Documents, Languages and Literacy’, in Erdkamp (ed.), *A Companion to the Roman Army* (Oxford 2007) 286-305, there 296.

⁷¹ V.M. Hope, ‘Constructing Roman identity: funerary monuments and social structure in the Roman world’, *Mortality* Vol. 2.2 (1997) 103-121, there 116.

⁷² Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 195.

regiment if one had failed to see this arranged before an untimely death, generally arranged for by burial clubs to which soldiers contributed.⁷³ It was also possible, although uncommon, that soldiers arranged this matter for their comrade whilst stationed elsewhere, revealing that bonds were maintained despite distance and not restricted to those within the same unit.⁷⁴ Military tombstones rarely mark the location of soldiers who died in battle as they were usually buried in mass-graves. To set up a tombstone was an activity that could be done in times of (relative) peace, and those who are buried there usually had succumbed to disease or suffered wounds.⁷⁵

Tombstones are no mere markings of places where people are buried and appear to be tied to social prestige. Meyer has noted that the quantity of epitaphs increase accordingly to the number of citizens in a community and declined after citizenship was extended to many by Caracalla in 212.⁷⁶ In the same vein Woolf concluded that tombstones were more-so part of public life rather than the private counterpart, their numbers declining once social distinction in the status of citizen ceased to have significant value.⁷⁷ These objects are a medium communicating to others, a testament to the achievements and memory of the dead. Whether they might have had some impact on the native population in the wake of the conquest is difficult to ascertain.⁷⁸ Epitaphs were written in the Latin language, excluding a large portion of provincial society from reading the words. It was meant to be read by other soldiers foremost as military cemeteries and graves were located near the forts and fortresses. Military tombstones are often easily recognizable by the use of a standard formula reporting name, filiation, place of origin, length of service and age of death.⁷⁹ In addition the sculptures part

⁷³ Keppie, *Understanding Roman inscriptions*, 81; Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*, 184. CIL 13, 3496 = ILS 9123. This inscription from Amiens, France was set up to a soldier by ‘the men of the detachment of the same legion ... at their own expense’.

⁷⁴ A. Meyer, *The Creation, Composition, Service and Settlement of Roman auxiliary units raised on the Iberian Peninsula* (Oxford 2013). Here 5 out of 26 inscriptions refer to individual soldiers or units raised on the Iberian Peninsula and another soldier from a different unit. One can also take a look at the letters found at Vindolanda, for some concern amical communication between soldiers and officers from different units.

⁷⁵ Hope, ‘Trophies and tombstones: Commemorating the Roman soldier’, *World Archaeology* Vol.35 (2003) 79-97, there 85.

⁷⁶ E. Meyer, ‘Explaining the epigraphic habit’, *JRS* Vol.80 (1990) 74-96.

⁷⁷ Woolf, ‘Monumental Writing and the Expansion of Roman Society in the Early Empire’, *Journal of Roman Studies* Vol.86 (1996) 22-39. This is in line with MacMullen’s observation that epigraphy rose in popularity during the first and second centuries and rapidly declined during the third. See R. MacMullen, ‘Epigraphic Habit’, *American Journal of Philology* Vol.103 (1982) 234-246.

⁷⁸ Academic studies do not appear to have been bothered too much by this question. Hope has been somewhat outspoken on this matter, suggesting that ‘the military cemetery, like the trophy monument, could serve as a symbol of Roman power, dominance and permanence’. Hope, ‘Trophies and tombstones’, 87.

⁷⁹ L. Keppie, ‘“Having been a soldier”. The Commemoration of Military Service on Funerary Monuments of the Early Roman Empire’, in J.J. Wilkes (ed.), *Documenting the Roman Army: Essays in Honour of Margaret Roxan* (London 2003) 31-54, there 31. While shorter epitaphs are the norm, some elaborate texts can be found

of the tombstone, if present, more often than not depict the deceased figure in armed appearance, in case of mounted cavalymen.⁸⁰ The presentation of soldiers regarding their clothing worn in life and that depicted in sculptures in death was an important aspect to military identity with which they distinguished themselves from the rest of society.⁸¹ An iconic example is the tombstone of Favonius Facilis, the first classicized sculpture in Britain (see figure 3).⁸²

The military tombstones which have been retrieved, preserved and (partially) pieced back together, have been incredibly useful in understanding the Roman army. The majority can be dated to the first and second centuries⁸³ For this study they have aided by disclosing the ethnic diversity of Rome's armies of the first, second and early third centuries. Funerary texts of (ex-)soldiers do not tell the year of death nor do they provide any form of reference to this. Instead they can be ascribed to certain periods by historical context. For example, an inscription from a fort part of the Antonine Wall can reasonably be dated to the period of its existence. The manner in which *Dis Manibus* ('to the Shades of the Dead') is referred to complements in providing a more accurate dating.⁸⁴ Epitaphs can be dated to the reign of Claudius or Nero in general when the phrasing *Dis Manibus* cannot be attested in the inscription. If these words are present the text can generally be dated to the later first century, whereas the abbreviated version D.M. makes the object post-Trajanic, yet some exceptions always exist.⁸⁵ Unfortunately it became increasingly common to omit the *origo* in the funerary texts from the second century onwards.⁸⁶ The epitaphs which do explicitly state the origins of the soldier can therefore more accurately be dated to the first century, which makes up the bulk of the total, and the early second century. The majority however does not, complicating the assessment of the ethnicity of soldiers garrisoned in Britain after Trajan and

on occasion. See for example RIB 292 (= CIL 07, 154, dated 43-61) of an eagle-bearer encouraging others to live their lives in proper conduct.

⁸⁰ Hope, 'Inscriptions and Sculpture: The Construction of Identity in the Military Tombstones of Roman Mainz', in Oliver (ed.), *The epigraphy of death*, 155-186, there 173; Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 169, 209-213.

⁸¹ James, 'The Community of the Soldiers', 18-21; Hope, 'Trophies and tombstones', 87; Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 209-213.

⁸² G. de la Bédoyère, *The Real Lives of Roman Britain* (New Haven 2015) 20.

⁸³ Hope, 'Trophies and tombstones', 84.

⁸⁴ For more elaboration on dating inscriptions, see L. Keppie, *Understanding Roman inscriptions* (Baltimore 1991); C. Bruun and J.C. Edmondson (eds.), *The Oxford handbook of Roman epigraphy* (Oxford 2015); Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*.

⁸⁵ Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*, 26; 64-65; 226. The abbreviation of *stipendiorum* also accounts for similar rulings regarding spelling and abbreviation. For conventions see appendix 1: Epigraphic conventions.

⁸⁶ The omission of father's name and voting-tribe of the deceased figure is also common from the second century onwards. Information taken from commentary provided by RIB vol. III concerning RIB 3074, taken 25/10/2021 from <https://romaninscriptionsofbritain.org/inscriptions/3074>.

Hadrian. In addition, military units would be reinforced by local recruitment rather than ‘ethnic’ recruitment after the initial levy, even more so after the lesson learned from the Batavian Revolt.⁸⁷ Auxiliaries were moved from their native province during their service, recruiting from the region where they operated. Ethnic names of auxiliary regiments are thus quickly deceptive labels concerning the composition of their members a few decades after the unit was established.



Figure 3: Tombstone of Marcus Favonius Facilis⁸⁸

⁸⁷ Dobson and Mann, ‘The Roman Army’, 194; Haynes, *Blood of the provinces*, 122.

⁸⁸ RIB 200 (= CIL 07, 90, dated 43-48). *M(arcus) Favoni(us) M(arci) f(ilius) Pol(lia) (tribu) Facilis (centurio) leg(ionis) XX Verecundus et Novicius lib(erti) posuerunt h(ic) s(itus) e(st)*. Marcus Favonius Facilis, son of Marcus, of the Pollian voting-tribe, centurion of the Twentieth Legion, lies buried here; Verecundus and Novicius, his freedmen, set this up. Image taken 30/12/2021 from <https://romaninscriptionsofbritain.org/inscriptions/200>.

Many known soldiers would likely have ended up with a different nationality than they had in life were it not for the mention of their *origo* on their funerary text. This aspect is core part of the identity of the soldier which appears to have been mentioned in the vast majority of epitaphs (as far as damages allow for this). It shall be studied in more detail in the following segments which present the quantitative and qualitative data of this chapter.

Quantifying origins: quantitative perspectives

Funerary inscriptions from all regions of the Roman Empire are believed to amount to at least 75% of the total inscriptions.⁸⁹ From Britain a total of 15.298 inscriptions of all kinds have been recorded, a total of 4.260 when excluding the *instrumentum domesticum*. Drawing from Hope's calculations regarding inscriptions on stone -the material of all objects used in this chapter- the total number of funerary inscriptions is narrowed down to 600.⁹⁰ This paper includes a few tables sorting the sources in different categories.⁹¹ These are based on 148 funerary inscriptions dated between the reign of Claudius and Caracalla, although this chapter draws from a collection covering up to the reign of Antoninus in particular. From this selection a total of 84 funerary inscriptions belonged to legionaries. There are 37 inscriptions from auxiliaries and 24 from veterans (divided as follows: 18 legionary veterans, one *emeritus* and five auxiliary *emeriti*).⁹² The remaining three could belong to either of these categories. From the total of 148 only 59 explicitly mention the *origo* of the deceased figure: 42 from legionaries, eleven belonging to auxiliary soldiers and four from veterans (of which one from a legionary and auxiliary *emeritus* each).⁹³ The data belonging to these 59

⁸⁹ F. Beltrán Lloris, 'Latin Epigraphy: The Main Types of Inscriptions', in Bruun and Edmondson (eds.), *The Oxford handbook of Roman epigraphy*, 89-110, there 95. See also Bodel, 'Epigraphy and the ancient historian', in idem (ed.), *Epigraphic Evidence. Ancient history from inscriptions* (London 2001) 1-56, there 30.

⁹⁰ Hope, 'Inscriptions and Identity', 287. Hope has postulated a database of 2800 inscriptions on stone. Taking into account the overlap between categories and potential misreading due to damage to the object, she divides the remaining 2.200 as follows: 1.000 votive inscriptions, 200 building dedications, 250 centurial stones, and 100 milestones. The remainder is left undetermined.

⁹¹ See Appendix 2: 'Funerary inscriptions'. 2.1 shows the sources where the *origo* could be deducted, either explicitly or by additional information provided by the object itself. 2.2 concerns the categorization based on rank. There is no division between soldier and officer, but one has been made between auxiliary cavalry (*alae*) and infantry (*cohortes*), including that within mixed units of cavalry and infantry known as *cohors equitata*. Appendix 3.2 categorizes on the basis of the location where the inscription was found.

⁹² An *emeritus* was a soldier who was no longer required to serve in the army, usually used for soldiers discharged due to mental or physical handicaps suffered during their career. These soldiers received similar rewards as veterans upon discharge. See De la Bédoyère, *The Real Lives of Roman Britain*, 37. *Emeritus* is also coined as a term to describe soldiers who remained in service even though they had already served their time. These are veterans who did not leave the army upon discharge.

⁹³ Cf. Appendix 2.1: Sorted by *origo* of soldiers.

inscriptions have been presented in a few tables. In table 1 the legionaries from the first century are presented related to their origins. For the Claudian invasion only four legions can be taken into account, namely the *II Augusta*, *IX Hispana*, *XIV Gemina (Martia Victrix)*, and *XX (Valeria Victrix)*.⁹⁴ In table 2 the legions are complemented with the other legions which served in Britain, the period extended to the reign of Caracalla. Table 3 presents similar data concerning the auxilia.⁹⁵

Explanation abbreviations and terms used for tables 1 – 3.⁹⁶

(v): veteran (e): *emeritus*⁹⁷

Celt. West: Celtic West, refers to the Roman provinces west of the Bosphorus predominantly part of Celtic influences located in Europe. This category consists of Britannia, Gaul (excluding Narbonensis), Germania, Hispania Lusitania, Noricum, Pannonia, and Raetia.

Lat. West: Latin West, refers to the Roman provinces west and south of Italy adjacent to the Mediterranean Sea, known to belong to the more Romanized regions of the West. This category consists of Gallia Narbonensis, Hispania Tarraconensis and the North African provinces west of Egypt.

Greek Lands: this category refers to regions where Greek was the dominant language west of the Bosphorus, namely Greece, Macedon and Thrace.

⁹⁴ Only legion *II Augusta* can be retrieved directly from the sources partaking in the invasion (Tacitus, *Histories* 3.44), but the other legions are mentioned by Tacitus during the Boudiccan Revolt (*Annals*, 14.32-34), where the XIV and XX gained their new titles. It is likely that these legions would not have been withdrawn as long as *Britannia* was to be pacified. Potter, *Roman Britain*, 7; S. Frere, *Britannia: a history of Roman Britain* (London 1967) 61; M.J. Jones, *Roman Lincoln. Conquest, Colony & Capital* (Stroud 2002) 31; Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 95.

⁹⁵ Note that the tables present the data for inscriptions explicitly mentioning place or region of origins.

⁹⁶ For a more detailed presentation of the *origo* among the regions, see appendix 2.1: sorted by *origo* of soldiers.

⁹⁷ See footnote 92.

| <u>Legion</u> | <u>Celt. West</u> | <u>Lat. West</u> | <u>Italy</u> | <u>Greek Lands</u> | <u>Asia Minor</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|----------------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| <i>II Augusta</i> | 2 | 1(v) | 1(v) | | | 4 |
| <i>IX Hispana</i> | 1(v) | 2 | 2 | 1 | | 6 |
| <i>XIV Gemina</i> | 1 | | 2 | | | 3 |
| <i>XX Val. Vict.</i> | 8 | 4(1v) | 3 | 1(e) | 1 | 17(1v/1e) |
| Total | 12(1v) | 7(2v) | 8(1v) | 2(1e) | 1 | 30(4v/1e) |

Table 1: Origins of legionaries and legionary veterans of the first century from legions partaking in the Claudian invasion:⁹⁸

| <u>Legion</u> | <u>Celt. West</u> | <u>Lat. West</u> | <u>Italy</u> | <u>Greek Lands</u> | <u>Asia Minor</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|---------------------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| <i>II Adiutrix</i> | 4 | 1 | 1 | 4 | | 10 |
| <i>II Augusta</i> | 2 | 1(v) | 1(v) | | | 4(2v) |
| <i>VI Victrix</i> | 3 | 1 | | | | 4 |
| <i>IX Hispana</i> | 1(v) | 2 | 2 | 1 | | 6(1v) |
| <i>XIV Gemina</i> | 1 | | 2 | | | 3 |
| <i>XX Val. Vict.</i> | 8 | 4(1v) | 3 | 1(e) | 1 | 17(1v/1e) |
| <i>XXII</i> ⁹⁹ | 1 | | | | | 1 |
| <u>Unknown</u> | <u>2</u> | | | | | <u>2</u> |
| Total | 21(1v) | 9(2v) | 9(1v) | 6(1e) | 1 | 47(4v/1e) |

Table 2: Origins of legionaries and legionary veterans from the legions active in Roman Britain between Claudius and Caracalla.

⁹⁸ Funerary inscriptions of legionaries belonging to unknown legions are excluded from table 1.

⁹⁹ This is either *Legio XXII Deiotariana* or *Primigenia*, *Deiotariana* can be attested from RIB 3163 (= AE 1965, 215, dated 83-160) concerning a *primus pilus* who became prefect of the XX (thus included with the XX in the tables). *Deiotariana* was not included, together with the *IX Hispana*, in the list of all existing legions by the time of Marcus Aurelius (see CIL 06, 3492 = ILS 2288), indicating that these legions were no longer active. *XXII Primigenia* can be attested from a building dedication and inscription from Birrens (RIB 3486 = AE 1992, 1148, dated 101-200) and Roman Scotland (RIB 2216 = CIL 07, 846, dated 139-161).

| Type of unit | Celt. West | Lat. West | Italy | Greek Lands | Asia Minor | Total |
|---------------|------------|-----------|-------|-------------|------------|--------|
| <i>Ala</i> | 7(1e) | 1 | 1 | | | 9(1e) |
| <i>Cohors</i> | 2 | | 1 | | | 3 |
| Total | 9(1e) | 1 | 2 | | | 12(1e) |

Table 3: Origins of auxilia serving in Britain between Claudius and Caracalla.¹⁰⁰

The vast majority of soldiers serving in Britain hailed from Celtic Europe (30 out of 59 in total), from regions where similar cultural traits would not have been uncommon. For the regions of Latin Europe, excluding North Africa, the same might be said to a lesser degree. Whilst troops from afar were transferred to distant regions, showcasing the logistics and mobility of the army, recruitment and (re)deployment favoured regions close-by. With Celtic culture as a dominant cultural grouping besides the Roman aspects part of service in the army, many of the troops might not have perceived the tribal societies of Britannia as very alien.¹⁰¹ Although it does sound appealing, it would be a mistake to assume that these Roman soldiers would have been the ideal active mediator between Celtic and Roman cultural exchange. The life of a soldier was with the army and the garrison, not among the civilians. The shared notion of Celtic culture might nonetheless have benefited the cultural exchange between soldiers and civilians, potentially ameliorating communications between the two. Furthermore it should be noted that the army was Roman in the sense of ‘being Romanized’ when discussing the Roman army in Britain. The ‘Roman’ army in Britain appears to be largely a collection of Romanized Celts reinforced by others from regions where Roman culture might have manifested itself in varying degrees. Those from Italy are part of the minority. Birley has calculated based on inscriptions from Britain that from the period of Augustus to Claudius the Italians outnumbered provincials by four-to-one in the legions of Britain, but during the reign of Vespasian to the end of Trajanus provincial legionaries became the overwhelming majority with a ratio of one Italian to four or even five provincials.¹⁰² Along the same line Mattingly has assumed that about 81% of the legionaries part of the Claudian invasion were recruited from Italy, with the remainder drawn from veteran colonies in Gallia, Germania, Hispania, Noricum and Raetia. By the end of the first century the Italians would make up for *c.* 20% of the total legionaries stationed in Britain.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ *Ala* for cavalry and *cohors* for infantry.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 168.

¹⁰² Birley, *The people of Roman Britain* (Berkeley 1980) 82.

¹⁰³ Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 187.

Based on the data of the first two tables the percentage of Italians in the legions diminishes from 26-27 to 18-19 per cent from the collection used here, similar to the calculations of Birley and Mattingly.

Logically the vast majority of funerary inscriptions would be found where the army was garrisoned. Roman Britain has been divided in three main areas for this study. The northern frontier includes the area from the fortress of York northwards to Hadrian's Wall and up to the Antonine wall and Scotland. The western frontier roughly covers modern-day Wales, the area marked by the legionary fortresses of Caerleon and Chester.¹⁰⁴ The third zone indicates civilian Britain and applies to the territories which have yet to be included. Civilian Britain grossly covers the south, east and centre of the island. This region sees significantly less military presence compared to the other areas. Table 4 serves to show where the inscriptions were retrieved, divided by the status of the individual as legionary, auxiliary or veteran. This table consists of the complete database of 148 inscriptions.¹⁰⁵

| <u>Zone</u> | <u>Legionary</u> | <u>Auxiliary</u> | <u>Veteran/Emeritus</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| Antonine Wall/Scotland | 2 | 4 | | 6 |
| Hadrian's Wall | 3 | 17 | | 21(+1*) |
| Hadrian's Wall – York | 15 | 7 | 7(5e) | 31(+2*) |
| Wales | 44 | 3 | 11 | 58 |
| <u>Civilian Britain</u> | <u>20</u> | <u>6</u> | <u>6(1e**)</u> | <u>32</u> |
| Total | 84 | 37 | 24(6e) | 148(+3*) |

*Amount of inscriptions included in total with unknown type of soldier

**Legionary *emeritus*

Table 4: Funerary inscriptions per region sorted by legionary, auxiliary and veteran.

It can be noted that the north and west provided exponentially more material than Civilian Britain has, which is not too surprising given the locations where the military was stationed.

¹⁰⁴ The civil settlement of Great Bulmore east of Caerleon has been included in this region due to the close ties between the two locations.

¹⁰⁵ For a more detailed breakdown see appendix 2.3: Finding spots sorted by zones.

The western frontier has yielded the most inscriptions with 60, showing a stronger concentration of legionaries and veterans with the legionary fortresses of Chester and Caerleon. Second comes the northern frontier with 58, providing for most of the auxiliary epitaphs by far with 28 out of the total of 38. This seems to be in line with the idea that the auxilia were employed often to guard the borders compared to the legionaries who were mostly tasked to stay close to the fort.¹⁰⁶ Civilian Britain has yielded a substantial amount of legionary epitaphs but it should be remembered that this region was the battleground for a longer time during the earlier period of Roman occupation. Interesting is the relatively low number of veterans compared to the military zones, suggesting that veterans were keen to return to their comrades in arms after service. The results are quite reflective for where the army was garrisoned, that being at the frontier regions in the north and west where the presence of armed forces was most required. The veterans following them are in line with the emergence of military communities around the military bases, which will be investigated further in the next chapter.

Another point of interest is the numerical gap between funerary inscriptions of legionaries and auxiliaries. The four legions invading Britain were accompanied by an equal number in auxiliary forces, a total paper strength of 40,000 soldiers.¹⁰⁷ Auxiliaries would outnumber legionaries by the 70s at the latest, which would make auxiliary funerary inscriptions more common than those of legionaries were all soldiers to leave a tombstone behind.¹⁰⁸ Yet such is not the case. One can suspect that many auxiliaries would leave for their homeland after they served their years in the army. It also depends on the assumption that all soldiers wished to be remembered as a Roman soldier, sentiment which might have been less popular among auxiliaries.¹⁰⁹ The disparity might also be attributed to economic reasons as the auxiliary soldier was paid less than his legionary counterpart, whilst a trooper earned more than the infantryman.¹¹⁰ The total cavalrymen would have been overshadowed by the number of infantry, yet the former is relatively overrepresented, in this database with 16 inscriptions

¹⁰⁶ Potter, *Roman Britain*, 38-39.

¹⁰⁷ Frere, *Britannia*, 61; Jones, *Roman Lincoln*, 31; Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 130; Allason-Jones, 'Roman Military Culture', in Millett, Revell and Moore (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook*, 464-478, there 464. Breeze has suggested based on military documents that this force might have been up to 25% below strength. See D.J. Breeze, 'The edge of the world: the imperial frontier and beyond', in Salway (ed.), *The Roman Era*, 173-202, there 183.

¹⁰⁸ Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 189. He dates this

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Keppie, 'Having been a soldier', 48-49.

¹¹⁰ As a ruling auxilia earned in general 5/6 of a legionary's pay. On differences in pay between legionary and auxiliary, see Dobson and Mann, 'The Roman Army in Britain', 195; Phang, *The Marriage of Roman Soldiers*, 183; Erdkamp, 'introduction', in idem (ed.), *The Roman Army*, 5-18, there 7; Southern, *The Roman Army*, 122-123; Herz, 'Finances and Costs of the Roman Army', 308.

from members of *alae* in contrast to 21 from soldiers of *cohortes*. The higher pay also explains why the infantry were seldom depicted in sculptures whereas these are more common among the cavalymen.¹¹¹ Even though the auxilia were outnumbered in the funerary epigraphic evidence, they will be studied more-so in the next segment which will approach the inscriptions from a qualitative perspective.

Putting a face to Roman soldiers: qualitative perspectives

The choice to give more attention to auxiliary soldiers was made because they showcase a stronger sense of self-presentation between their roots and profession compared to their legionary counterparts, not in the least because of their names. It is also plausible to assume that legionary recruits would have been drawn from families that were better acquainted with Roman cultural practices and inhabited more Romanized areas compared to auxiliaries, especially if the latter were drawn from regions where Roman culture did not have a profound influence on society.¹¹² The father of a legionary recruit could have been either an auxiliary veteran (up to 140 AD) or a citizen for other reasons.¹¹³ Both would nonetheless have provided a setting in which Roman (material) culture would have been more common, especially as most legionary recruits originated from the veteran colonies.¹¹⁴ That is not to say that legionaries did not originate from all over the empire, yet they would have been more in contact with Roman institutions and practices than the average auxiliary tribesman.¹¹⁵ This is more applicable to the first century and the early second century as the gap between the two groups of soldiers would diminish, eventually disappearing by the reign of Caracalla.¹¹⁶ Haynes has argued that the reign of Antonine Pius already saw a ‘substantially eroded status’ of the distinction between auxiliaries and legionaries.¹¹⁷ Provincials became just as much the norm among the ranks of the legionaries as in the auxilia. By the time of Hadrian Italians would cease to volunteer for the legions and subsequently disappear from the British

¹¹¹ Keppie, *Understanding Roman inscriptions*, 82.

¹¹² Cf. Hope, ‘Inscriptions and Sculpture’, 167.

¹¹³ The extension of citizenship to the children of auxiliary veterans was halted after 140, noticeable with the disappearance of *liberis posterisque* on military diploma’s. See for example RMD 1.39. Hassall, ‘Homes for heroes: married quarters for soldiers and veterans’, in Goldsworthy and Haynes (eds.), *The Roman Army*, 35-40, there 36; Phang, *The Marriage of Roman Soldiers*, 57; idem, ‘Military Documents’, 291. For the most recent discussion on this development, see Lavan, ‘The Army and the Spread of Roman Citizenship’, 30-31.

¹¹⁴ Dobson and Mann, ‘The Roman Army in Britain’, 192.

¹¹⁵ RIB 3445 (dated 201-300) found at Birdoswald (*Banna*) mentions soldier C. Cossutius Saturninus from Hippo Regius, Algeria.

¹¹⁶ Potter, *Roman Britain*, 39.

¹¹⁷ Haynes, *Blood of the provinces*, 80.

legions.¹¹⁸ The use of three names (*tria nomina*) accompanies the possession of citizenship and suggests a longer period of Roman influence on the soldier (a period of Romanization) who had to serve 25 years in order to achieve this privilege.¹¹⁹ The use of three names says more about a shift in the individual's identity and presentation if this person did not enjoy this right from birth and had to obtain it first, for it refers to a rise in social status and prestige which would have impacted his life after service.

It is time to turn to the inscriptions to discover the diverse origins of soldiers of Roman Britain, and whether they still maintained some connection to their homelands as they fought far from home in service of Rome. Because this part of the chapter draws from material where the *origo* can be attested with more certainty, the following examples can be dated between the second half of the first century to the first half of the second century. The first two inscriptions belong to legionaries who fought during the Conquest of Britain. They were both found at the legionary fortress of Lincoln (*Lindum*).¹²⁰

G(aio) Saufeio G(ai) f(ilio) Fab(ia tribu) Her(aclea) militi legio(nis) VIII, annor(um) XXXX, stip(endiorum) XXII h(ic) s(itus) e(st)

'To Gaius Saufeius, son of Gaius, of the Fabia voting-tribe, from Heraclea, soldier of the Ninth Legion, aged 40, of 22 years' service; he lies here.'¹²¹

T(itus) Valerius T(iti) f(ilius) Cla(udia tribu) Pudens Sav(aria) mil(es) leg(ionis) II A(diutricis) p(iae) f(idelis) (centuria) Dossenni Proculi, a(nnorum) XXX aera [V]I, h(eres) d(e) s(uo) p(osuit) h(ic) s(itus) e(st)

¹¹⁸ Dobson and Mann, 'The Roman Army in Britain', 192-193. Mann, *Legionary recruitment and veteran settlement during the principate* (London 1983) 23-24.

¹¹⁹ See Lavan, 'The Army and the Spread of Roman Citizenship', 29 and footnote there for further discussion on auxiliary forces who served for longer periods before citizenship was rewarded.

¹²⁰ Jones, *Roman Lincoln*, 34. The fortress was constructed during the reign of Nero by legion *IX Hispana*, which was replaced by *II Adiutrix* in 71 as the Ninth would move to York to construct another legionary fortress, one of the three permanent legionary bases together with Caerleon (*Isca*) and Chester (*Deva*). It cannot be excluded that Lincoln's earlier foundation can be traced back to the later Claudian period of 47-54.

¹²¹ RIB 255 (= CIL 07, 183, dated 51-70). Translation Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*, 22.

‘Titus Valerius Pudens, son of Titus, of the Claudia voting-tribe, from Savaria, soldier of the Second Legion Adiutrix Dutiful and Loyal in the century of Dossennius Proculus, aged 30, of six years’ service; his heir set this up at his own expense; he lies here.’¹²²

The lack of *Dis Manibus* in any form suggests that both inscriptions date from the first century. The first one can be dated before 71 as the Ninth legion would have left Lincoln by that time. Saufeius originated from Heraclea in Macedonia (little south to present-day Bitola), yet his name is unmistakably Latin.¹²³ While it was common for recruits to take a Latinized name, Macedonia was already part of Rome since the second half of the second century BC, so it would not be too surprising to find Latin names in an area where Greek predominated. It would also be possible that he changed his name to a Latin one upon enlisting in the army, yet his father’s name is clearly Latin as well which suggests that he did not change his name from Greek to Latin when joining the army as he already had one. It is noteworthy that he was not remembered with the *tria nomina* as Saufeius was a citizen, yet he can be easily distinguished as one nonetheless because of the requirement to be a citizen in order to become a legionary. The *duo nomina* is not a clear point of reference regarding the status of citizen as some non-citizens made use of the *duo* and *tria nomina* form, a practice employed by soldiers in particular.¹²⁴ This was not without risk as the use of the three names was forbidden for non-citizens, but this false use shall play no further part as the following inscriptions have provided enough information to discern the social status of the individual besides the names.¹²⁵ The other legionary, Pudens, originated from the Claudian veteran colony Savaria (Szombathely, Hungary). The three names and his legionary profession clearly indicate his status as citizen. He likely would have been granted citizenship by heritage because his father was a veteran, perhaps even one who fought in the invasion force. His age of 30 suggests that he would have been among the first recruits for the newly raised legion in 70, which allows for the exact dating of his tombstone to the year 76.¹²⁶ In contrast to Saufeius his epitaph specifies the century to which he belonged. This might be a matter of financial funds made available by their heirs who were responsible for the funerary texts. A more elaborate written text would logically be more expensive than a shorter one, to which

¹²² RIB 258 (= CIL 07, 185, dated 76). Translation Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*, 46.

¹²³ Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*, 22.

¹²⁴ M. Lavan, ‘The Army and the Spread of Roman Citizenship’, 38.

¹²⁵ R. Alston, ‘The ties that bind’, 175-196.

¹²⁶ Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*, 46.

the heir of Pudens might refer to with ‘at his own expense’. Both legionaries state their *origo* first, their affiliation to their legions second, and in the case of Pudens naming their specific century third. The place of origins was not forgotten as they fought far from home, hinting that their former home was kept in mind and important enough to be inscribed on the stone.

The following four inscriptions belong to members of an auxiliary cavalry contingent originally raised in Thrace, another region where the Greek language persisted. The first two are well-known and originate from the veteran colonies of Colchester (*Camulodunum*) and Gloucester (*Glevum*).¹²⁷

Longinus Sdapeze Matyci f(ilius) duplicarius ala prima Tracum pago Sardi(ca), anno(rum) XL, aeror(um) XV, heredes ex{s} testam(ento) [f(aciendum)] c(uraverunt), h(ic) s(itus) e(st)

‘Longinus Sdapeze, son of Matycus, *duplicarius* in the First Cavalry Regiment of Thracians, from the district of Sardica, aged 40, of 15 years’ service, lies buried here; his heirs under his will had this set up.’¹²⁸

Rufus Sita eques c(o)ho(rtis) VI Tracum, ann(or)um XL, stip(endiorum) XXII, heredes ex{s} test(amento) f(aciendum) curave(runt), h(ic) s(itus) e(st)

‘Rufus Sita, trooper of the Sixth Cohort of Thracians, aged 40, of 22 years’ service, lies buried here. His heirs had this erected according to the terms of his will.’¹²⁹

Just like legionaries the *auxilia* state their place of origins. Longinus hailed from Sardica, (Sofia, Bulgaria). Whilst the stone of Rufus does not explicitly mention his origins, Cassius Dio mentions a Thracian king named Sitas who ruled in 29 B.C.¹³⁰ Both Longinus and Rufus

¹²⁷ J. Wachter, *The Towns of Roman Britain* (London 1975) 17, 137. Colchester was the *oppidum* of the *Catuvellauni* tribe that ‘provoked’ the Claudian invasion. After this tribal centre was taken in 47 it was turned into a *colonia* two years later. Fort *Glevum* was constructed one year prior to this first colony of Roman Britain and would have been turned into a legionary fortress by 67 in preparation for another campaign in Wales. A civilian settlement can already be attested around the fort before it was designated a colony in 96-98 by emperor Nerva, carrying the full name of *Colonia Nervia Glevensium*.

¹²⁸ RIB 201 (= AE 2002, 88, dated 43-49). Translation Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*, 20. Longinus would likely taken the role of second-in-command as he was a *duplicarius*: a soldier on double pay, which would partially explain the more elaborate text on the tombstone. See appendix 3.1: Tombstone belonging to Longinus Sdapeze.

¹²⁹ RIB 121 (= CIL 07, 67, dated 51-100). Translation Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*, 23.

¹³⁰ Dio, *Roman History*, 60.23; Birley, *The people of Roman Britain*, 91.

have *duo nomina*, the first one being Latin -potentially assumed at the start of their career- and the second one probably chosen in relation to their place of origins. The lack of a third name completing the *tria nomina* supports the assumption that the person was not a Roman citizen. The soldier from Heraclea did not have three names either, but he can be confidently assigned to the role of legionary as his tombstone refers to the Ninth. The epitaphs of legionaries often remark to service in the legions, whereas those of auxiliaries refer to the cohort to which they belonged. Despite these units being part of a legion, funerary texts of auxiliaries do not appear to refer to the legion they were assisting at the time of death. A strong notion of ‘cohort spirit’ reveals itself, comparable to the century within a legion, but it would be crude to estimate that this would have been stronger among auxilia compared to legionaries on the basis that the latter does not explicitly name their cohort as much in their epitaph. Both groups of soldiers would have looked towards their direct companions first, those with whom they fought and shared the soldier’s life. There might be more reason to believe that legionaries felt a stronger connection to the legion as military communities compared to auxiliaries as they made up the consistent core of a legion, supported by contingents of non-citizen troops which were more liable to be reassigned to different legions. These units did, among other things, provide the core strength of heavy infantry with much needed mobility in the form of cavalry, to which Longinus and Rufus were both part of. So too were Tirintius and Genialis, two other members of Thracian *alae*. Their tombstones came from Wroxeter (*Viroconium*) and Cirencester (*Corinium Dobunorum*).¹³¹

*Tib(erius) Claud(ius) Tirintius eq(ues) coh(ortis) [...] Thracum an[n]orum LVII
sti[p]endior(um) XX[...] h(ic) s(itus) [e(st)]*

‘Tiberius Claudius Tirintius, trooper of the [...] Cohort of Thracians, aged 57, of [...] years’ service, is buried here.’¹³²

¹³¹ Wachter, *The Towns of Roman Britain*, 5; idem, *Roman Britain* (London 1978) 69-70. P. Crummy, ‘Colchester: making towns out of fortresses and the first urban fortifications in Britain’, in Hurst (ed.), *The Coloniae of Roman Britain*, 88-100, there 95. Both Wroxeter and Cirencester are early forts turned into civilian settlements during the 80’s in the wake of Agricola’s advance to the north.

¹³² RIB 291 (= CIL 07, 158, dated 51-100). Translation Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*, 23-24.

Sextus Valerius Genialis eq(u)es alae Trhaec(um) civis Frisia(v)us, tur(ma) Genialis, an(norum) XXXX st(ipendiorum) XX h(ic) s(itus) e(st) (h)e(res) f(aciendum) c(uravit)

‘Sextus Valerius Genialis, trooper of the Cavalry Regiment of Thracians, a tribesman of the Frisiavi, from the troop of Genialis, aged 40, of 20 years’ service, is buried here. His heir set this up.’¹³³

Comparing the names of Longinus Sdapeze and Rufus Sita with Tiberius Claudius Tirintius and Sextus Valerius Genialis clearly demonstrates the dissimilarity in social status, with Longinus and Rufus being non-citizens whereas Tirintius and Genialis have three names each, indicating the possession of citizenship. The name Tirintius has Greek roots (Tirynthius) hinting towards his origins in or around Greece.¹³⁴ Even though the exact number of years in service is not known, he presumably would have served over the required 25 years as portrayed by the *tria nomina*. His age supports this assumption as recruits of the Roman army, legionaries foremost, were usually recruited from men in their late teens and early 20’s.¹³⁵ Genialis however fell short of obtaining this right by five years yet he is remembered with three names nonetheless, implying that he was already a citizen before signing up with the army or obtained this privilege during his service. He shows that even in the non-citizen auxilia one could find citizens, so the clear distinction between citizen or non-citizen auxiliary units is not that tenable after the initial establishment of the citizen units during the reign of Augustus. Genialis has taken the name of his commanding officer which is not a rare occurrence as the third name, the *cognomen*, was in origin a private nickname.¹³⁶ Genialis is one of those soldiers that would potentially have been assigned a different ethnicity by modern scholars were he not have mentioned his roots. He was not a Thracian compared to the others as he was a tribesman of the *Frisiavi*, a tribe from northern Belgica which was an important recruiting ground for auxiliary cavalry since Caesar’s campaign in Gaul. Had the name of the tribe not been mentioned on the stone, it would be unlikely that his place of origins would have been deducted as the *tria nomina* conceals his roots.¹³⁷

¹³³ RIB 109 (= CIL 07, 68, dated 43-75). Translation idem, 24-25.

¹³⁴ Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*, 24.

¹³⁵ Breeze, *The Frontiers of Imperial Rome* (Barnsley 2011) 38.

¹³⁶ Potter, *Roman Britain*, 14. Soldiers would sometimes take the name of their commander when naming themselves with three names just as *alae* were named after the first commander (see footnote 71). See E. Birley, ‘*Alae* named after their commanders’, *Ancient Society* Vol.9 (1978) 257-273.

¹³⁷ Birley, *The people of Roman Britain*, 91; Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 190; Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*, 25.

So far it appears that soldiers did not let go of their roots despite their careers, holding on to their origins until death. Their participation in the funerary culture of Romans with tombstones inscribed with a standard formula shows that they were appropriating Roman culture. One does however have to keep in mind that they were introduced to this aspect of Roman society by the military foremost. Perhaps it would be more sensible to ascribe this to participation in Roman military culture -as member of a military community- rather than Roman culture itself. Some mention their place of origins or keep a name with ties to this place, whether rooted in the region (Sita) or a Latinized version of a more native name (Tirintius). There are also known instances of auxiliaries who kept their own (Latinized) name rather than confirming to a Roman practice or rather wished to be remembered by this name when they died. Known cases, amongst others, are Dannicus from the *ala Indiana* buried at Cirencester and Insus of *ala Augusta* buried at Lancaster.¹³⁸ Dannicus was from *Augusta Raurica* in Germania Superior (Augst, Switzerland), whereas Treveri tribesman Insus hailed from Rhineland Germany. They both preferred to be remembered by a single name in contrast to the regular two to three names as seen before. The text belonging to Insus does not state anything about his age or years of service, which is unusual, but is otherwise similar to other funerary texts of auxiliaries.¹³⁹ The tombstone of Dannicus does refer to his two heirs both using two names, Fulvius Natalis and Flavius Bitucus, suggesting that it would have been an intentional choice to leave Dannicus without any additional names:

Dannicus eq<u>es alae Indian(ae), tur(ma) Albani, stip(endiorum) XVI, cives(!) Raur(icus) cur(averunt) Fulvius Natalis it(!) Fl[av]ius Bitucus ex testame(nte) h(ic) s(itus) e(st)

‘Dannicus, trooper of the *ala Indiana*, troop of Albanus, of 16 years’ service, a tribesman of the Raurici, lies buried here. Fulvius Natalis and Flavius Bitucus had this erected under his will.’¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ RIB 108 (= CIL 07, 66, dated 43-75) for Dannicus and RIB 3185 (= AE 2006, 750, dated 75-120) for Insus. There were three to four *alae Augusta* in Britain. For discussion on these *alae*, see P.S. Austen and D. Breeze, ‘A New Inscription from Chesters on Hadrian’s Wall’, *Archaeologia Aeliana* Vol.7 (1979) 115-126; M.G. Jarrett, ‘Non-Legionary Troops in Roman Britain: Part One, the Units’, *Britannia* Vol. 25 (1994) 35-77; J.E. Spaul, *ALA²: The auxiliary cavalry regiments of the pre-Diocletianic imperial Roman army* (Andover 1994).

¹³⁹ Cf. commentary provided by RIB Vol. III, 3185. Taken 12/01/2022 from <https://romaninscriptionsofbritain.org/inscriptions/3185>.

¹⁴⁰ Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*, 39. The *ala Indiana* is named after its first commander, Julius Indus. For image, see appendix 3.2.: Tomstone belonging to Dannicus.

This particular funerary text might on first sight not show much different compared to others. Mattingly only briefly remarks that Dannicus chose to have ‘a more native appellation’.¹⁴¹ Tomlin believes him to be a veteran discharged after Vespasian’s accession in AD 69 and does not dwell on it any further.¹⁴² His sixteen years of service would imply a premature end to his career, nor is there any mention of a honourable discharge (*honesta missio*).¹⁴³ Perhaps Dannicus was an *emeritus* similar to Crotus of the Fourth Cohort of Gauls, but that leaves the question why Dannicus would not have mentioned this status.¹⁴⁴ Crotus himself is only known by this name. His tombstone found in Templeborough (a fort south of Hadrian’s Wall) is possibly from the late first century, supported by the unabbreviated use of *Dis Manibus*. He could not have served his twenty-five years as that would have meant he signed up at the age of 15, thus making it more likely that *emeritus* should be taken as ‘unfit for service’ instead of another word for veteran who remained in service.¹⁴⁵ Because there is little indication to be found on the tombstone that Dannicus left the army before his death or died an *emeritus*, either as veteran or discharged based on his condition, it is more plausible to believe him to be member of his *ala* when he died. This makes the choice of maintaining one name in an environment where fellow soldiers usually carried multiple all the more intriguing.

Alston and Roymans have suggested that the presentation of soldiers on their gravestones, especially in imagery, should not always be interpreted as the standard presentation of masculine warrior-culture. Instead they argue that the overemphasis on one side of the individual, that being his martial side tied to the army, emerges from the need to define oneself when faced with social pressure regarding identity.¹⁴⁶ Roymans believes that auxiliaries (generally from Celtic Europe) participating in the Roman army saw their identity pressured by the military culture influenced by Roman cultural practices, necessitating a

¹⁴¹ Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 190.

¹⁴² Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*, 39.

¹⁴³ Compare to RIB 526 (dated 101-300) which does refer to honourable discharge of a post-Trajanic veteran.

¹⁴⁴ RIB 620 (dated 101-116): ‘To the spirits of the departed and to Crotus, son of Vindex, *emeritus* of the Fourth Cohort of Gauls, aged 40; Flavia Peregrina, his devoted wife, made this monument and set up this inscription to her devoted husband’. Note that Crotus his wife does carry two names. Translation taken 31/10/2021 from <https://romaninscriptionsofbritain.org/inscriptions/620>.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*, 22: There is always the case of ‘age rounding’. The date of enlistment would have been known, but not the date of birth, so the age would on many occasion be rounded up or down (Longinus Sdapeze and Rufus Sita are both coincidentally 40). Crotus being an *emeritus*, however, would mean he was either unfit for service or a veteran, but if he was a veteran who prolonged his time in the army, he would have obtained the right to bear the *tria nomina*. De la Bédoyère has already hinted that Crotus would not have obtained citizenship when he was discharged because he would have become ‘unfit for service’.

¹⁴⁶ Alston, ‘The ties that bind’, 190; Roymans, ‘Romanization, cultural identity and the ethnic discussion’, 62. Similar argumentation can also apply to civilians in the Roman Empire, see Woolf, ‘Monumental Writing and the Expansion of Roman Society in the Early Empire’, *JRS* Vol.86 (1996) 22-39.

strong response to preserve their own values in the new setting they were part of.¹⁴⁷ A similar sentiment on a smaller scale might be said of Dannicus as well. He was from a German tribe himself and, just like Insus, would undoubtedly have been confronted with the Batavian Revolt one way or another, either from news reaching his unit or being involved in fighting the Batavians. The presence of the *ala Indiana* in Britain in the years after the uprising does correspond with the measure taken by Rome to move auxilia away from their homelands as a result of the Batavian Revolt. Taking a look at his tombstone one can see the same sculpture motif as the tombstone of Longinus shows, portraying the rider trampling down the enemy. Auxiliary cavalymen were often depicted in their glorious moment of defeating their barbaric foe, which also symbolized the victory of life over death.¹⁴⁸

It is noteworthy that provincial tribesmen eventually depicted themselves defeating barbarian foes in a Roman styled funerary culture whilst their own people would have potentially been presented as the trampled warrior at one point in Rome's history. It is a testament to the successful method of Rome to incorporate former foes to fight different enemies. Here it is more valuable to state that Dannicus is perhaps one of the best preserved examples of the complex nature of self-presentation by non-enfranchised auxiliary soldiers. On one side this cavalryman wished to be remembered in line with Roman military culture with a tombstone of him riding down the foe. On the other side he did not forget his heritage as part of the *Raurici* and an intentional choice has been made not to conform to the Roman practice of taking multiple names. His Latinized name implies Romanization but does not detract from the underlying intricacy concerning identity inherent to auxiliary soldiers from the different tribes of the Roman Empire. He was a Germanic tribesman by birth and Roman soldier by profession as shown by his epitaph, not wishing to forgo his origins yet also desiring to belong to a military community that became a second home. Dannicus presents himself to be more than a one-dimensional figure part of the Roman world. He might have taken his train of thought behind this choice to the grave, but he showcased the question of self-presentation which would have confronted many other auxiliary soldiers. This aspect can be easily overlooked upon studying the Roman army from a higher level and it should not be forgotten when 'Roman' soldiers are discussed.

¹⁴⁷ Roymans, 'Romanization, cultural identity and the ethnic discussion', 62. He discusses his idea in the framework of the Batavian Revolt.

¹⁴⁸ Keppie, *Understanding Roman inscriptions*, 82; Hope, 'Inscriptions and Identity', 297.

So far the use of the *tria nomina* and citizenship has been mentioned in line with one another, one accompanying the other. Obtaining citizenship would see many a name changed to reflect the increase in status, sometimes obscuring or taking away the original name. This prestigious reward was however not always provided. It could be granted earlier or withheld from the soldier based on the performance of the individual. This can be illustrated with Tancinus and Ammonius. The tombstone of Tancinus was located near the Roman town of Bath (*Aquae Sulis*); the one from Ammonius at Ardoch, a Roman fort constructed as part of Agricola's invasion in southern Scotland.

*L(ucius) Vitellius Mantai f(ilius) Tancinuscives(!) Hisp(anus) Cauriesis eq(ues) alae
Vettonum c(ivium) R(omanorum) ann(orom) XXXXVI stip(endiorum) XXVI h(ic) s(itus) e(st)*

'Lucius Vitellius Tancinus, son of Mantaus, a Spanish tribesman from *Caurium*, trooper of the Cavalry Regiment of Vettones, Roman Citizens, aged 46, of 26 years' service, lies buried here.'¹⁴⁹

*Dis Manibus Ammonius Damionis (filius) (centurio) coh(ortis) I Hispanorum stipendiorum
XXVII, heredes f(aciendum) c(uraverunt)*

'To the Shades of the Dead. Ammonius son of Damio, centurion of the First Cohort of Spaniards, of 27 years' service. His heirs had this made.'¹⁵⁰

Caurium is modern-day Corio in Spain, although he would have originated from Lusitania (modern Portugal). *Caurium* was the territory of the *Vettones*, making Tancinus part of the initial members when the unit was raised.¹⁵¹ In contrast to Genialis Tancinus would have been correctly assigned his nationality based on the name of his unit, yet this generally only applies to the members of the first levy as local recruitment superseded ethnic recruitment. The title 'Roman Citizens' of the regiment refers to a battle honour earned by outstanding performance, presumably during the British invasion, which would extend citizenship to all

¹⁴⁹ RIB 159 (= CIL 07, 52, dated 51-100). Translation *Britannia Romana*, 25-26. Tancinus' tombstone also portrays a cavalryman trampling the foe.

¹⁵⁰ RIB 2213 (= CIL 07, 1146; dated 80-84). Translation idem, 64-65.

¹⁵¹ Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*, 25.

its members at the same time.¹⁵² New members afterwards would not share in this grant and were to earn it in accordance with the regular manner. Tancinus was therefore probably already citizen before he finished his time in the army. Thus two types of auxiliary units bearing the title ‘Roman citizens’ exist: those which were raised by Augustus and those which earned this honour by extraordinary military feats. Keep in mind that the former would still predominantly consist of citizens well into the second century as recruits were almost exclusively drawn from citizens.¹⁵³ The distinction between citizen and non-citizen might have been taken for granted so far depending on whether the soldier was part of the legions or the auxilia, whether he had served his time or not, but this becomes obsolete with the *Constitutio Antoniniana* in 212 which offered this status to all free men in the empire.

In the case of Ammonius it should be noted that he served the time to obtain his citizenship, but the lack of the *tria nomina* implies that he did not possess it. Despite the 27 years of service the epitaph does not provide any other information on whether he would have obtained citizenship, leaving the conclusion that Ammonius was not eligible to receive it based on something he had done in his career. One can suggest that he, similarly to Dannicus, defied the use of multiple names on his tombstone, yet none of the other tombstones of time-served auxiliary soldiers from the evidence of Roman Britain would support this assumption. Perchance his position of centurion marked a step in redeeming the mistake from his career yet he did not live to see it pay off. His origins are unsure, but his name reveals hints of Eastern origins, particularly towards Egypt and the famous shrine of Zeus Ammon, exemplifying local recruitment by the auxilia based on the province in which they were located.¹⁵⁴

The last inscription hails from Mumrills, the largest fortress of the Antonine Wall. Once again the person in question operated within a unit raised in Thrace.

*Dis M(anibus) Nectovelius f(ilius) Vindicis an(norum) IXXX stip(endiorum) VIII nationis
Brigans militavit in coh(orte) II Thr(acum).*

¹⁵² De la Bédoyère, *The Real Lives*, 23; Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*, 26. Both state that this honour was earned during the British invasion.

¹⁵³ P.A. Holder, *Studies in the Auxilia from Augustus to Trajan* (Oxford 1980) 64-69. Lavan, ‘The Army and the Spread of Roman Citizenship’, 37. This would make up 7-11% of total auxiliary units by 14 AD, and of the 46 raised cohorts about 22 to 25 would be maintained as permanent forces.

¹⁵⁴ Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*, 64-65. The cohort can be attested to have been present in the East based on inscription ILS 9499 from Ephesus.

‘To the Shades of the Dead. Nectovelius, son of Vindex, aged 29, of nine years’ service, a Brigantian by nationality, served as a soldier in the Second Cohort of Thracians.’¹⁵⁵

Nectovelius is only known by one name similar to Dannicus and Ammonius. He is the only Brigantian explicitly recorded in the Roman army.¹⁵⁶ It is a prime example of the dilution of once strong ethnically embedded regiments within the auxilia -with ‘British’ Nectovelius fighting in a ‘Thracian’ unit- as local recruitment would gradually become the norm of reinforcing existing units. Very little funerary inscriptions of British recruits serving on the island have been preserved, and only one other instance could be gathered as part of the database.¹⁵⁷ They were drafted into the Roman army before 69 and a forced levy (*dilectus*) was employed before 60.¹⁵⁸

It suffices to say that soldiers were conscious about their place of origins, and the names they took to themselves have been very indicative in this regard. It would define the person for who he was and continue to contribute as an important aspect of who they were in life, their rank and distance from home notwithstanding. The Roman army was not specifically ‘Roman’ in the sense that it was turning provincials into Roman soldiers and citizens, but more appropriately would be to perceive it as Roman as it brought the many different groups of people together in a single institution to which all could adhere to. All were moved to different provinces in the empire, especially so from the reign of Vespasian onwards, and they were all exposed to the same military society of the army. The experiences of the varying soldiers differed as they experienced different cultural settings in the province where they were located. Members of different units would experience a different life during their service to the point that one could speak of the discrepant experiences of the Roman army.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁵ RIB 2142 (= CIL 07, 1091, dated 138-161). Translation Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*, 135. The epitaph also show the curious phenomenon of ‘Deckname’ or ‘cover name’. The name Vindex (‘avenger’) belongs to a group of names popular with Rome’s Celtic-speaking people for ‘concealing’ a Celtic name-element, see Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*, 135.

¹⁵⁶ Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*, 135. The *Brigantes* were a tribe ruled as a client-kingdom of Rome since the Claudian invasion by queen Cartimandua. She was opposed by her ex-husband Venutius, leading to a period of turmoil in the 50’s after she handed the leader Caratacus of the *Catuvellauni* over to the Romans. About a century later, long after the client-kingdom was absorbed as part of the Roman province, many of these tribesmen would have been formally included in the army.

¹⁵⁷ RIB 3005 (dated 71-116) concerns a tribune from *colonia Victricensis*, better known as Colchester. Veteran colonies were popular recruiting grounds. See Dobson and Mann, ‘The Roman Army in Britain’, 192.

¹⁵⁸ Tac. *Agr.* 15. For an overview on the topic of Britons in the Roman army, see Dobson and Mann, ‘The Roman Army in Britain’, 191-205. For a case-study on the recruitment of Britons during the Conquest, see Sparey-Green, ‘Inungi delectus’, 106-135.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. Mattingly, *Dialogues*, 14.

Chapter conclusion

After studying the funerary epigraphic sources on a quantitative and qualitative level, it can be concluded that the army in Roman Britain from the later stages of the Claudian invasion onwards was mostly comprised of Romanized Celts and provincials. Epitaphs often simply record the soldier, his origins and his place in the army, yet are nonetheless a significant aspect in a world of prestige. As Roman citizenship and the *tria nomina* often follow one another, the rise in social status from non-citizen to citizen can be easily tracked, an indication of a changing identity in a setting where the privileges of being a Roman citizen were highly valued. But those texts which show only one or two names are just as important for our understanding of the participation of auxiliary soldiers in the Roman army, and in extension the Roman world. It must be considered whether these soldiers in question were more open to Roman cultural practices in general or to the cultural habits maintained by the Roman military communities. Epitaphs have shown that self-presentation is key with the use of (Latinized) names, with some differentiating themselves more-so than others. While this often depends on whether citizenship was obtained, the mere mention of the *origo* suggests that roots remained an important matter to many. If we are to take the Roman garrison of Britannia into account for the process of Romanization from the army towards other groups in society, one has to keep in mind whether these soldiers can be considered Roman or rather Romanized.

Chapter 2: The military communities: spatial orientation and entourage

This chapter serves to investigate the military communities in depth. To investigate Romanization in the context of the army and provincial society requires elaboration on three elements. The first two concern spatial orientation on a macro-level and a micro-level respectively. In the first part the distribution of the military communities will be discussed on a province-wide level to map where their Romanizing impact would have been more profound. The second part will narrow the scope to the local level to examine where these communities were housed, the locations where Romanization between army and civilians would have been facilitated. Focus is placed on the extramural settlements known as *canabae* and *vici*.¹⁶⁰ The third part deals with the people of the military communities aside from the soldiers, individuals who would also interact with the Roman culture inherent to life in the army and contribute to its spread. They have been divided in three categories: tradesmen, family and veterans.

Conquest and consolidation: mapping the army in Roman Britain

The Roman army would not have been looked upon kindly by many of the defeated tribes as they brought war and the threat of violence to their lands. Indeed, murder, raiding and enslavement does not make one favourable in the eyes of the suffering parties, even though the bloody business of war was not something new to the tribes of Britain.¹⁶¹ Most of the soldiers would however not have to deal with policing matters as the conquest required their units to constantly move. They were often forced to break up camp and continue onwards in the short run, leaving little time to integrate in the locality to have any considerable long-term effect. This can be attested from the remains of ‘marching camps’ which have aided in the reconstruction of military movement. The defences of temporary camps are mostly found in Wales and close to the border between England and Scotland, whereas south-eastern England

¹⁶⁰ Extramural settlements and garrison settlements are used interchangeable.

¹⁶¹ See Tac. *Ann.* 12.39 where the fate of the *Silures* virtually equals genocide. Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 93. Mattingly estimates 100.000 – 250.000 British casualties during the conquest (43-83) out of a population of two million.

presents very little to no evidence of such camps.¹⁶² The permanent forts dated from the Flavian period (69-96) appear to be similarly distributed as their temporary counterparts, mostly located at the border with Scotland, Wales, and northern England.¹⁶³ It is safe to assume that forts are more commonly found in regions where military presence is more required, whether these are aimed to keep out external threats (the border) or to suppress potential uprisings from the recently conquered. The two permanent legionary fortresses of Caerleon and Chester provided strong bulwarks for the invasion and supervision of Wales because its people fiercely resisted the Romans.¹⁶⁴ It should thus be noted that the south and east were left relatively unguarded compared to the west and north, but it was far from a peaceful region in the early stage of the conquest.¹⁶⁵ Greater quantities of soldiers would have a more profound influence on the nearby region than smaller garrisons. A larger force would create more sizeable military communities and presumably become more attractive to entrepreneurs and natives due to the increased demand in goods and services.

The role of urbanization should not be underestimated here either, for specific forms of Roman influences appear to find more ground in the environment of the city where elite culture is more prominent.¹⁶⁶ The dissemination of Roman culture by soldiers is different compared to that by local elites, with both groups appropriating and emphasizing the aspects that mattered most to them. Urban Romanization was a rather elite phenomenon that presented itself strongest in the south, whereas the diffusion of Roman culture by soldiers was more present where urbanization lagged behind. Life in the army was spent in and around forts, not among civilians to whom the (ex-)soldier would have been an outsider as the army rarely visited (large) cities. Haynes has suggested that those who did settle there were drawn in by existing military networks, extensions of the military communities.¹⁶⁷ Nonetheless, to be a member of such in an urbanized region in the civil zone would be the

¹⁶² R.J.A. Wilson, *A guide to the Roman Remains in Britain* (London 1975) 8-12; R.H. Jones, ‘Lager mit *claviculae*’, in W.S. Hanson (ed.), *The Army and Frontiers of Rome* (JRA supplement nr. 74; Portsmouth 2009) 11-24, there 18.

¹⁶³ Davies, ‘Size matters: campaign forts in Britain’, in Hanson (ed.), *The Army and Frontiers of Rome*, 44-54, there 46.

¹⁶⁴ Potter, *Roman Britain*, 11; Davies, ‘Soldiers, peasants, industry and towns’, 169-170. In the first and early second century around 100.000 soldiers were stationed in Wales, a relatively large force compared to the native populace.

¹⁶⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 12.31 for the revolt of 47; Tac. *Ann.* 14.31 and Dio 62.1-12 for Boudiccan Revolt of 60-61.

¹⁶⁶ Garnsey and Saller, *Economy, Society and Culture* (London 1987), 186; D. Petts, ‘Landscape and cultural identity in Roman Britain’, in R. Laurence and J. Berry (eds.), *Cultural Identity in the Roman Empire* (London 1998), 79-94, there 91; D. Perring, ‘Chapter 1: Town and country in Roman Britain: current perspectives’, in idem and M. Pitts (eds.), *Alien Cities: Consumption and the origins of urbanism in Roman Britain* (Portslade 2013) 1-12, there 4.

¹⁶⁷ Webster, *The Roman Imperial Army*, 284. Haynes, *Blood of the Provinces*, 345.

exception rather than the rule.¹⁶⁸ On a macro-level attention is drawn foremost to the north and the west. With the main concentration of the army there a discrepancy surfaces between the driving factors of Romanization in the civil zone compared to the rest of Roman Britain.¹⁶⁹ That is not to say other influences were completely absent in the civil area. The army might have been concentrated the most at the frontiers, yet it was also garrisoned in civil Britain, albeit more towards the coast (see figure 4). While restricted in terms of impact compared to the greater concentration of forces elsewhere, these cannot be overlooked if one is to estimate the army's sphere of influence.

The period of conquest was superseded by one of consolidation which 'ended' with longer term garrisoning marked by the construction of Hadrian's Wall.¹⁷⁰ While primarily aimed at fortifications, there is proof that the army assisted in the construction of civilian buildings and settlements.¹⁷¹ The establishment of longer term garrisons would have had a more profound economic and cultural effect on the nearby land, and this would likely have been improved as bad blood ebbed away with the passing of time.¹⁷² Social relations between soldiers and civilians tend to flourish more in times of peace than war after all. To put this group in perspective compared to the native population, the size of the garrisoned army should be quickly taken into account. Despite the permanent reduction of the total stationed legions from four to three, scholars usually maintain the number of 40.000 (equal to the invasion force), the loss in legionaries made up by additional auxiliary regiments, combining a total of three legions with 50 or more auxiliary regiments.¹⁷³ This number is a rough estimate as

¹⁶⁸ Urban region here is regarded as the region surrounding cities and towns in general. Many scholars have especially discussed the rulings of what can be considered city or town and what not. See Perring, 'Town and country in Roman Britain', 1 and A. Smith and M. Fulford, 'The Defended Vici of Roman Britain: Recent Research and New Agendas', *Britannia* Vol.50 (2019) 109-147, there 111.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. James, 'Romanization' and the peoples of Britain', *Italy and the West*, 187-209, there 197.

¹⁷⁰ M.M. Roxan, 'The distribution of Roman military diplomas', *Epigraphic Studies* Vol.12 (1981) 265-286; Cunliffe, *Greeks, Romans and Barbarians*, 163; Salway, *A History of Roman Britain*, 127-128; Shotter, *Romans and Britons*, 29. A notable exception to the rule is fortress Chester, see T.J. Strickland, 'What kind of community existed at Chester during the hiatus of the 2nd C.?', *The Roman army as a community*, 105-110.

¹⁷¹ Keppie, *Understanding Roman inscriptions*, 87; Fulford, 'Veteran settlement in 1st-c. Britain', 185; Webster, *The Roman Imperial Army*, 274. See inscriptions CIL 9, 6075 and CIL 13, 8250 for example.

¹⁷² Fulford, 'A second start: from the defeat of Boudicca to the third century', 39-74, there 56. Construction of the permanent fortresses of Caerleon, Chester and York took place during the reign of Trajan and continued well into the reign of Trajan.

¹⁷³ B. Dobson, 'The Roman Army: Wartime or Peacetime Army?', in W. Eck and H. Wolff (eds.), *Heer und Integrationspolitik. Die römischen Militärdiplome als historische Quelle* (Cologne 1986) 10-25, there 18; Breeze, 'The edge of the world: the imperial frontier and beyond', *The Roman Era*, 173-202, there 183. A diploma generally considered to be a complete list of all auxiliary units stationed in Britain was found in Pannonia Superior (Komárom, Hungary). This object lists 13 alae and 37 cohorts serving in Britain by 17 July 122. See CIL 16, 69.

evidence points out that units might be up to 25 per cent below strength as vexillations would be sent to different regions as reinforcements.

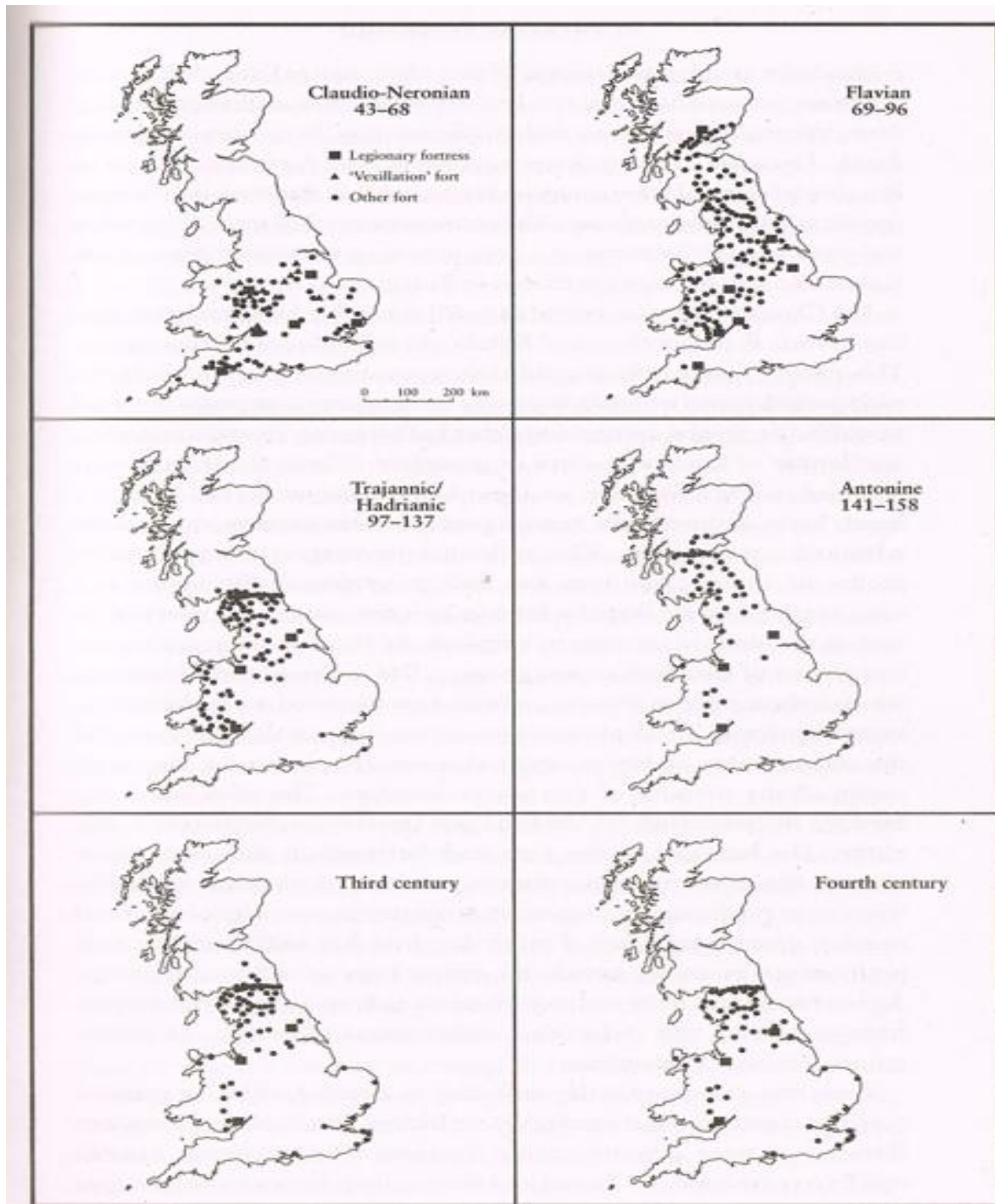


Figure 4: Garrison patterns in Roman Britain from the Claudian invasion to the fourth century.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁴ Copied from Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 133.

Jarrett has argued that the auxiliary regiments would have made up for 30.000 based on diplomas by the time of Hadrian.¹⁷⁵ Combined with three legions of about 5000 soldiers each, this would account for a total of 45.000.¹⁷⁶ With the arrival of other reinforcements accompanying Hadrian and Antoninus the maximum number might have reached 55.000 according to Mattingly, but these moments were exceptions in a province where no permanent additional gains in territory were won.¹⁷⁷ It is difficult to assign concrete numbers to units which were understaffed due to sickness or casualties, nor can vexillations from and to Britain be adequately numbered. Therefore the number of 45.000 shall serve as the average of garrisoned troops, the minimum of Mattingly's calculation. His additional 10.000 soldiers would have been present in Britain for a temporary period before redeployment and should not be taken into account for the long-term military communities of Roman Britain (individual soldiers might have retired in Britain).¹⁷⁸ His calculations regarding its population for the second century will however be taken as reflective of provincial society with a total of two million. Mattingly divided them among the military communities with 150.000, the urban communities with 145.000 and the rural communities with 1,7 million plus 5.000.¹⁷⁹

The army by itself formed two to three per cent of the total population, but with the military communities taken into account about seven and a half, making them a significant minority group in provincial society. Following Mattingly's argument this minority would grow as people were attracted to the presence of Roman soldiers, mostly out of economic motives and comradeship. At the same time the troops consciously identified themselves very differently

¹⁷⁵ M.G. Jarrett, 'Non-Legionary Troops in Roman Britain: Part One, the units', *Britannia* Vol.25 (1994) 35-77, there 74. He based this number from the strength of 15 alae and 43 cohorts.

¹⁷⁶ Estimates on the amount of soldiers in a legion vary from 4800 to 5120. See G. Webster, *The Roman Imperial Army of the First and Second Centuries A.D.* (Norman 1998; third edition) 109; Goldsworthy, *The Complete Roman Army*, 46-48; Southern, *The Roman Army*, 99; S.E. Phang, *Roman Military Service. Ideologies of Discipline in the Late Republic and Early Principate* (Cambridge 2008) 4. Breeze, *The Frontiers of Imperial Rome* (Barnsley 2011) 34. Auxiliary units were divided in quingenary or milliary regiments with 500 to 1000 soldiers each. See Webster, *The Roman Imperial Army*, 145; Goldsworthy, *The Complete Roman Army*, 56-58; Southern, *The Roman Army*, 121; Haynes believes that these units on average consisted of 400 to 800 men on average, see *Blood of the Provinces*, 344;

¹⁷⁷ Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 131.

¹⁷⁸ Hassall, 'Britain and the Rhine Provinces: Epigraphic Evidence for Roman Trade', in J. du Plat Taylor and H. Cleere (eds.), *Roman shipping and trade: Britain and the Rhine Provinces* (London 1978) 169-188, there 172; Birley, 'The Frontier Zone in Britain', 356. Hadrian brought with him 3.000 legionaries from Upper Germany and Spain. Assuming at least an equal force in auxiliaries were brought along, some 6.000-10.000 soldiers would be stationed around the zone of the wall before they departed after construction was finished in some ten to fifteen years.

¹⁷⁹ Mattingly, *Imperialism, Power and Identity*, 219-221. Military communities: 45.000-55.000 in the army, 100.000 in extramural settlements. Urban community: 120.000 in major towns, 25.000 in minor towns. Rural community: 5.000 in and around villa's; 1,7 million in other rural settlements. The take on 45.000 soldiers reduces the long term military communities by 10.000, but because this is also subtracted from the total the relative size of the communities in comparison to one another remains similar.

from civilians, creating considerable distance between themselves and others.¹⁸⁰ The military identity was a very distinct version of presenting oneself to be related to Rome in one way or another, and on that account Mattingly is quite correct. He does however emphasize this aspect of identity too far with the underlying assumption that those prioritizing and adhering to this identity would isolate themselves from the rest of provincial society in the process. Perhaps this is more true for the initial period of occupation, but it is difficult to fathom that for decades or even centuries since the invasion contingents of Roman troops within their forts would remain isolated ‘Roman beacons’ in a land of Britons.¹⁸¹ Military identity might have been a very strong aspect in the life of an individual but it does not prevent one from engaging in meaningful interaction with those who were not part of it, nor does participation to this group by civilians end all previously established connections. By the early third century soldiers would have been long part of local civil life in the province.¹⁸² Longer periods of garrisoning the land were interrupted by mobilization, at least for part of the army in Britain, with advances to the north and the construction of two strong lines of defence during the reign of Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Commodus, and Severus. Literary sources do not tell of notable uprisings or revolts after the conquest from Britons living in Roman territory, at least so up to the reign of Caracalla. The use of violence for punitive expeditions or war seems mainly reserved to operations north of the Wall of Hadrian, and the advances made during the reign of Antoninus and Severus were the result of conquest instead of retaliation.¹⁸³ The province of Britain was thus relatively peaceful in general, and some individual soldiers might have served their time without fighting at all. Garrisoned troops require goods and services, and these appear to have been provided to a considerable degree by people inhabiting the region nearby. The direct vicinity of forts and fortresses became the most common meeting point between soldiers and civilians.

¹⁸⁰ Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 166-167, 520; idem, *Imperialism, Power and Identity*, 222.

¹⁸¹ Cf. S. Clarke, ‘Contact, Architectural Symbolism and the Negotiation of Cultural Identity in the Military Zone’, in Baker et.al. (eds.), *TRAC 98*, 36-45, there 43.

¹⁸² Cf. James, ‘The Community of the Soldiers’, 21.

¹⁸³ See Salway, *A History of Roman Britain*, 149, 152 and Birley, ‘The Frontier Zone in Britain’. Roman emperors reacted to northern aggression rather than crossing the border for gains in territory, with the exception of Antoninus. Hadrian: Hadrian’s arrival was precipitated by unrest in Britain. According to *Historia Augusta, Vita Hadriani* 5.2, ‘The Britons could not be kept under Roman rule’. This most likely referred to the region close to the Stanegate as the construction of Hadrian’s Wall implies that the defences of the Stanegate were deemed inadequate. Commodus: Dio 72.8 mentions that the greatest war in the reign of Commodus took place in Britain. Tribes crossed the wall inflicting a great amount, including the death of a general. According to Birley, this was probably the legionary legate, see ‘The Frontier Zone in Britain’, 356. Severus: his campaign north can be seen as a campaign of conquest provoked by northern aggression. Dio 75.5.4 concerns attacks made by the *Maeatae* and *Caledonians* in the absence of the competing emperor Albinus Clodius. Dio 76.13.1 relates Severus campaign in the north to the wish to subjugate the complete island.

Housing the military communities: *canabae* and *vici*

It has become clear that the army was primarily concentrated away from urban settlement in the more rural sites, notably the north and west. This part will approach the places where the soldiers would spend most of their time during their careers, narrowing the scope from macro to micro. Military installations were not sheer defensive bulwarks housing units with little else around. Troops require food, clothing and other supplies to be maintained as an effective fighting force. The opportunity to provide goods and services to them in exchange for coin and other products attracted traders and locals alike. Garrison settlements inhabited by civilians would appear around the defences which are known as *canabae* and *vici*, exclusively used in relation to fortresses and forts respectively. It is generally agreed upon that these settlements would always emerge just before or after the fortifications were constructed, or, rather, there is no concrete evidence that would disprove this idea.¹⁸⁴ Furthermore, the planning of the foundation of military bastions seems to have taken space into account for the accompanying settlement.¹⁸⁵ Denizens of *canabae* and *vici* often moved along with the unit to whom they were connected, but there is a general development which differs between the south and the north. In the southern parts many established *vici* expanded when the fort was dismantled, and many seem to have been bestowed a second life when the unit departed. Several foundations of abandoned forts and extramural settlements were repurposed and fashioned after Roman towns to become the new tribal capitals, also called *civitas* capitals.¹⁸⁶ The army was not required to get in contact with these centres nor did it have any considerable impact on life in these places.¹⁸⁷ In the north the *vici* and its people were more attached to the forts – older foundations did not appear to have been repurposed akin to the

¹⁸⁴ Salway, *The Frontier People of Roman Britain* (Cambridge 1965) 10; D.J.P. Mason, 'Chester: The *Canabae Legionis*', *Britannia* Vol.18 (1987) 143-169, there 143-145; Davies, 'Soldiers, peasants, industry and towns', 189. Henceforth the use of fortresses is only used to refer to the three legionary bases at Caerleon, Chester and York. Shotter, *Romans and Britons*, 36. Shotter is more hesitant towards the 'chronological coincidence', but does not offer an alternative.

¹⁸⁵ C.S. Sommer, 'The Roman army in SW Germany as an instrument of colonization: the relationship of forts to military and civilian *vici*', *The Roman Army as a community*, 81-94, there 81, 86; Hanel, 'Military Camps', 412;

¹⁸⁶ Cunliffe, *Greeks, Romans and Barbarians*, 162; Fulford, 'A second start', 39-74, there 58-61; Sommer, 'The Roman army in SW Germany', 92; Smith and Fulford, 'The Defended *Vici*', 111. Wachter, *The Towns of Roman Britain*, 5; idem, *Roman Britain*, 67-70. *Civitas* capitals were administrative centres governed with the aid of local elites. About 15 tribal capitals existed in Britain by the mid-second century. First came Canterbury, Verulamium, and Chelmsford (although Chelmsford did not become successful in attracting the *Trinovantes*). The incorporation of the client kingdoms resulted in the establishment of Caistor-by-Norwich, Chichester, Silchester, and Winchester. During the Flavian period, in the wake of Agricola's campaigns, the settlements Cirencester, Dorchester, Exeter, Leicester, and Wroxeter were build. Hadrian stimulated the development of Caerwent, Carmarthen, Brough-on-Humber, and Aldborough. Later developments or exceptional cases are Carlisle, Ilchester, and Water Newton.

¹⁸⁷ Creighton, *Britannia*, 122.

south.¹⁸⁸ This does fit in the general pattern with the south showing a higher degree of urbanization. Whereas military forces were relatively quick to leave the south, they would remain more permanently at the western and northern frontier. With a lack of civil settlement the tribes in the north and west were directly supervised by the army instead, and military officials are known to have been in charge of civilian policing.¹⁸⁹ Larger concentrations of soldiers would have made it unappealing to settle close by the forts for the vast majority of civilians, in particular in the direct wake of the conquest.¹⁹⁰ The majority of the people (the rural population) would not have seen their lives considerably changed in the first decades with the coming of the Romans, for most of the civil infrastructure was aimed around towns.¹⁹¹

The *vici* discussed in this paper should be understood as military *vici*. Whereas *canabae* are always part of the fortress and thus regarded as part of the military sphere, the *vici* are not. Those which are tied to the forts or production for the army are considered military; the rest civil.¹⁹² Many of the older military *vici* would have been repurposed and reinhabited and become civil ones instead. Vermeulen has shown that both sorts of roadside settlements were important centres for the spread of cultural influences to the rural populations in remote regions in the West.¹⁹³ Recently Smith and Fulford have argued that, instead of interpreting such settlements as small towns, the forty or so settlements should be considered to be a specific group of *vici*.¹⁹⁴ Civil *vici* are most prominent in the centre and southern parts of the island and did not retain their military character, following Smith's and Fulford's argument. These smaller nucleated settlements of civil character can instead be studied more beneficially in the light of markets and cultural transmission of urban practices to the

¹⁸⁸ De la Bédoyère, *The Real Lives of Roman Britain*, 127-128.

¹⁸⁹ Webster, *The Roman Imperial Army*, 273; Herz, 'Finances and Costs of the Roman Army', 307; Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 128; De la Bédoyère, *The Real Lives of Roman Britain*, 68. These include *centuriones regionarii* and *praefectus gentis*.

¹⁹⁰ The military environment of camps and forts discouraged civil settlement, and those that emerged were built considerable distance away from the forts. See Hanel, 'Military Camps', 413.

¹⁹¹ Garnsey and Saller, *Economy, Society and Culture*, 195; Petts, 'Landscape and cultural identity', 91; Perring, 'Town and country in Roman Britain', 3-4. The redirection of production and trade to new market centres would have been the main difference to the rural population.

¹⁹² Salway, *The Frontier People*, 11; Sommer, 'The Roman army in SW Germany', 81-94; T. Brindle, 'Chapter 6: Coins and Markets in the Countryside', in M. Allen et al., *New visions of the countryside of Roman Britain volume 2: The rural economy of Roman Britain* (London 2017) 258-323, there 277; Smith and Fulford, 'The Defended Vici', 114-116.

¹⁹³ F. Vermeulen, 'The role of local centres in the Romanization of northern Belgica', in Metzler, Millett, Roymans and Slofstra (eds.), *Integration in the Early Roman West*, 183-198.

¹⁹⁴ Smith and Fulford, 'The Defended Vici', 134, 142. This contrasts the dominating view which was introduced by B.C. Burnham and J.S. Wachter, *The small towns of Roman Britain* (London 1990). This makes up for just under 20% of total nucleated settlement alongside the Roman road network.

countryside. It must however be questioned to what extent rural communities engaged with such markets.¹⁹⁵ Davies' study of Wales, which showed that the *canabae* and the *vici* were the most 'urban' Roman settlements to be found in the vicinity, reveals that the presence of nucleated settlements does not necessarily increase the degree of Romanization in the region.¹⁹⁶ Roman infrastructure left behind by the army opened the way for Roman influences to reach civilians. While the soldiers themselves had little to do directly with this process as they would move onwards in the initial stages of conquering Britain, their impact on the Romanization of Britain reaches further than direct interaction through the rise of civil *vici*. The military counterparts would follow as the army was garrisoned for the long term. Extramural settlements would emerge around the northern and western frontiers foremost. Here the army would become more accessible to the surroundings with the arrival of new markets. This development would lower the threshold between army and civilians and facilitate communication between the two. The army was separated from civilians, as Mattingly has argued, but such a statement mostly concerns the urban communities. The majority inhabited the rural sites where the army was stationed or has often been stationed, and here points of contact should logically be expected the most.

The garrison settlements were more than collections of homes and stores.¹⁹⁷ During the late first and second century many buildings of timber were partially or wholly replaced by stone, which would confirm their permanent character, and by the late third to early fourth century fort and settlement fused together into fortified towns throughout Britain.¹⁹⁸ Over time the *canabae* and *vici* would develop and evolve to virtually rival smaller towns. While it is not intended to describe the extramural settlements of Britain in full detail here, a few words can be put forward about what one could find here. The visitor would first pass one or more cemeteries on the way to the settlement. Officials of the government could find lodging at *mansio*'s, somewhat luxurious resting places along the road or close to larger settlements maintained by the central government. Many other official buildings also lay outside the

¹⁹⁵ Perring, 'Town and country in Roman Britain', 4.

¹⁹⁶ Davies, 'Soldiers, peasants, industry and towns', 196-197.

¹⁹⁷ It has been attractive to perceive Roman buildings in provinces as imposing reminders of Roman rule, including those found in the *canabae* and *vici*. See Petts, 'Landscape and cultural identity', 87; R.M.J. Isserlin, 'A spirit of improvement? Marble and the culture of Roman Britain', in Laurence and Berry, *Cultural Identity*, 125-155, there 137-147. Buildings however cannot be understood as an indication of Romanization due to their unique contextual histories and developments. See L. Revell, 'Constructing Romanitas: Roman public architecture and the archaeology of practice', in Baker et.al. (eds.) *TRAC 98*, 52-58.

¹⁹⁸ Frere, *Britannia*, 216; Mason, 'Chester: The Canabae Legionis', 167; Hanel, 'Military Camps', 399; Smith and Fulford, 'The Defended Vici', 111.

walls of the fortresses as the archaeological record of Caerleon has shown.¹⁹⁹ Religious needs were satisfied with the construction of temples and altars. *Vici* would house baths for the troops, accessible to legionaries in their own fortresses, and some have yielded archaeological evidence for arena's.²⁰⁰

The proximity to military bases did legally impact the juridical position and the degree to which the people of the garrison settlements were allowed to settle (civil) matters by themselves. The territory on which these settlements were located was reserved for the legions (*prata legionis*), so it was technically under direct military control.²⁰¹ It would nonetheless not be correct to perceive the settlements as a simple extension of military space, but rather as smaller societies coexisting alongside the garrisoned forces. The inhabitants and visitors here enjoyed several rights preventing them from unjust treatment by the soldiers, and those who were familiar with the Roman apparatus could appeal to higher authorities inside and outside of the encampment, evidently shown with a letter found at Chesterholm (*Vindolanda*).²⁰² The *canabae* might have been under less strict rulings compared to the *vici*. The soldiers of a single legion seriously outnumbered that of several auxiliary units together and the larger the size of the garrison, the greater the number of people it would attract, increasing the need for a stronger form of (self-)control. Many settlements close to the fortresses were guided by a civilian council in the same fashion of towns and cities, and civilians inhabiting *canabae* appear to have had some considerable degree of independence.²⁰³ The civilians in question will now be addressed to provide a clarified image of the people who lived and participated in the military communities, individuals contributing to the cultural influences and its diffusion as exercised by soldiers. They have been divided in three main categories: traders, family, and veterans.

¹⁹⁹ Haynes, 'Identity and the Military communities', 450.

²⁰⁰ Mason, 'Chester: The Canabae Legionis', 146-155; Chester's amphitheatre could house 7.000 onlookers; Hanel, 'Military Camps', 412. For more elaborate discussion on the buildings in the fortresses and *canabae* of Caerleon and Chester, see D.R. Evans, V.M. Metcalf and D. Allen, *Roman Gates. Caerleon: 'The Roman Gates' Site in the Fortress of the Second Legion at Caerleon, Gwent* (Oxford 1992), Mason, *Roman Chester: City of the Eagles* (Stroud 2002), and S. Ward et.al., *Excavations at Chester: the western and southern Roman extramural settlements: a Roman community on the edge of the world* (Oxford 2012).

²⁰¹ D.J.P. Mason, 'Chester: The Canabae Legionis', *Britannia* Vol.18 (1987) 143-169, there 145; Jones, *Roman Lincoln*, 45

²⁰² Tab.Vindol. 344 concerns a trader who was beaten with a rod by soldiers without good reason. He seeks justice to be done.

²⁰³ Salway, *The Frontier People of Roman Britain* (Cambridge 1965) 10; D.J.P. Mason, 'Chester: The Canabae Legionis', 143-145; Davies, 'Soldiers, peasants, industry and towns', 189.

Tradesmen

Provincial Romans appear to have had a profound role on the early development of infrastructure and economy in Britain.²⁰⁴ Much of the supplies provided for the soldiers came from merchants and contractors following the army. Especially during the conquest it can be assumed that they provided the bulk of the goods to keep the logistics running, aiding in the enormous quantities of food which were imported during the conquest and the immediate period afterwards.²⁰⁵ Among them were potentially many who would have traded their goods to the natives as well in time, allowing for natives to interact with Roman material culture and for Romans to obtain locally produced wares. The traders are known in sources as *lixae*, *negotiatores* or *mercatores*, with contractors from the army known as *conductores*.²⁰⁶

Verboven has noted that individual businessmen were particularly active in the western Celtic regions. About 32 per cent of inscriptions attesting to traders throughout the empire (out of a total of 326) came from Gaul, Germany and Britain.²⁰⁷ Yet the evidence yielding from Britain is poor, with almost no direct record of them or their presence in the *vici*, and only little has complemented what Whittaker has summarized.²⁰⁸ About nine objects do refer to their presence. Vindolanda, where excavations have uncovered most source material regarding communication between the army and traders, yields three letters.²⁰⁹ There is an inscription from York, but this one concerns civil matters and cannot be related to the army.²¹⁰ Neither can the remaining four objects, three of which were retrieved from London and one from Southwark.²¹¹ When the scope is extended to specific types of traders some inscriptions do arise.²¹² Among the meagre finds stands a notable fragmentary tombstone from the second century found at Corbridge, to the south-east of the eastern sector of Hadrian's Wall.

²⁰⁴ Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 108-109. Gauls were a prominent group among the first entrepreneurs due to their proximity and cultural affinities (especially considering earlier contacts). Many would have been targeted during revolts due to their exploitation of the land.

²⁰⁵ C.R. Whittaker, *Rome and its Frontiers: The Dynamics of Empire* (London 2004) 102.

²⁰⁶ Idem, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 108; Davies, 'Soldiers, peasants, industry and towns', 189; Verboven, 'Good for Business', 297.

²⁰⁷ Verboven, 'Good for Business', 297-303. 17% came from Italy outside of Rome.

²⁰⁸ Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire: A Social and Economic Study* (Baltimore 1994) 108; idem, 'Supplying the Army. Evidence from Vindolanda', in Erdkamp (ed.), *The Roman Army and the Economy*, 204-234, there 217-218; idem, *Rome and its Frontiers*, 97.

²⁰⁹ *Lixae*: Tab.Vindol. 888; *Negotiatores*: Tab.Vindol. 182, 302.

²¹⁰ *Negotiatores*: RIB 3195 (= AE 1983, 643, dated 221).

²¹¹ *Mercatores*: Tab.Lond.Bloomberg 58 (dated 62-70); RIB 3002 (= AE 1976, 362, dated 43-300); *Negotiatores*: Tab.Lond.Bloomberg 7 (dated 65-80); RIB 3003 (= AE 1982, 655, dated 201-300); The object from Southwark: RIB 3014 (= AE 2003, 1015, dated 171-200). There appear to be no mentions of *conductores* in the evidence from Britain.

²¹² *Negotiatores* often described themselves by the commodity they dealt in. For example, a *negotiator* trading in salt would be known as a *salsari*.

[D(is)] M(anibus) [.]rathes Palmorenus vexil(l)a(rius) vixit an(n)os LXVIII.

‘To the spirits of the departed: [...]rathes, of Palmyra, dealer in ensigns, lived 68 years’.²¹³

Barathes’ tombstone is quite interesting. It can be argued that he was a soldier who became trader for the army after discharge, but that leaves the question why he would not have referred to his service in the army, which the formula of his epitaph does not support, or why he would not have taken the three names. Thus he is assumed to be a trader here who has moved a long way from Palmyra (Syria) for his profession. He could have travelled on his own account or accompanied a unit from the Roman army when it was redeployed. For example, he might have moved with (Moorish) auxiliary detachments to Britain after the war was resolved in the late 140’s.²¹⁴ He also had a tombstone erected for his wife Regina at South Shields (*Arbeia*), which is located in close proximity to Corbridge. Regina herself originated from the *Catuvellauni* tribe of Britain. What is so intriguing about her tombstone is the inscription which in part is inscribed in his native tongue.²¹⁵ Thus there is a Palmyrene trader, who moved all the way up north to Britain to work in connection to the Roman army. He took a wife in this faraway land and mourned her death in a style familiar in the Roman world, doing so in Latin with a contribution in his own tongue. This does not imply that Barathes was Romanized due to his work, for Syria was part of the Roman empire for many decades by then.²¹⁶ It does however say something about the function of the army as a magnet to civilians, whether out of purely economic motives or else, to the point that they travelled from and to distant regions, participating in a shared notion of Roman culture which was recognized across the empire from Syria to Britain. Similar to the tombstones of Roman soldiers the place of origins of both Barathes and Regina were referred to in the tombstone, exemplifying a multi-layered structure of identity. Barathes was a trader for the Roman army,

²¹³ RIB 1171 (= AE 1914, 187, 138-300). The name Barathes can be attested from the tombstone to his wife Regina, RIB 1065 (see footnote 56). The word *vexillarius* can be understood as either ‘standard-bearer’, ‘dealer in ensigns’, or ‘flagbearer of a mounted unit’, but here it is assumed that Barathes was a dealer in ensigns (not a creator) before his death. The formula does not correspond with those of soldiers, as discussed in the previous chapter, nor does his age support a function in the army.

²¹⁴ Breeze, *The Frontiers of Imperial Rome*, 35.

²¹⁵ RIB 1065 (= AE 2000, 804, dated 151-200). *D(is) M(anibus) Regina liberta et coniuge Barates Palmyrenus natione Catuallauna an(n)orum XXX*. Followed by the following in Palmyrene: RGYN’ BT HRY BR T’ HBL. ‘To the spirits of the departed (and to) Regina, his freedwoman and wife, a Catuvellaunian by tribe, aged 30, Barates of Palmyra (set this up).’ Palmyrene: ‘Regina, the freedwoman of Barate, alas.’

²¹⁶ Syria became part of the Roman realm since the end of the third Mithridatic War in 64 BC.

a married man to his wife from Britain, and a Palmyrene, among other aspects which are now lost to time. Him taking part in the tradition of funerary inscriptions, one to which many soldiers invested in, might still hint to some degree of Romanization on account of the army.

While scholars generally agree that traders would have made up a considerable minority of the population in the army and the cities, it is still unclear to what degree the provision for the army was arranged by individual entrepreneurs complemented by contractors in service of the army.²¹⁷ This becomes a more complex question with known cases of soldiers operating as merchants during their service.²¹⁸ See for example the following tombstone from Bath:

Iulius Vitalis leg(ionis) XX V(aleriae) V(ictricis) stipendiorum IX an(n)or(um) XXIX natione Belga ex col(l)egio fabr(ice)nsium elatus h(ic) s(itus) e(st).

‘Julius Vitalis, armourer of the Twentieth Legion Valeria Victrix, of 9 years’ service, aged 29, a Belgic tribesman, with funeral at the cost of the Guild of Armourers; he lies here.’²¹⁹

The ‘Belgic’ tribe is somewhat dubious: the *Belgae* were known to have inhabited parts of Britain in the south, yet there is also a Gallic counterpart in Belgian Gaul. Birley has assigned Vitalis to the British variant, a reading shared by Mann who considers the object to be Severan or later.²²⁰ In contrast to the two it is believed here that he originated from Northern Gaul as a camp follower, not a legionary, which can be dated to the first century.²²¹ The stone can be dated somewhere between 61, when the Twentieth received the title *Valeria Victrix*, to somewhere in the end of the first century. This suggests that Vitalis presumably signed up with the legion during the conquest given that his tombstone was found at Bath, presumably before the Twentieth settled in Chester where construction of the fortress started mid-70’s.²²² Furthermore, local recruitment in the legions became the norm only towards the end of the

²¹⁷ Salway, *The Frontier People of Roman Britain*, 24; Mason, ‘Chester: The Canabae Legionis’, 143; Whittaker, *Rome and its Frontiers*, 97, 204; idem, ‘Supplying the Army’, 211; Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 108-109; De la Bédoyère, *The Real Lives of Roman Britain*, 18; Allason-Jones, ‘Roman Military Culture’, 472.

²¹⁸ AE 1941, 168, (dated 89-96) concerns a member of the German fleet active as *negotiator cervesarius artis affecturae*, a trader in beer who most likely would have found his customers among the *auxilia*.

²¹⁹ RIB 156 (= CIL 07, 49, dated 71-100). This tombstone was not included in the database of 150 funerary inscriptions due to personal interpretation.

²²⁰ Birley, *The people of Roman Britain*, 85; Mann, *Legionary Recruitment*, 90.

²²¹ Mann’s dating is unlikely given the complete lack of *Dis Manibus* and the unabbreviated use of *stipendiorum*.

²²² Mason, *Roman Chester*, 42.

first century.²²³ A Briton in the legions would have been very unusual, and the lack of the *tria nomina* might support this assumption. While some legionaries did not use three names, like Gaius Saufeius from the previous chapter, it would have been quite odd for Vitalis not to do so. The prestige tied to the name would have been significant in the Roman sphere in a province where relatively very few Britons would have obtained citizenship by then. This counts doubly so given his close connection to the army, one which would have been considered positively among fellow soldiers after the impact of the Boudiccan Revolt. His services as armourer would have been very relevant with the ongoing military campaigns. The tombstone was put up by the Guild of Armourers but is styled after that of a soldier. Were this reading to be correct, references on epitaphs which refer individuals to a certain legion were not reserved for actual soldiers, and if so this tombstone fits well in the image of civilians sharing in a military identity in the military communities.

Besides the merchants and contractors, artisans would have opened shop in close proximity to the army, and within the army there are known instances of individuals who could function as artisan.²²⁴ It can be assumed that the merchants would most likely have dealt in luxurious goods and those from overseas foremost after the initial stage of the conquest, when the bulk of food and common goods would be gathered and made in the locality. Evidence from York reveals that by the start of the second century, about a generation after the fortress would be constructed, Roman goods appeared on native sites, potentially because local farmers supplied the fortress with food in exchange for Roman goods or money.²²⁵ Perhaps the import of food was kept alive for the garrisons in the north, where it is questionable whether the highlands could have provided enough for the soldiers and natives.²²⁶ Merchants operating in Britain did not appear to have been at a severe disadvantage compared to those of the continent. It has been convincingly proven that Britain was not a distant province disconnected from the greater trading network throughout the Roman Empire. Even the far forts at Hadrian's Wall have yielded materials from overseas and a sense of following modes of fashion, such as footwear and combs, which have been studied in depth by Greene and Birley.²²⁷ The city of London (*Londinium*) would have been a popular place to purchase and

²²³ Dobson and Mann, 'The Roman Army in Britain', 192.

²²⁴ Tab.Vindol. 160; Jones, *Roman Lincoln*, 45; Whittaker, *Rome and its Frontiers*, 92.

²²⁵ Whittaker, *Rome and its Frontiers*, 102.

²²⁶ Idem, 103.

²²⁷ E.M. Greene, 'Footwear and fashion on the fringe: stamps and decoration on leather and shoes from Vindolanda (1993-2016)', in T. Ivleva, J. de Bruin and M. Driessen (eds.), *Embracing the Provinces: Society and Material Culture of the Roman Frontier Regions* (Oxford 2018) 143-152; B. Birley, 'Stylising the functional: Wooden hair combs from Vindolanda', in idem, 189-196.

sell wares due to its strategic positions as gateway to the island, growing into an important town by the first half of the second century.²²⁸ In the words of Verboven, business in Britain was ‘thoroughly marketized, monetized, and Romanized’ by the second century.²²⁹

Now remains the question how these traders fit in the image of the Romanization of Britain from the perspective of the army. They are potentially the ones who would have been interested in the military communities as a market primarily, and their dealings with this group does not necessitate the wish to assume a military identity other than to coordinate their sales more effectively. The importance of traders to cultural change should also be investigated to where the market shifted and expanded. With the repurposing of military *vici* to civil ones, and the growth of extramural settlements drawing in attention of the locals, a greater audience could be reached by traders. Woolf has stressed the function of military markets at *canabae* and *vici* in the northwestern provinces as the start of the ‘consumer revolution’ which signified Romanization by setting new patterns of consumption related to Roman social identity (such as *terra sigillata* and wine).²³⁰ To what extent they could negotiate and trade with locals remains debatable. With the assumption that the majority of traders would ask for coin instead of exchange of products, and with cash payments mostly restricted to the *vici*, a significant portion of the rural population would be left out (especially so in Wales).²³¹ The locations where coins already circulated prior to the Roman arrival would have been most receptive for traders. Brindle maps these locations in the south and east at roadside settlements, near complex farmsteads and villas, whereas the north and west, where the army was most present, lagged behind.²³² Connections between army and the locality for supplying the military bases, in combination with markets selling Roman wares at garrison settlements, would have attracted an unquantifiable number of natives to peruse and purchase Roman wares. Opposing Mattingly’s view, military identity inherent to *vici* and *canabae* plausibly prevented natives from participating in this milieu. It did however not stop them altogether from interacting with Roman material culture, made more accessible to them in extramural settlements as the garrisons attracted traders and artisans.²³³ Roman soldiers could have improved dealings between locals with tradesmen: the soldier’s pay for their

²²⁸ Tac. *Ann.* 14.32: the early town of London was ‘full of traders and merchants’ ([...] *sed copia negotiatorum et comaeatum maxime celebre*). Creighton, *Britannia*, 98; Revell, *Roman Imperialism*, 32.

²²⁹ Verboven, ‘Good for Business’ 313.

²³⁰ Woolf, *Becoming Roman: the origins of provincial civilization in Gaul* (Cambridge 1998) 169-205.

²³¹ Whittaker, ‘Supplying the Army’, 234; Davies, ‘Soldiers, peasants, industry and towns’, 169-197.

²³² Brindle, ‘Coins and Markets in the Countryside’, 277.

²³³ Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 174.

goods could be used by natives to purchase wares from the traders. The greatest impact of the merchants on the population of Britain should nonetheless be looked for in the urban civil zones where coin was more common.

Family

When excavations at forts revealed that parts of the barracks were rebuilt to serve as married quarters, the idea that women and men were strictly separated in the army was quickly abandoned.²³⁴ While most women would not have entered the military bases at all, it is known that the wives and children of higher officials were allowed -even expected- to live with their husband in the commander's house (*praetoria*).²³⁵ As for the lower ranked soldiers, they too remain ordinary men looking for female companionship and with a wish to start a family. Women would have found work at the extramural settlements in the service industry, by cooking or doing laundry, but also the local industry, agriculture and trade.²³⁶ Soldiers would however not be allowed to marry before they were discharged for the first two centuries. There was a marriage ban which applied to soldiers which was ended by Severus at the end of the second century. This was presumably initiated by Augustus to deny the accompanying rights of marriage on legal terms so that the state was not responsible for the soldiers' families.²³⁷ There is however a point to be made that Severus did little else than acknowledge what was already happening in practice for a long time. It is more common in military epitaphs for the 'wife' to commemorate the 'husband' than the other way around.²³⁸ Whether this ban was consistently observed in a strict manner seems unlikely as it mostly concerns the legal position of the couple rather than their actual relation, although it has been

²³⁴ Hassall, 'Homes for heroes: married quarters for soldiers and veterans', *The Roman Army as a community*, 35-40; Allason-Jones, *Women in Roman Britain* (York 2005) 52 Regarding claims of women in soldiers' barracks (*contubernia*) before the dissolution of the marriage ban, see Hodgson, 'The accommodation of soldiers' wives', 27. In particular the works of Allason-Jones have contributed much to the understanding of women in the ancient world. See Allason-Jones, 'Women and the Roman army in Britain', in Goldsworthy and Haynes (eds.), *The Roman Army*, 41-50; 'Roman Military Culture', and *Women in Roman Britain*.

²³⁵ Allason-Jones, *Women in Roman Britain*, 45; Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 171; E.M Greene, 'if the shoe fits: Style and status in the assemblage of children's shoes from Vindolanda', in Collins and McIntosh (eds.), *Life in the Limes*, 29-36.

²³⁶ De la Bédoyère mentions a trader named Tullia Tacita at the Antonine Wall who stamped her wares with the initials of her name, see *The Real Lives of Roman Britain*, 90.

²³⁷ Dio 60.24.3 refers to the marriage ban under Claudius. Scheidel, 'Marriage, Families and Survival: Demographic Aspects', in *A Companion to the Roman Army*, 417-434, there 417-418; S.E. Phang, *The Marriage of Roman Soldiers (13 B.C. – A.D. 235): Law and Family in the Imperial Army* (Leiden 2001) 75; Hodgson, 'the accommodation of soldiers' wives', 26;

²³⁸ Scheidel, 'Marriage, Families and Survival', 419.

proposed that this was done more-so in the first century as families would slow down soldiers during the campaigns.²³⁹

If the spread of Roman citizenship is indicative of Romanization, the army would have been very vital in this process.²⁴⁰ Men would have ‘become’ Roman by serving in the army, and by taking peregrine women as a wife they would make them Roman citizens too. Many enfranchised soldiers would have been unable to find someone of their own relatively high social status (Roman citizen) and often resorted to unions with slaves and freedwomen, if they would find a suitable partner at all.²⁴¹ The funerary inscriptions reveal many women bearing ‘colourless’ Latin names.²⁴² The use of two names might indicate that they were citizen or originated from other Romanized regions, but it is not a certain proof of status, rather a reflection of participation in a Roman environment by native women.²⁴³ The right of *conubium* allowed for Roman citizens to take a non-citizen woman as a wife. This was a reward obtained by soldiers who served their time and allowed for a marriage with a peregrine woman to be counted as legal according to Roman law. A peregrine woman would gain the status of citizen when married with a soldier, provided that she was his first wife when obtaining *conubium*.²⁴⁴ The overrepresentation of peregrine women on diplomas might very well result from auxiliary veterans who wanted to affirm this grant of *conubium* to make marriages valid.²⁴⁵

A sizeable portion of the military communities would consist of people closely related to the soldiers. Their families, slaves and freedmen/freedwomen were all interacting in a society where military identity was the main form of presentation. The epigraphic tradition was one inherent to the Roman army by which they commemorated achievements in life and left a memory for the living in death. Many provincials who moved to the *canabae* and *vici*, or communicated with the denizens there, would have been introduced to the presence and

²³⁹ Phang, *The Marriage of Roman Soldiers*, 156.

²⁴⁰ Lavan, ‘The Army and the Spread of Roman Citizenship’, 28.

²⁴¹ The ability to provide for a family and afford upkeep, especially by auxiliary soldiers, has also been discussed: Idem, 181-186; Hodgson, ‘The accommodation of soldiers’ wives’, 27.

²⁴² RIB 620 (dated 101-116). Cf. De la Bédoyère, *The Real Lives of Roman Britain*, 37: Flavia Peregrina, ‘the Provincial’.

²⁴³ Phang, *The Marriage of Roman Soldiers*, 191. Scheidel, ‘Marriage, Families and Survival’, 423.

²⁴⁴ *Conubium* was granted to the auxiliary forces when they became Roman citizens after service. Mann, ‘A Note on Conubium’, *Heer und Integrationspolitik*, 187-189; Phang, *The Marriage of Soldiers*, 59, 61, 322. Whether legionaries also had to obtain *conubium* or already possessed it remains unsure, for there are no legionary diplomas.

²⁴⁵ Phang, *The Marriage of Roman Soldiers*, 193; Scheidel, ‘Marriage, Families and Survival’, 423.

thought behind tombstones.²⁴⁶ Funerary inscriptions expose the social relations within the army as very few other sources can.²⁴⁷ To many it was a key aspect in defining an individual serving in the army. Emotional ties and a desire to be remembered was the prime motivation to set up tombstones, many so prior to death in anticipation of a premature end.²⁴⁸ Epigraphy regarding commemoration outside the army has been extensively researched by Adams and Tobler, and one can wonder to what degree this was inspired by the example set by the army.²⁴⁹ Their work does not really take the military into account, but a humble start can be provided here. From this study's database (148 total) 25 tombstones were erected to soldiers by nuclear family, from which twelve belonged to legionaries, six to auxilia, and seven to veterans. In nineteen cases the wife set up the tombstone (sometimes in combination with a son), four of which anonymously.²⁵⁰ The remaining were erected by a brother (two), a son alone or with other heirs (three), and once by an heiress, potentially his daughter.²⁵¹ When juxtaposing these against the total numbers of funerary inscriptions of the legionaries, auxilia, and veterans, a percentage of 14, 16, and 30 per cent respectively emerge.²⁵² Acknowledging the potential of epigraphic bias, it shows that veterans tend to be married more than soldiers, which is not too surprising as they would have had the financial and legal means to marry.²⁵³

Family and personal servants would make up for a significant number within garrison settlements. Sons of veterans would generally flock to the banners, a recruiting pool which would make up for a sizeable part of local recruitment.²⁵⁴ Soldiers and veterans alike would

²⁴⁶ V.M. Hope, 'Constructing Roman identity: funerary monuments and social structure in the Roman world', *Mortality* Vol.2.2 (1997) 103-121, there 105.

²⁴⁷ RIB 690 (= CIL 07, 247, dated 122-300) and 3473 (dated 171-300) are soldiers mourning their wives. RIB 396 (dated 43-300) is a tombstone for a soldier on one side and from his wife to their son on the other. RIB 1250 (= CIL 07, 1014, dated 101-367) is one to the memory of a mother. RIB 1742 (= CIL 07, 739, dated 122-300) was erected by a sister, and nieces can be attested from RIB 1830 (dated 122-300). RIB 594 (= CIL 07, 229, dated 171-300) concerns an auxiliary mourning the loss of wife, son, and mother-in-law. RIB 937 (= CIL 07, 328A, dated 43-410) mentions a legionary tribune commemorating his foster-child Ylas, a name which is quite exotic for the Latin language. Outside of family one can find freedmen and fellow soldiers. RIB 200 (= CIL 07, 90, dated 43-48) and 680 (= CIL 07, 244, dated 71-122) are from freedmen to their patron. RIB 19 (= CIL 07, 24, dated 101-150) concerns a scout (*speculator*) who is remembered by comrades from the same unit.

²⁴⁸ Hope, 'Constructing Roman identity', 104.

²⁴⁹ G.W. Adams and R. Tobler, *Romano-British Tombstones between the 1st and 3rd Centuries AD: epigraphy, gender and familial relations* (Oxford 2007).

²⁵⁰ The tombstones where the name could once be attested but has been damaged to the point that it cannot be read are counted as named ones. These can generally be dated after 197, when the ban was lifted.

²⁵¹ Throughout Britain the nuclear family was responsible for setting up 30-40% of the total funerary inscriptions. See Scheidel, 'Marriage, Families and Survival', 420.

²⁵² The percentages are rounded up or down. Discounting the three inscriptions which could not be assigned to these categories with certainty, there are 23 inscriptions of veterans, 38 of the auxilia and 86 legionaries..

²⁵³ Phang, *The Marriage of Roman Soldiers*, 159; Scheidel, 'Marriage, Families and Survival', 423.

²⁵⁴ Dobson and Mann, 'The Roman Army in Britain', 193; Webster, *The Roman Imperial Army*, 284; Phang, *The Marriage of Roman Soldiers*, 76; Scheidel, 'Marriage, Families and Survival', 432. The *castris* theory

take the daughters of their comrades as their wives, an assumption which might have been derived from epigraphic bias.²⁵⁵ Traces of Romanization on behalf of this group cannot be adequately estimated. Newfound relations and the creation of families would see the military communities sustained and grow, yet it is mostly wishful thinking to see this development as the spread of Roman culture on a greater scale than the locality. One can only muse about the question whether the family of the native women in extramural settlements would have been subjected to more Roman influences now that their daughter is 'becoming Roman'. Those who left soldiers' families in *canabae* and *vici* to move somewhere else would probably end up in a place where Roman culture was also widely available, such as other military outposts or urban regions, and their contribution to Romanization can be considered minimal. Soldiers saw to the Romanization of local women in the earlier stages of Roman occupation and raised children in an environment where Roman cultural practices would have been the norm, yet it is doubtful whether this would have affected many other people outside of the military communities.

Veterans

The ex-soldiers would have been very engaged within military communities during service and they would take Roman cultural practices from the army with them to wherever they would settle. A veteran could return home to his place of origins, but those who stayed would either farm at a rural site, start a business, or practice a trade.²⁵⁶ They would have amassed enough wealth to afford the change in lifestyle. Veterans were generally discharged with a considerable sum in cash equal to more than ten year's pay, which would see them -combined with personal savings from their time in the army- in a financially superior position compared to the majority of provincials.²⁵⁷ If they desired so they could have been quite influential in local councils as their wealth equalled that of local elites of medium-sized towns, but

assumes that the sons and freedmen around the camps would turn to the army to obtain citizenship. See Phang, *The Marriage of Roman Soldiers*, 333, 343.

²⁵⁵ Phang, *The Marriage of Roman Soldiers*, 138, 331; G. Welsch-Klein, 'Recruits and Veterans', in Erdkamp (ed.), *A Companion to the Roman Army*, 433-450, 447; Lavan, 'The Army and the Spread of Roman Citizenship', 50.

²⁵⁶ According to Verboven's calculation, there were 10.800 veterans in Britain in the second century. See Verboven, 'Good for Business', 303-304. For other calculations on discharges, see Mann, *Legionary recruitment*, 59; Scheidel, 'Marriage, Families and Survival', 432.

²⁵⁷ Potter, *Roman Britain*, 36; Phang, 'Military Documents, Languages and Literacy', *A Companion to the Roman Army*, 286-305, there 296; Southern, *The Roman Army*, 166-167; Welsch-Klein, 'Recruits and Veterans', 439; Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*, 24.

veterans did not appear interested in politics and administration.²⁵⁸ Those who did not receive cash payment were awarded with a plot of land. This reward was usually given when a large group of soldiers were to retire and a large territory, possession of the Roman army, was available for distribution. In the first century the settlements of Colchester, Gloucester, and Lincoln emerged, primarily aimed at housing veterans from legion XX, II Augusta and IX Hispana respectively. These are considered veteran colonies and were designed to accommodate veterans first; veterans from other units and other groups of inhabitants would eventually reside there too.²⁵⁹

Table 5 concerns the place where veterans settled and is an indication to where they preferred to continue their life outside of the army, assuming that the tombstone is representative for where the veteran settled.

| <u>Location</u> | <u>Legionary veterans</u> | <u>Auxiliary veterans</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Northern frontier | | 5 | 5 |
| Western frontier | 11 | | 11 |
| <u>Civil Britain</u> | <u>6 (3c)</u> | <u>3 (1c)</u> | <u>9 (4c)</u> |
| Total | 17 | 8 | 25 |

(c): amount of veterans inhabiting veteran colonies.

Table 5: Funerary inscriptions of veterans found in Britain

The tombstones of the veterans reveal a predilection of this group to remain in the frontier zones, with sixteen veterans remaining in the frontiers. Those of the legions flock to the west with the main focus of fortresses there, whereas the auxilia turn to the north as they would have predominantly been stationed in this zone. The ones moving to the civil zone seem roughly split between civil settlements and those with a military character. All combined

²⁵⁸ C. Ando, 'The Army and the Urban Elite: A Competition for Power', in Erdkamp (ed.), *A Companion to the Roman Army*, 359-378, there 373 puts their wealth on equal with local elites of at least medium-sized towns. Welsch-Klein, 'Recruits and Veterans', 447.

²⁵⁹ Wachter, *The Towns of Roman Britain*, 17-18; Hurst (ed.), *The Coloniae of Roman Britain*, articles by Crummy, Jones, Hurst, and Fulford. Southern, *The Roman Army*, 164-167; Mattingly; *An Imperial Possession*, 168, 192; De la Bédoyère, *Roman Britain*, 135. York would become a *colonia* as well under Caracalla, but this is a change of status.

about one in five veterans would settle outside of the frontier zones. Before drawing any further conclusions from this, the numbers will be adjusted by taking the diplomas of auxiliaries into account.²⁶⁰ Jarrett and Haynes have noted that seventeen were located within Britain, eight of which near military areas (including colonies).²⁶¹ The diplomas considered on their own indicate that auxiliary veterans were more keen to leave the forts behind and move to the civil settlements instead. Adding these to the total of tombstones amounts to a total of 42 objects, of which 28 were related to the military context of the frontiers and colonies, and fourteen are related to civil locations. Tombstones saw the partition of veterans to the military context on a basis of four out of five, but in combination with diplomas it becomes two out of three, a change from 80 to 67 per cent. From this it can be concluded that the majority of veterans would reside in the sphere of the army, close to their former units. However, it cannot be excluded that those who moved to the civil zone did do so to 'leave' the military sphere. Wroxeter and Exeter, both considered to be outside of the frontier regions, are located close to (former) military bases and are known to have housed veterans.²⁶² Within the civilian region it is not implausible that former soldiers would encounter and interact with one another, creating a community on a very modest scale. Such individuals were not to become active agents of Romanization, yet with their presence they brought the military community to civilian Britain. Whilst it is difficult to assess this reduction in distance between civilian and military, it does suggest that the influence of the army extends beyond the forts and fortresses.

Chapter conclusion

The Roman army was present where urbanization was in a lower stage of development. Between the end of the first and the early second century the army would become more stationary, which allowed for soldiers to embed themselves more firmly in the locality.

²⁶⁰ The diplomas of Britain combined cover a period of roughly 60 years. See Birley, *The people of Roman Britain*, 90; Mann, 'The Settlement of Veterans', 183; Lavan, 'The Army and the Spread of Roman Citizenship', 30-34. The most famous diploma from Britain is known as the Malpas diploma (see appendix 4: Malpas diploma).

²⁶¹ Personal investigation did not yield other results. Jarrett, 'Non-Legionary Troops in Roman Britain', 37; Haynes, *Blood of the Provinces*, 344-345. Haynes also notes that 23 diplomas of auxiliaries who served in Britain were found in other provinces, with Thracians in particular eager to return home. The yields from Britain are a small part of the total of 1200 diplomas found, see Lavan, 'The Spread of Roman Citizenship', 27.

²⁶² Creighton, *Britannia*, 119-121.

Canabae and *vici* would become the main place for the military communities to grow and develop, drawing in more attention from the locality to Roman material culture and cultural practices. The impact of the army can be attested the most at the military variant in the northern and western parts of Roman Britain, but the army also facilitated the diffusion of Roman influences by placing the blueprint for civil *vici*. Traders were drawn by the coin of soldiers which made their goods more accessible to natives, seeing their markets shift from military bases to roadside settlements. The families of the soldiers should be perceived as a substantial element within the communities adhering to a military identity, but not so much to the dissemination of Romanization. As for the veterans, these former soldiers would have taken Roman cultural practices with them, but the majority stayed around their former posts. Those who did leave the settlement might have contributed to Romanization in more urban regions, but it can be questioned what effect this would have had compared to urban Romanization. There is however good reason to contest the notion that the military communities were isolated and detached from provincial society in Britain as Mattingly has assumed. This group might have deterred others from participating in an environment dominated by military identity, but it did not halt interaction between natives and Roman material culture or practices. In fact, the army and in extension military communities were quite accessible to civilians upon narrowing the scope, and their members could be found across Britain.

Chapter 3: Religious practices: worship, cults and curse tablets

This chapter explores the religious aspects of the army to assess their impact on provincial society. It shall commence with the religious practices in the army and epigraphic evidence to show the range to which Romanization by the army is to be considered. Subsequently the two oriental cults of Jupiter Dolichenus and Mithras will be addressed regarding their diffusion in Britannia.²⁶³ Afterwards the contact between soldiers and civilians in a religious setting will be addressed by reviewing the curse tablets of Bath, a settlement with a central position between civilian Britain and the fortress of Caerleon. It will be argued in this chapter that the considerable distance between civilian and soldier, as some scholars have argued, might have been exaggerated.

Religious practices of the Roman army

The army was especially located in the areas where Roman institutions were scarce. This makes it appealing to perceive the army as the main factor for Romanizing influences to the population in the rural sites, including those of a religious nature. Roman religion was underlined by public record: the dedication of altars, statues or temples was a powerful way to increase one's standing in the eyes of others.²⁶⁴ Such a prospect would have been attractive to those wishing to advance in prestige in Roman Britain. By examining the finding spots of religious dedications it becomes evident that military bases along the northern frontier yield the most material (see figure 5). Unfortunately the receptivity of the great majority in Roman Britain to influences from the army, the rural population, cannot be confidently reconstructed. Very little to no epigraphic material was left by this group, not to mention that what does originate from such places can be related to a Roman or Romanized dedicator.²⁶⁵ The official

²⁶³ The choice to use the term oriental instead of eastern has been made deliberately. The category oriental more accurately covers the original area where the cults emerged, thrived and spread than eastern does. The cults in question starting as Parthian, Iranian, Syrian or Zoroastrian cults transitioned into oriental cults which subsequently became Roman cults. The implementation of the Hellenized/Romanized versions of oriental cults in the eastern provinces of the empire could be considered eastern cults. See S. Nagel, J.F. Quack and C. Witschel (eds.), *Entangled Worlds: Religious Confluences between East and West in the Roman Empire* (Tübingen 2017). The papers in this bundle all sympathize with the idea that 1) eastern cults are better understood as Hellenized eastern cults and 2) that the label 'Oriental cults' fits better.

²⁶⁴ G.L. Irby-Massie, *Military Religion in Roman Britain* (Leiden 1999) 4.

²⁶⁵ To set up a dedication to a deity would require knowledge of the formula(s), usually in Latin, and accompanying rituals.

Roman religion has once been defined as ‘a cluster of beliefs expressed in an elaborate system of institutions and rituals’, a mostly urban feature as the institutions were generally located in towns and cities.²⁶⁶



Figure 5: Distribution map of Roman inscribed altars.²⁶⁷

Ritual and belief formed the basis of Roman religion: by performing the rituals correctly a contractual arrangement was initiated from which both man and god could gain benefits.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁶ Garnsey and Saller, *Economy, Society and Culture*, 163

²⁶⁷ Copied from Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 17.

²⁶⁸ J.F. Shean, *Soldiering for God: Christianity and the Roman Army* (Leiden 2010) 33. Shean has explained ancient religion as ‘duty’ or ‘obligation’. It relied on the principle of *do ut des*: ‘I give so that you may give’. J. Rives, ‘Essay Nine: Religion in the Roman world’, in J. Huskinson (ed.), *Experiencing Rome: Culture, Identity*

To take part in a Roman religious setting does not necessitate the rejection or neglect of one's own gods in favour of those of the Romans. Roman occupation did not require natives to abandon their own religious beliefs, and these would have remained strong in the regions where little to no urbanization took place.²⁶⁹ All gods were part of the world, some known and other unknown. As Irby-Massie has stated, the average worshipper probably saw little difference between Roman and non-Roman gods, between 'official' and private ones.²⁷⁰

The conceptualization of Roman religion is somewhat ambiguous. It would be more appropriate to continue this chapter in the context of the spread of Roman religious practices in contrast to religion. There is no 'Roman' religion in the sense that no god was truly Roman, as many if not virtually all gods were appropriated from the peoples Rome came into contact with. Perhaps it can instead be considered Roman because the myriad foreign gods were assumed, translated and worshipped by the Romans, taking them to new regions with the expansion of the Empire.²⁷¹ The incorporation of various religious beliefs, practices and cults and their spread across the Roman Empire remains indicative of Romanization as it has been defined in this paper, namely the increasing use and participation of people regarding Roman cultural practices (material and immaterial). Thus this chapter is written with the assumption that the army fulfilled a Romanizing role with the spread of religious practices.

The same subject could be phrased in a more broad way as to whether cults of the military religion had an open character, yet there is something curious to labelling the cluster of beliefs from the army as military religion besides understanding religion as religious practices instead. The concept of military religion shares the same trait as Romanization that those who read about it usually have a preconceived image of what it entails. The need to explicitly define the concept did not emerge in the work of Irby-Massie except for the short mention

and Power in the Roman Empire (London 2000) 245-276, there 247. Many inscriptions of dedications end with the letters v.s.l.m. (*votum solvit libens merito*), an abbreviation for 'willingly and deservedly fulfilled his vow', indicating that the god gave the dedicator what he requested, for which the deity gained the object in return.

²⁶⁹ M. Henig, *Religion in Roman Britain* (London 1984) 62; Rives, 'Religion in the Roman world', 246. See also Henig, *Religion in Roman Britain*, 17. During the conquest the druids of Anglesey, leading figure in religious beliefs, were indeed marked priority targets for military operations, although it is more likely they became the target for their function in undermining Roman authorities instead of religious repression..

²⁷⁰ Irby-Massie, *Military Religion*, 159.

²⁷¹ The worship of the Egyptian goddess Isis for example – or rather the Hellenized version- can be attested in London in the late first century. Even though the origins of the deity were not Roman, it has become part of this cultural grouping through adoption and subsequent worship in the Empire. See De la Bédoyère, *The Real Lives of Roman Britain*, 100. For Hellenized Isis, see J. Alvar, 'The 'Romanization' of 'Oriental Cults'', in Nagel, Quack and Witschel (eds.), *Entangled World*, 23-46, there 28.

that it might be ‘organized state religion’ in the army on the basis of the *Feriale Duranum*.²⁷² Perhaps the lack of a better crystalized definition compared to Romanization can be excused due to its less ambiguous nature.²⁷³ Irby-Massie is more interested with what it meant to the troops, strongly dividing the purpose of military religion with that of civilian. With the assumption that military religion refers to religious aspects belonging to the army, the label does present the implicit yet curious meaning that it excludes those not part of the military. In a world where one could worship any divinity based on relevance to the individual, the label military or civilian is generally misleading to accessibility.²⁷⁴ Rather it would be more fruitful to perceive this label as to where one might encounter such beliefs more-so. For example, many more soldiers would worship a god offering protection in battle compared to civilians because the former would see these gods more integral to their lives, not because civilians were forbidden to venerate them. The syncretized local gods which can often be found in the Roman army throughout the Empire are mostly known as part of military religion. Several inscriptions can attest that civilians in military communities also adopted the gods part of military religion, of which a few from the veteran colony of Colchester reveal that this also included the native gods of Britain.²⁷⁵

Haynes has pointed out that religion might perhaps be the strongest indicator of profound change in the cultural identity of auxiliary regiments. All soldiers within the army were to venerate the ‘official’ gods of the Roman pantheon and deities related to the military, as well as local gods and goddesses depending on where the unit was based.²⁷⁶ From a general perspective the army appears to be a solid and uniform collection of armed individuals adhering to the same religious calendar, but differences between daily experiences become increasingly visible upon narrowing the scale to the provinces and units. No matter the rank

²⁷² The *Feriale Duranum* is a papyrus scroll with calendar dates from *cohors XX Palmyrenorum* from Dura-Europos (Salhiyé, Syria) written between 224 and 235. This object has aided immensely in reconstructing the religious calendar and festivals. See Irby-Massie, *Military Religion*, 14-15; I.P. Haynes, ‘The Romanisation of Religion in the Auxilia of the Roman Imperial Army from Augustus to Septimius Severus’, *Britannia* Vol. 24 (1993) 141-157, there 141-142; Shean, *Soldiering for God*, 50-51.

²⁷³ Irby-Massie, *Military Religion*, 4.

²⁷⁴ Such was the argumentation of Allason-Jones regarding small finds from Hadrian’s Wall. Personal objects such as combs cannot be labelled in ‘military’ or ‘civilian’ groups because they serve a purpose which is freed from such restriction. A soldier would like to comb his hair just as much as a civilian would have. See Allason-Jones, ‘Small finds’ from turrets on Hadrian’s Wall’, in J.C. Coulston (ed.), *Military Equipment and the Identity of Roman Soldiers* (Oxford 1988) 197-223, there 220.

²⁷⁵ RIB 191 (dated 222-235) concerns a Caledonian offering to Mars Medocius of the Campeses - the Campsie Fells in Stirlingshire. RIB 193 (= CIL 07, 87, dated 43-300) was set up to Mercury Andescociuoucus. RIB 194 (= AE 1951, 96, dated 43-300) was a dedication set up with a coppersmith with a name with its roots in Celtic name giving.

²⁷⁶ De la Bédoyère, *The Real Lives of Roman Britain*, 141.

or the province where one was stationed, every soldier was confronted with the same structured elements during their service, including religious practices.²⁷⁷ Every member of the Roman imperial army was to partake in religious rituals and festivals prescribed by the military. The auxilia were formally included in the religious practices of the Roman army after a standardized system was set up to integrate these forces directly into the army, the result of the turbulent events of 69 when Batavian and other (German) auxiliary units turned to mutiny.²⁷⁸ The worship of the Roman gods and military *genii* would accelerate the integration of troops in Roman practices. Romanization took place, albeit not its intended purpose, as military religion and ceremonies involving these deities were repeated over and over, also strengthening the bond between soldier and his unit and in extension the army.²⁷⁹

Service in the army left quite the impact on the soldiers as many of the new gods would be incorporated in their religious views. It is remarkable that the auxilia were quite engaged with the worship of the Roman gods besides their own, which has been evidently investigated with Zoll's study involving religious inscriptions at Hadrian's Wall.²⁸⁰ He has calculated that the votive inscriptions from the Wall, a total of 437, comprise close to half (47%) of the total votive inscriptions found in Britain. Jupiter Optimus Maximus, amidst more than two hundred named gods, was the most addressed one with 64 inscriptions, 39 coming from the auxilia.²⁸¹ His study shows the broad spectrum of religion for Roman soldiers, with the worship of the 'official' gods (Jupiter) on one side and the worship of gods both local or from far abroad on the other. Such dedications do however not solely originate out of pious sentiment. They can also be perceived as some stronger form of identification with the Roman army, one which might have been imposed by the army to forge closer ties between soldier and organization. Every year auxiliary regiments vowed sacrifices to various divinities for the welfare of the emperor and Empire, to Jupiter Optimus Maximus foremost.²⁸² Whether the auxiliary soldiers were truly engaged with the deity to which they

²⁷⁷ James, 'The community of soldiers', 14-18; Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 166. These include common standards of service and conditions, Latin as lingua franca, and the religious calendar..

²⁷⁸ Webster, *The Roman Imperial Army*, 142.

²⁷⁹ Haynes, 'The Romanisation of Religion in the Auxilia', 141-143, 157.

²⁸⁰ A.L. Zoll, 'A view through inscriptions: the epigraphic evidence for religion at Hadrian's Wall', in Metzler, Millett et.al. (eds.), 129-138. Several individual finds have been made since this study, but these are so few in number that the outcome of his study would have altered very little.

²⁸¹ Zoll, 'A view through inscriptions, 129-131, 136-137. Of the 437 inscriptions 429 address named deities, of which 56% involved those of Roman and Graeco-Roman origins. Deities not from Roman or native origins made up around 20%.

²⁸² Hassall, 'Altars, Curses and Other Epigraphic Evidence for Religion in the Province', in W. Rodwell (ed.), *Temples, Churches and Religion: Recent Research in Roman Britain, with a Gazetteer of Romano-Celtic Temples in Continental Europe* (Oxford 1980) 144-158, there 145-150. This happened on the third of January.

set up the object, or whether they did so out of a sense of belonging, might not always be as clear from the evidence. It does reveal more about the strong ties the army forged between provincials and the Roman state. Such dedications from a collective group enforce the sense of coherence and belonging to the Roman army and state.

Military religion might perchance almost exclusively be attested at military bases, with little potential to spread to the hinterland beyond, yet civilians were not barred from participation. Several inscriptions can attest that civilians in military communities also offered devotions, of which a few from the veteran colony of Colchester reveal that this also included the native gods of Britain.²⁸³ An inscription to Jupiter Optimus Maximus from the Carriden (Antonine Wall) and one from Old Carlisle (just south-west of Hadrian's Wall; dated past 212) set up by *vikani* provide evidence that the military did not gatekeep their religious practices.²⁸⁴ On both occasions the altars were dedicated by the villagers as a collective. The inscription from Carriden does mention a certain Aelius Mansuetus who took care of the matter. Although it is uncertain whether he was an influential figure of the villagers or directly involved in the army overseeing the matter, it can be noted that the military either allowed or helped facilitate such devotions. Where military religious practices can be located, one can find traces of interaction between army and military community, perchance as well for outsiders who wished to participate. As small and insignificant as such rare examples might be for the greater picture, discarding such evidence takes away from potential points of contact between army and the rest of provincial society.

Official worship and veneration was not limited to the gods in the army.²⁸⁵ Military religion consisted of the official worship and festivals of several aspects deemed important to the army, including the veneration of the emperor, the standards, the eagle and a plethora of deities and *genii*.²⁸⁶ In particular the standards have been addressed as focal point of

Stoll lists these as part of official army religion, whereas Haynes attributes them to a shared sense of military identity. See Stoll, 'The Religions of the Armies', 451-452. Haynes, 'Identity and the Military Community', 454.

²⁸³ RIB 191 (dated 222-235) concerns a Caledonian offering to Mars Medocius of the Campeses - the Campsie Fells in Stirlingshire. RIB 193 (= CIL 07, 87, dated 43-300) was set up to Mercury Andescociuoucus. RIB 194 (= AE 1951, 96, dated 43-300) was a dedication set up with a coppersmith with a name with its roots in Celtic name giving.

²⁸⁴ RIB 3503 (=AE 1962, 249, dated 138-300) from the fort of Carriden (*Veluniate*). RIB 899 (= CIL 07, 346, dated 238-244) from Old Carlisle (*Maglona*), also set up to Vulcanus.

²⁸⁵ Phang, *Roman Military Service*, 89. Different forms of worship aside from the gods primarily served to maintain imperial order among the soldiery.

²⁸⁶ Irby-Massie, *Military Religion*, 36-47. *Genii* (singular *genius*) are protective spirits.

eneration within the army.²⁸⁷ The standards serve in a two-fold manner, symbolizing the soldier's allegiance to the unit whilst also doing the same between unit and emperor.²⁸⁸ The oath of allegiance to the emperor took place in front of the colours and was ceremoniously dissolved there upon discharge.²⁸⁹ The standards were representative of the very identity and an essential component for the creation of a strong bond between the soldiers.²⁹⁰ To Haynes the standards are 'the symbols *par excellence* of the Roman military community' (his italics).²⁹¹ They were kept safe within the *principia* of the forts and fortresses in times of peace, away from civilians who were not included in the formal veneration of the standards. Besides the standards and the altar to be found in the courtyard there is little religious evidence to be found in the forts and fortresses.²⁹²

Worship of the gods took mainly place at the shrines and temples in the nearby *canabae* and *vici*, and it can be expected that here the army was most influential. While the routine of army life promoted the sense of unity and adherence to the Roman state and emperor, emphasized by the imperial cult, there was nothing preventing soldiers to worship individual deities as long as the official imperial cult was venerated.²⁹³ The army does present many Roman gods to all recruits, but a wide selection of additional gods, both Romanized or local, were presented to the new soldier depending on the province and the regiment he would join. Furthermore, the recruits would also have a prior relation to the gods of their own people before enlisting in the army, and those from similar origin would collectively continue in the veneration of the gods from their homeland. A clear instance can be found with the Hamian archers. Members of the *cohors I Hamiorum* have made several dedications to their Syrian deities, bringing their gods with them to the other side of the Empire.²⁹⁴ Veneration of such divinities would take place on a very personal level, yet one might wonder whether troops would have venerated a Romanized version of their 'own' gods at one point.

²⁸⁷ Haynes 'Identity and the Military Community', 455. The eagles and animal-totems of the auxilia can be considered in a similar light.

²⁸⁸ Haynes, *Blood of the Provinces*, 218; Shean, *Soldiering for God*, 44.

²⁸⁹ Dig.49.18.2: *sacramentum solvere*. O. Stoll, 'The Religions of the Armies', in Erdkamp (ed.), *A Companion to the Roman Army*, 451-476, there 455.

²⁹⁰ Tac. *Ann.* 2.17.2. The standards were 'the very divinity of the legions'.

²⁹¹ Haynes, *Blood of the Provinces*, 218.

²⁹² Webster, *The Roman Imperial Army*, 277-278.

²⁹³ J. Bird, 'Religion', in Allason-Jones (ed.), *Artefacts in Roman Britain*, 269-292, there 269.

²⁹⁴ A.R. Birley, 'The *cohors I Hamiorum* in Britain', *Acta Classica* Vol. 55 (2012) 1-16. For the dedications see RIB 1780 (= CIL 07, 750, dated 122-300) and 1783 (= CIL 07, 752, dated 122-300). The Hamian archers were predominantly stationed at the fort of Carvoran (Hadrian's Wall) from 120 onwards.

Ethnic compositions within units could vary significantly before local recruitment would become the norm, grouping worshippers of a wide range of foreign deities together. Some inscriptions show in fact that some gods were recognized across borders as similar figures. At the same time these reveal the diversity of individual soldiers brought together from different parts of the Roman Empire. An altar from Winchester was dedicated to the Italian, German, Gallic and British Mother Goddesses, revealing that some supernatural powers were recognized as counterparts across the provinces.²⁹⁵ Along the same line an altar from York to the African, Italian and Gallic Mother Goddesses can be understood.²⁹⁶ Yet where conformity can be found, one can also find a more exclusive nature. On occasion the worship of particular gods within a unit would become so ingrained in its identity that every member participated for generations to come, with newcomers of many decades later revering these deities even when they themselves originally did not have ties to these gods.²⁹⁷ Among the regiments distinct religious affiliations appear venerating divinities deemed integral to the core of the group, best clarified with an example from the mounted troops. The *Campestris* find their roots in Celtic religious beliefs and were brought to the army via Gallic and Germanic cavalymen. They were venerated virtually exclusively in the *alae* as these gods were associated with the parade-grounds and training fields of the cavalry, becoming a core part of the identity of the auxiliary cavalry.²⁹⁸ Religious beliefs could be part of self-identification within the army, aiding in the formation and continuation of distinct sub-cultures and military communities within the army. They hint to conscious self-definition between groups of soldiers to the wider audience, mostly aimed but not restricted to fellow soldiers.²⁹⁹ Religious practices played a not so insignificant role in the creation of different military identities.

The *auxilia* played a major role in the spread of many new religious beliefs through the Roman Empire. Many of the religions of subjugated peoples would be spread through the Empire with the deployment of *auxilia* to different provinces, which contributed the most to the number of deities worshipped across the provinces. These were eventually syncretized

²⁹⁵ RIB 88 (= CIL 07, 5, dated 71-200).

²⁹⁶ RIB 653 (= CIL 07, 238, dated 122-300).

²⁹⁷ Irby-Massie, *Military Religion*, 36-47; Stoll, 'The Religions of the Armies', 470.

²⁹⁸ Irby-Massie, 'The Roman Army and the Cult of the *Campestris*', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* Vol.113 (1996) 293-300, there 293; Haynes, *Blood of the Provinces*, 224-225. For mentions of the *Campestris* in Britain, see RIB 1334 (= CIL 07, 510, dated 238). RIB 2141 (dated 138-161) and 3484 (dated 81-200) are unsure readings which might refer to them.

²⁹⁹ Such as the sculptures of auxiliary cavalymen as mentioned in chapter 1.

with Roman gods and turned into official cults in the army and beyond.³⁰⁰ The epigraphic evidence can attest to this, as can be shown with the following example of a dedication found within the remains of Mumrills, the largest fort which was part of the Antonine Wall.

Herculi Magusan(o) sacrum Val(erius) Nigrinus dupli(carius) alae Tungrorum

‘Sacred to Hercules Magusanus: Valerius Nigrinus, *duplicarius* of the Cavalry Regiment of Tungrians, (set this up).’³⁰¹

This is the only known dedication to Hercules Magusanus found in Britain, a Germanic deity worshipped in Lower Germany and Belgian Gaul almost exclusively by (ex-)soldiers.³⁰² The German deity seems to have partially lost his original character to a Roman counterpart. This object demonstrates syncretism in the Roman world in what is understood as *Interpretatio Romana*: the ‘broad identification among Romans of a foreign godhead with a member of their own pantheon.’³⁰³ Here it is portrayed with Hercules being the Roman version of Greek Heracles and Magusanus a local deity from Germany. Many Celtic deities native to Britain would eventually be incorporated and worshipped across Roman Britain. Native religious traditions did not disappear under Roman rule, but assimilated into new cults both local and Roman in character.³⁰⁴ The rough equation of these deities to Roman ones have attributed many different names, making ‘one’ deity a multifaceted being with different attributes. Mars for instance gained many new names after being brought to Britain, including but not limited to Cocidius, Belatucadrus/Belatucairus, Barrex, Riginamus, and Ocelus.³⁰⁵ Romanization is not merely the extension of Roman culture to other regions. The many syncretized gods to which the soldiers vowed and offered are perhaps the strongest indicator that native practices were indeed affecting the Roman setting too, an aspect easily overshadowed by the use of

³⁰⁰ Shean, *Soldiering for God*, 42.

³⁰¹ RIB 2140 (= CIL 07, 1090, dated 138-161). Translation Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*. 134.

³⁰² Haynes, *Blood of the Provinces*, 232; Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*. 134.

³⁰³ C. Ando, *The Matter of the Gods* (Berkeley 2008) 43. See also Irby-Massie, *Military Religion*, 100, 158, and Shean, *Soldiering for God*, 41.

³⁰⁴ Rives, ‘Religion in the Roman world’, 271.

³⁰⁵ RIB 2015 (= CIL 07, 886, dated 122-300) is a dedication by a centurion of the First Cohort of Batavians. RIB 2024 (= CIL 07, 914, dated 138-161) is a dedication by ‘soldiers of the Second Legion Augusta’ (*milites legionis II Augustae*), showing that worship could be done on a personal level or as a collective group. RIB 948, 970 (= CIL 07, 957, dated 43-410), 2044 (dated 122-300) for Belatucadrus; RIB 1784 (= CIL 07, 746, dated 122-300) for Belatucairus. RIB 947 (= CIL 07, 925, dated 71-300) for Barrex. RIB 187 (= CIL 07, 61, 43-410) for Riginamus. RIB 310 (= AE 1912, 6, dated 71-300) for Ocelus.

Romanization. The acceptance of these deities and their growing popularity among soldiers, sometimes widespread, other times confined to the province or the locality, is almost a 'common' feature part of the Roman army. In that regard Romanization also entails picking up local practices, coating it to fit the Roman context, and subsequently taking it to other places.³⁰⁶

The myriad of options from which to choose make it very difficult to narrow down a singular conviction for one person, not to mention within the framework of a polytheistic world.³⁰⁷ An inscription from the Antonine Wall reads 'To Mars, Minerva, the Goddesses of the Parade-ground, Hercules, Epona, and Victory, Marcus Cocceius Firmus, centurion of the Second Legion Augusta, (set this up)'.³⁰⁸ The centurion here shows that he was aware of the many different forms of supernatural powers, either official (Mars, Minerva, Victory), those part of the legion (Goddesses of the Parade-ground), half-gods (Hercules), and 'foreign' gods (Epona originates from Gaul). This was not always the case - on some occasion it appears that the dedicator himself wished to be sure he did not miss any relevant deity. Two instances can be presented from Hadrian's Wall. One addresses 'the gods who dwell in this place', whereas the other is directed 'to god or goddess'.³⁰⁹ Individuals would select gods from a sea of options depending on whether the deities could help them for the challenges life offered. In the army a collection was created and imposed on all soldiers for the well-being of the military. Additionally other gods important to the individual were venerated, whether on personal basis or due to his affiliation to a specific military unit. It should not be forgotten that military religion was not reserved to the soldiers and that civilians could participate if they desired to do so. Personal need or suspected reward was a significant factor in the decision-making which divinity should be worshipped, a choice which led many to participate in specific religious sects. The next segment shall investigate two prominent cults in Roman Britain.

³⁰⁶ Cf. Huskinson, 'Essay One: Looking for culture, identity and power', in idem (ed.), *Experiencing Rome*, 3-28, there 22-23.

³⁰⁷ Supernatural powers could be found anywhere, ruling over greater and smaller domains. RIB 3504 (= AE 2013, 935, dated 142-161) for example was set up to wood nymphs and goddesses of cross-roads.

³⁰⁸ RIB 2177 (= CIL 07, 1114, dated 142-180) found at Auchendavy. *Marti Minervae Campestribus Her(u)l(i) Eponae Victoriae M(arcus) Coccei(us) Firmus (centurio) leg(ionis) II Aug(ustae)*. Translation taken 01/11/2021 from <https://romaninscriptionsofbritain.org/inscriptions/2177>.

³⁰⁹ RIB 1208 (= CIL 07, 980, dated 201-300): *Dis Cultoribus huius loci*. RIB 2071 (= CIL 07, 649, dated 122-300): *[s]ive deo sive d[e]ae*. Translations taken 03/12/2021 from <https://romaninscriptionsofbritain.org/inscriptions/1208> and <https://romaninscriptionsofbritain.org/inscriptions/2071>

The cults of Jupiter Dolichenus and Mithras

For this segment the presence of the oriental cults of Jupiter Dolichenus and Mithras in Britannia are reviewed.³¹⁰ They have been selected due to the close ties between cult and military religion on the island.³¹¹ By analysing the presence of these cults aids it can be reasonably estimated whether such cults were indeed a matter solely belonging to the army. The label cult hides the relatively immense popularity they enjoyed and it has already been argued that they might very well be understood as ‘proto-religions’, which were developed on the key features of initiation, mystery, salvation, mobility and universality.³¹² Here they shall be approached in more detail regarding their accessibility to those outside of the army.

Many inscriptions exist dedicated to deities where the locality was an important factor for the name of the god in question in order to distinguish a certain appearance or trait belonging to the divinity. An inscription directed at Jupiter Dolichenus found at Benwell (*Condercum*, Hadrian’s Wall) concerns a redeemed vow directed to the protective sky-god originally venerated in Doliche in Commagene, (Dülük, south-east Turkey).³¹³ This Jupiter would be a manifestation of the traditional version, not a separate entity rivalling the upper god despite the discrepancy between theory and practice of religious practices.³¹⁴ He was related to multiple domains and by specifically mentioning the name Dolichenus the votary would address the deity regarding his domain of protection and the sky. The cult of Jupiter Dolichenus appears in the late second century and became widespread throughout the Empire by 200, becoming very popular along the borders of the Empire.³¹⁵ Especially his protective nature would gather him many followers in the army, although the greater picture across the Empire saw more adherents among civilians.³¹⁶ Speidel’s extensive study has shown that the

³¹⁰ Cf. footnote 263. For the relation between these cults and the army, see E. Harris and J.R. Harris, *The oriental cults in Roman Britain* (Leiden 1965; newly published 2014); Henig, *Religion in Roman Britain*; Haynes, ‘The Romanisation of Religion in the Auxilia’; Irby-Massie, *Military Religion*; De la Bédoyère, *The Real Lives of Roman Britain*, 94-95.

³¹¹ G.L. Irby-Massie, *Military Religion in Roman Britain* (Leiden 1999) 71, 80.

³¹² Alvar, ‘The ‘Romanization’ of ‘Oriental Cults’’, 27.

³¹³ RIB 1330 (dated 139-161). Other inscriptions to Jupiter Dolichenus can be found, amongst others, in RIB 320 (= CIL 7, 98, dated 161-169), RIB 992 (= CIL 7, 976, dated 122-367), RIB 1725 (dated 131-170), and RIB 2099 (dated 81-180).

³¹⁴ See Rives, ‘Religion in the Roman world’, 258. Rives has discussed the conflict of the theoretical image of one god as presented in mythology in contrast to the practice of one deity as multiple versions through the worship in different cults.

³¹⁵ M.P. Speidel, *The Religion of Iuppiter Dolichenus in the Roman Army* (Leiden 1978) 5-10; Harris and Harris, *The oriental cults*, 57-64; Irby-Massie, *Military Religion*, 63; Winter, ‘The Cult of Jupiter Dolichenus and its Origins. The Sanctuary at Dülük Baba Tepesi near Doliche’, in Nagel, Quack and Witschel (eds.), *Entangled Worlds*, 79-95, there 79. The cult reached its climax under Severus Alexander in the first half of the third century. In particular the Dolichenum at Vindolanda has been preserved to a considerable degree.

³¹⁶ Speidel, *Iuppiter Dolichenus*, 5-45.

main audience consisted of soldiers, but also senators, governors and traders. Less than two out of five inscriptions were set up by soldiers, with the material from Britain described as pauper. Speidel studied the statues and other artwork of Dolichenus and concluded on that basis that the cult found many adherents in the army, but it could not have been a purely military religion. In fact, Speidel believes that civilian worship would have been more sophisticated compared to that in the army in general. He differentiates the worship of Dolichenus between the provinces depending on the size of the civil regions, concluding that Britain lagged behind in civil worship compared to the other ‘Celtic’ provinces of Western Europe.³¹⁷

To Dészpa the name Jupiter Optimus Maximus Dolichenus was ‘a reimagined combination of the Empire as a whole’, a combination of the Empire (Optimus Maximus) and the local (Dolichenus). The name was the Roman adoption of their conquered subjects to integrate them in the social structure of imperial rule through religious means.³¹⁸ The adherence to such a cult by people without roots to the site of origins -the vast majority of soldiers in Britain- hints of a successful integration of a local element in Roman structures, subsequently manifested as an empire-wide phenomenon. Yet practical purposes should not be overlooked: to soldiers Jupiter Dolichenus was mostly a god that would grant them protection. From the scarce epigraphic material of Britain, excluding that which can be certainly be dated after 212, the name Jupiter Dolichenus can be attested eleven times, either in combination with or without Optimus Maximus. from which only one example does not come from the northern frontier. The inscription in question was found at the legionary fortress of Caerleon. From the remaining material nine were retrieved from Hadrian’s Wall and nearby forts, and one from the Antonine Wall.³¹⁹ One of these reveals an intriguing combination of the Romanized Syrian god together with a Romanized deity from Britain and a ‘Roman’ one, indicating that the oriental deities were too were not detached from the rest of the pantheon. Here Jupiter Dolichenus is addressed together with Caelestis Brigantia and Salus, symbolically uniting the

³¹⁷ Ibidem.

³¹⁸ M.L. Dészpa, ‘Jupiter Optimus Maximus Dolichenus and the Re-Imagination of the Empire: Religious Dynamics, Social Integration and Imperial Narratives’, in Nagel, Quack and Witschel (eds.), *Entangled Worlds*, 113-181, there 173

³¹⁹ Caerleon: RIB 320 (= CIL 07, 98, dated 161-169). Hadrian’s Wall: RIB 895 (= CIL 07, 342, dated 197), RIB 916 (= CIL 07, 316, dated 171-230), RIB 922 (= CIL 07, 321, dated 122-300), RIB 1131 (= AE 1947, 122, dated 201-300), RIB 1220 (= CIL 07, 991, dated 201-300), RIB 1725 (dated 131-170), RIB 1726 (= CIL 07, 725, dated 122-200), RIB 1782 (= CIL 07, 753, dated 122-300), RIB 2099 (dated 81-180). Antonine Wall: RIB 2158 (dated 142-161).

east with the west and the city Rome.³²⁰ Another example reveals that the civilians in the military zones also interacted with this deity: a woman named Magunna dedicates an altar to fulfill her vow, located in Birrens.³²¹ From the epigraphic evidence Jupiter Dolichenus appears quite limited to the frontiers, and this view is not changed when taking that beyond 212 into account. Very likely it was not due to the prohibition of civilians to participate, but rather because few if any would be attracted to this divinity outside of the military communities, similar to the *Campestres*. All in all, the cult of Dolichenus was facilitated in its military nature and provides little ground to believe it was widely spread in Britannia outside of the army based on epigraphic evidence.³²²

Another cult that fared well within the army is that of Mithras, one which was present in all provinces halfway into the second century, a god connected to the ‘unconquerable sun’.³²³ Out of all mystery cults -cults which keep their rites secret to the public- Mithras was the most popular.³²⁴ The success of the cult is usually related to the deeper personal spiritual bond a follower would have developed when partaking in a mystery cult. Mithras specifically did well among soldiers because of the similarities it posed compared to life in the army.³²⁵ Gordon has underlined the significance of the process of Graeco-Roman reception on oriental religions, in particular regarding Mithras, for these were not mysteries in their homelands. Key aspects to the original faith are nowhere to be found in any epigraphic reference internal to the cult in the western Empire.³²⁶ The mystery of Mithras was a Romanized version of its original oriental version which would become embedded in the religious practices of the army. Mithras’ roots were not Roman, but his mystery cult was. The worship of this deity

³²⁰ RIB 1131 (= AE 1947, 122, dated 201-300). *Salus* is understood here as representative for the prosperity of the Roman state. *Caelestis Brigantia* is the local aspect of *Juno Caelestis* or *Dea Syria* (from which *Dolichenus* originates), and this specific *Jupiter* and *Juno* have been taken in compliment to the Severan dynasty. This inscription can thus be seen as a dedication to the imperial family and the empire. See Harris and Harris, *The oriental cults*, 57.

³²¹ RIB 2099 (dated 81-180).

³²² Cf. Irby-Massie, *Military Religion*, 71.

³²³ M. Clauss, *The Roman cult of Mithras: the God and his mysteries* (Edinburgh 2000, translation by R. Gordon) 23-28; R. Beck, *The religion of the Mithras cult in the Roman Empire: mysteries of the unconquered sun* (Oxford 2006) 1.

³²⁴ Irby-Massie, *Military Religion*, 80; Shean, *Soldiering for God*, 54-55. Beck, *The religion of the Mithras cult* has seen emphasis in studies on this cult readdress main issues in studies on this cult. See 56-57 in particular.

³²⁵ Henig, *Religion in Roman Britain*, 95-97; Clauss, *The Roman cult of Mithras*, 36. Total commitment to Mithras was for life, akin to commitment to the emperor, and the rank of soldier within Mithraic hierarchy was an attractive position for them to obtain. RIB 3 (dated 176-225) from London concerns an *emeritus* who refers to himself as being ‘made a soldier’ (*miles factus*), yet it is debatable whether he refers to becoming a soldier of Mithras or his service in the army.

³²⁶ R. Gordon, ‘From East to West: Staging Religious Experience in the Mithraic Temple’, in Nagel, Quack and Witschel (eds.), *Entangled Worlds*, 413-441, there 413-418. These include its Persian origins, relation to Zoroaster or the *magi*.

seems to be incorporated in a greater setting of military religious practices and not left isolated. A dedication from the mithraeum of Housesteads was set up to Jupiter Optimus Maximus and Cocidius who was equated with Mars, although this was not explicitly mentioned on the inscription.³²⁷

The epigraphic evidence once again shows a very military character of the cult. Mithras was quite influential in the forts of Britain, especially more so in the north.³²⁸ From the twelve inscriptions dated up to 212 the majority comes from the military zone. Ten were retrieved from the northern frontier and one from the western frontier (Caerleon). The material shows more diversity besides dedications to Mithras alone. One was dedicated to Mithras and Cautopates, one the two torchbearers accompanying him, whereas another was dedicated solely to the other torchbearer Cautes (not included in the twelve).³²⁹ There is one from Hadrian's Wall that is directed to 'the Sun-god Apollo Invincible Mithras', assimilating two gods of the sun into one figure.³³⁰ A similar confluence of Apollo and Mithras (not among the twelve either) is a dedication made to Apollo depicted akin to Mithras, flanked with his two torchbearers.³³¹ The last of the twelve inscriptions was retrieved from civil Britain, to which two more can be added when those of the later third and fourth centuries are included, all three from London.³³² In contrast to Jupiter Dolichenus the cult of Mithras can be attested beyond the military zone, either due to it being more widespread or because it was spared to a greater degree from the Christian sweep of non-Christian elements in the fourth century.³³³ Five mithraea (singular mithraeum), the official place of worship, have been located at London, Caernarvon, Rudchester, Carrawburgh and Housesteads, with evidence found from the three legionary bases, possibly hinting to the presence of more than one

³²⁷ RIB 3503 (= AE 1692, 249, dated 138-300). It was also set up to the local Genius.

³²⁸ C.M. Daniels, *Mithras and his Temples on the Wall* (Durham 1962); De la Bédoyère, *The Real Lives*, 105.

³²⁹ Respectively RIB 1082 (= CIL 07, 650, dated 151-300) and RIB 943 (dated 71-300). See Clauss, *The Roman cult of Mithras*, 27, 95-98. Cautes and Cautopates are the two torchbearers, with Cautes holding his torch upright and Cautopates upside down, symbolizing sunrise and sunset.

³³⁰ RIB 1397 (= CIL 07, 543, dated 201-300).

³³¹ RIB 1198 (= CIL 07, 309, dated 101-300).

³³² Northern frontier: RIB 1082 (= CIL 07, 650, dated 151-300), RIB 1272 (= CIL 07, 1039, 213), RIB 1395 (= CIL 07, 541, dated 201-300), RIB 1397 (= CIL 07, 543, dated 201-300), RIB 1398 (= CIL 07, 544, dated 201-300), RIB 154 (= AE 1951, 125A, dated 211-222), RIB 1545 (= AE 1951, 125B, dated 201-230), RIB 1546 (= AE 1951, 125C, dated 201-250), RIB 1599 (= CIL 07, 645, dated 246), RIB 1993 (= CIL 07, 831, dated 201-300). Western frontier: RIB 322 (= CIL 07, 99, dated 171-200). Civil Britain: RIB 3 (dated 176-225). From third and fourth centuries: London: RIB 1 (dated 251-330) and RIB 4 (dated 307-308); from Housesteads RIB 1600 (= CIL 07, 646, dated 252).

³³³ Irby-Massie, *Military Religion*, 99. See Shean, *Soldiering for God*, 57. The typical Mithraic cult site was located underground, in basements or caves.

mithraeum for each fortress.³³⁴ There are several other minor sites from which St. Albans, north of London, stands out as it is the only other site in civil Britain.³³⁵

Mithraea have yielded epigraphic material that did not always directly relate to Mithras. Shepherd has noted the worship of Minerva and Mercury, Serapis and even Danubian rider-gods, among others, at the site of London.³³⁶ In addition, the sun-god would be closely related to the emperors from the reign of Marcus Aurelius onwards. From the third century onwards Mithras would grow into a protector of the imperial house, tying the emperor to the figure of Sol Invictus. Many inscriptions found in mithraea, both to Mithras or other deities, were inscribed to the health and safety of the emperor.³³⁷ Throughout the Empire many worshippers are known to be affiliated with the army, the imperial administration, the household of the emperor, and ordinary citizens due to the mention of their social rank on inscriptions.³³⁸ As for Britain, the inscriptions themselves do not present any citizen votary. The site at London, and to some degree St. Albans, could very well provide non-soldiers entrance to participate in this dominantly military group. As the imperial side of the cult would become more influential and the cult would have been better integrated in London over time, it is not unthinkable that civilians would seek entrance, nor were they prevented to do so (with the exception of women). Irby-Massie and Haynes have both assigned its presence to the vicinity of Cripplegate fort and the military community of London.³³⁹ Well they would likely be the main audience of this site, the participation of others cannot be excluded with certainty. Because the popularity of Mithras extended to the people of London, in contrast to Jupiter Dolichenus, one might wonder whether it was the influence of the army or from civilians like traders that brought the deity there. Another group might also be taken into account. Noteworthy is the lack of evidence of mithraea from any of the three veteran colonies, where one would expect some evidence as being a member of the cult was a lifelong business. It is known that Colchester maintained close connections to London, shown

³³⁴ Clauss, *The Roman cult of Mithras*, 26; Irby-Massie, *Military Religion*, 80-96; Shean, *Soldiering for God*, 57-58. For the potential of more than one mithraeum in a fort, see Mason, 'Chester', 146-155, who discusses the possibility for Chester. Clauss, *The Roman cult of Mithras*, 43 refers to the multiple temples at the small-fort settlement of Nida (Hedderheim) in Germania Superior, arguing that Mithraic communities preferred to found new and small communities.

³³⁵ Clauss, *The Roman cult of Mithras*, 26. Additional sites are Carlisle, Castlesteads, Lanchester, High Rochester, and Whitley Castle. See also Harris and Harris, *The oriental cults*, 38-39

³³⁶ J. Shepherd, *The Temple of Mithras, London* (London 1998). See also Bird, 'Religion', 269.

³³⁷ Clauss, *The Roman cult of Mithras*, 23, 28: *pro salute imperatoris Caesaris*. Especially Commodus identified himself with Mithras.

³³⁸ Idem, 33. Beck, *The religion of the Mithras cult*, 1-10.

³³⁹ Irby-Massie, *Military Religion*, 80; Haynes, *Blood of the Provinces*, 235.

by Durham's study on metal figurines depicting deities.³⁴⁰ Veterans could very well have played a vital role in the maintenance or even start of Mithraic worship in the city. Whether the traders, soldiers or veterans saw to beginning of the Mithras cult in London cannot be confidently traced back. Nonetheless the three groups all have connections to the army in one way or another. Perchance the cult was popularized later on by civilians, yet it most likely started out due to the presence of the military.

For the argument that military religion was influential to the native people, however, the answer is negative similar to Dolichenus. Even with the notion that the cult of Mithras was more accessible to civilians, both in location and religious beliefs, the people who would have been drawn in would hail mostly from London and vicinity. This urbanized region experienced the most profound impact of Roman rule and was already quite Romanized, but not due to the presence of the army. The low numbers of epigraphic material from rural sites does however not immediately indicate a lack of circulation regarding religious practices. Such would have occurred in places where contact between soldiers and civilians would take place, which so far was mostly restricted to extramural settlements. The settlement Bath might however prove differently and shall be discussed regarding curse tablets in the final part.

Soldiers in the public sphere: violence, curse tablets and Bath

To consider the impact of the Roman army on change in the religious setting of Britain requires religious elements and practices which were accessible to civilians too, better facilitated in the zones where soldiers and civilians came into contact with one another. To Mattingly such relations were obstructed as the soldiers would keep fair distance to those not part of the army. This issue shall be explored in a place where the two parties would meet: the sanctuary at Bath, a settlement positioned along the road between London and Caerleon housing the sanctuary of the native god Sulis.

Upon looking into contact points between soldier and civilian, it is important not to forget the social position among the two. As this study has shown like several different ones before, the members of the military communities presented themselves in a strong fashion

³⁴⁰ E. Durham, 'Metropolitan styling: metal figurines from London and Colchester', in S. Hoss and A. Whitmore (eds.), *Small Finds & Ancient Social Practices in the Northwest Provinces of the Roman Empire* (Oxford 2016) 75-97.

differentiating from others in society. To some like Mattingly this was a huge obstacle to relations between the two parties, worsened in combination with the unequal social status between the two parties.³⁴¹ Gardner has warned that it was not the sheer differences in self-identification that made for such unequal relations. He refers to inherent hierarchical power dynamics surrounding soldiers interacting with those within and outside of the army. He argues that the ongoing role of violence in imperial society would see the inequality between the military and civilians maintained.³⁴² Recently Cousins' book on Bath has been published in which the sanctuary is discussed in great length.³⁴³ Here she has opted for a model taking civilians and soldiers as main focus point, studying Bath as a point of contact in several chapters. Following Gardner's article, Cousins also places serious distance between army and society. In her argumentation she interprets the dedications to the emperor as a powerful tool for worshippers, in particular 'those connected to the military community' by which they clarified and reinforced their position within the empire.³⁴⁴ Bath was the place for 'community self-definition and self-construction', showing diverse and distinct forms of identity.³⁴⁵ Yet a stronger sense, or perceived need, of self-identification in a setting of social prestige does not necessarily put communication and interaction to the side. Instead, identities exist, evolve, and thrive in the presence of others, aiding in the reflection and redefinition of what one was in contrast to another.

Before the curse tablets can be brought into discussion, the role of violence in Britannia is to be addressed in reaction to Gardner and Cousins. The army was most extensively used in the first century during the initial stages of Roman occupation.³⁴⁶ Their behaviour would become a focal point to Roman opposition. Veterans of Colchester abused the local *Trinovantes* and enjoyed from the confiscation of their land. On occasion they would take more land in addition to what the government had assigned to them, encouraged by soldiers to do so.³⁴⁷ Neither does the mistreatment of Boudicca require rehearsal. After this revolt and

³⁴¹ Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 166-167.

³⁴² A. Gardner, 'Thinking about Roman Imperialism: Postcolonialism, Globalisation and Beyond?', *Britannia* Vol.44 (2013) 1-25, there 6-10.

³⁴³ E. Cousins, *The sanctuary at Bath in the Roman Empire* (Cambridge 2020).

³⁴⁴ *Idem*, 92-93.

³⁴⁵ *Idem*, 108-110.

³⁴⁶ It has been argued that the conquest was largely welcomed or accepted by British aristocracies, but the initial shock of how the Romans governed them would see groups of natives flock to the Boudiccan rebellion. See Salway, 'Conclusion', in *idem*, *The Roman Era*, 203-236, there 205.

³⁴⁷ Tac. *Ann.* 14.32. Tacitus writes that 'the settlers [veterans at Colchester] drove the *Trinovantes* from their homes and land, and called them prisoners and slaves'. The troops encouraged this behaviour 'since their own way of behaving was the same'. Mattingly, *An Imperial Possession*, 107. The *Trinovantes* would be the tribe first to join the Iceni in their revolt..

the subsequent crackdown on the remaining opposition in the following decades, notably the *Brigantes* and Welsh tribes, the region would be pacified. No other significant uprisings from Roman Britain have been mentioned (see chapter 2). Britannia was a relatively peaceful province, making it reasonable to believe that the army primarily used force against external foes in the northern frontier.³⁴⁸ It should be considered whether hostilities would linger after the first century and beyond, when Roman domination was the norm for decades. From the Boudiccan Revolt onwards a change can be noticed in Roman policy in Britain. The uprising was a sign that the abuse of the population would not be suffered endlessly and that better relations between Roman government and local populations were key to maintaining order.³⁴⁹ In this vein Cousins presents the sanctuary at Bath as the successful version of the temple of Claudius at Colchester, both symbolic of Roman dialogue with conceptions of empire and conquest.³⁵⁰ Bath was however the more successful variant in this conversation in Roman imperialism, a lesson painfully learned with Boudicca leaving the stage.

The notion that the bulk of the army was not interested in participating in society outside of their direct sphere has been core to Mattingly's vision on the military communities of Britain. In extension Gardner sees relations between soldier and the rest of society as feeble, with the former group being able to bully as their position would allow for it. Whilst Gardner's conception would be more true to the first decades of Roman presence, the longer term would see such behaviour less likely, potentially even counteracted by Roman authorities. Literary sources do refer to the army as being an unruly and dangerous group on occasion, behaving as brutes or brigands. Such references are however mostly found regarding times of turmoil such as civil war or rebellions, nor must it be forgotten that this reflects the vision of a selected group of civilian elites.³⁵¹ The idea that the army was terrorizing local populations as a rule would be an inefficient way to maintain long-term stability in the region. It would not be in best interest to rile up the local population with sustained abuse, nor were such actions condoned as a general rule. In the previous chapter a merchant beaten for unjust reason would seek contact with higher authorities to see them punished, indicating that soldiers were not to abuse civilians without good reason. Alston's study revealed that individuals in the army did

³⁴⁸ There was a smaller revolt by the Iceni in the year 47 as tribes were disarmed. Potter, *Roman Britain*, 9; Sparey-Green, 'Inungi delectus', 124.

³⁴⁹ Salway, *A History of Roman Britain*, 81; Fulford, 'A second start';

³⁵⁰ Cousins, *The sanctuary at Bath*, 92. See also Isserlin, 'A spirit of improvement', 127-128 and De la Bédoyère, *The Real Lives of Roman Britain*, 28-29. The temple of Claudius at Colchester and forced participation of local nobles in its priesthood was blatantly humiliating to the native elites.

³⁵¹ MacMullen, 'The Legion as a Society', 440-456; Alston, 'The ties that bind', 190-191; Phang, *Roman Military Service*, 18, 75.

maintain relations to facilitate a better transition into the civilian life, and that the army was not as deterrent to civilians as initially thought.³⁵² In the first chapter Mann's observation that auxiliary veterans tended to keep their status hidden after service can also be considered part of a desire to seek more peaceful relations with neighbours after military career, yet it might also hint to the stigma attached to soldiers as antagonists. For this reason the curse tablets from Bath will be examined, as the gods would surely see evildoers punished for their hubris.

The function of the cult of the goddess Sulis of the thermal springs and her syncretization with Minerva have been abundantly discussed elsewhere, and it can be confidently said that the cult saw the most official involvement out of any cult in Britannia.³⁵³ It was an excellent place to deposit curse tablets, because *defixiones* were believed to be more likely to take effect in designated places to divinities (sanctuaries) and places where bodies of water were stored.³⁵⁴ They are defined as 'inscribed pieces of lead, usually in the form of thin sheets, intended to bring supernatural power to bear against persons and animals', in accordance with the work of Gager.³⁵⁵ Through the use of persuasive analogy, in combination with ritual, it would stimulate further action from the invoked deity; lack of success was usually attributed to performing the ritual incorrectly.³⁵⁶ Despite the paucity of epigraphic material in general, Britannia is quite rich in curse tablets, from which the great majority comes from the sanctuaries of Bath and Uley (sanctuary of Mercury).³⁵⁷ The material from Britain is especially known for the abundance of judicial prayers to which nearly all objects belong to. Introduced by Versnel, judicial prayers are 'pleas for justice and revenge', in Britain overwhelmingly related to the theft of goods.³⁵⁸

³⁵² Alston, 'The ties that bind', 175-196.

³⁵³ Henig, *Religion in Roman Britain*, 47. Henig presents Sulis to be 'the most extreme case of Romanisation' (page 43). Irby-Massie, *Military Religion*, 166-171; J. Gerrard, 'The Temple of Sulis Minerva at Bath and the End of Roman Britain', *Antiquaries journal* Vol.87 (2007) 148-164, there 148: 'The temple can be seen as the epitome of the process of so-called Romanization in a remote and peripheral frontier province'. Cousins, *The sanctuary at Bath*, 70-75.

³⁵⁴ J.G. Gager, *Curse tablets and binding spells from the ancient world* (New York 1992) 18-21.

³⁵⁵ Idem, 3. For an elaborate introduction, see 3-41. Lead was the most popular material, but alternatives did exist.

³⁵⁶ F.M. Simón, '*Domino Neptuno corulo pare(n)tatur*: Magic and Law in the Romano-Celtic world', in A. Mastrocinque, J.E. Sanzo and M. Scapini (eds.), *Ancient Magic: then and now* (Stuttgart 2020) 123-138, there 128.

³⁵⁷ H. Versnel, 'Beyond Cursing: The Appeal to Justice in Judicial Prayers', in C.A. Faraone and D. Obbink (eds.), *Magika hiera: ancient Greek magic and religion* (New York 1991) 60-106, there 177; D. Urbanová, *Latin curse tablets of the Roman Empire* (Innsbruck 2018) 365-367. In total about 250 curse tablets were found in Britain, of which 160 have been published.

³⁵⁸ Versnel, 'Beyond Cursing', 60-106; Urbanová, *Latin curse tablets*, 183, 367, 374. Judicial prayers were divided by Urbanová in three categories depending on desired outcome: the return of stolen goods, their return and revenge on the culprit, and those purely revolving around revenge.

Given the absence of auxiliary forts and the legionary fortress nearby, in addition to the epigraphic material as presented by Cousins, it can be deduced that legionaries would make up for the main group of soldiers visiting this place.³⁵⁹ Mattingly, Gardner and Cousins alike have assigned considerable distance to the soldiers and civilians based on how they presented themselves. The curse tablets do however not explicitly refer to them as being vastly different. About 130 *defixiones* have been retrieved from the sanctuary at Bath, with 70 at least partially readable.³⁶⁰ Investigating these places them on par with those from other provinces: the suspected culprit is defined according to social status, provided that the name was unknown to the curser.³⁶¹ Somewhat paraphrased, it usually comes down to ‘whether slave or freedman, man or woman’.³⁶² Not one of them remarks on the distinction between soldier or civilian, yet there is one instance known which does. A curse tablet from Weeting with Broomhill (eastern Britain) confirms that such examples did exist. It reads as follows:

s(i) servus si [l]ib[e](r) [qu]i [f]uravit su[st]ulit [ne ei] dimitte [male]fic(i)um d(u)m tu vindi[c]a[s] ante dies nov[e](m) si pa[g]a[n]us si mil[e]s [qui] su[s]tu[l]it

‘Whoever has stolen or taken it, whether he is slave or free, do not forgive him his evil-doing until you punish him within nine days, whether he is a civilian or a soldier, whoever has taken it.’³⁶³

It is remarkable that such a tablet was not found in a region where the military was very present, instead in a very demilitarized zone where the most nearby military encampment was located at the shore some considerable distance away. The lack of such examples in Bath can potentially be related to the notion that contact between soldiers and civilians closer to military zones was a common occurrence. The notion that the relation between soldiers and civilians was on a very unequal basis is scarcely supported by the sources. It is difficult to

³⁵⁹ Cousins, *The sanctuary at Bath*, 92-93.

³⁶⁰ Urbanová, *Latin curse tablets*, 367. See R. Tomlin, ‘The Curse Tablets (suggested abbreviation: Tab.Sulis). Chapter 4’, in B. Cunliffe (ed.), *The Temple of Sulis Minerva at Bath. Volume 2: The finds from the Sacred Spring* (Oxford 1988) 59-270.

³⁶¹ Curse tablets involving names provide interesting perspectives in provincial societies, showing blends of Latinized names with some maintaining native appellations. See Text no. 188, dfx.3.2./22: *Severianus fil(ius) Brigomall(a)e, Patarnianus filius, Maternus uxor, Catonius Potentini, Marinianus Belcasti, Lucillus Lucciani, Aternus Ingenui, Bellaus Bellini*.

³⁶² Cf. Urbanová, *Latin curse tablets*, 365-397.

³⁶³ First published in *Britannia* Vol.25 (1994) page 296. See also Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*, 196.

find actual contact, but perhaps the absence of such material hints that such a thing was so common it was rarely worth mentioning. The explicit distinction between soldier and civilian is perhaps the exception, not the rule.

Chapter conclusion

The religiosity of a soldier in a polytheistic world stretched much further than the province in which he was located or the military detachment he was part of. Beliefs in the supernatural incorporated different supernatural powers from the corners of the Roman Empire. These would not be reserved to serving troops, as the military communities participated as well to some degree. The majority of the religious practices in the army were not reserved for military purposes only, but pragmatic reasons would see very few others join in the veneration of 'military' gods. Jupiter Dolichenus was quite limited to the military zones as his domain was especially relatable to this group, whereas Mithras, although more open to public, would remain close to the soldiers. Curse tablets from Bath did not reveal any direct contact between civilian and soldier. The lack of specific mentions about them reveals that they either knew how to behave properly or, more importantly, were not considered too differently from civilians. Even though this chapter was unable to pinpoint the spread of religious practices from the army to the natives, it does however provide ground to reconsider the presumed distance between soldier and civilian. Points of contact might not be retrieved, but epigraphic material and the finding spots leave room to conclude that wherever soldiers practiced their religion, clusters of civilians would subsequently follow.

Conclusion

This study followed the warning put forward by Haynes, Alston and Revell not to consider the soldiers and military communities as an isolated group in society, a reaction to frontier studies concerning provincial societies. It became common in academic works to assign a limited role to the army regarding the diffusion of Roman cultural practices. This study started with the question as to what role the Roman army fulfilled in the Romanization of Britain from the Claudian invasion up to the early years of Caracalla's reign. Here it has been argued that such a strong perspective portraying the army as isolated is not supported by the available epigraphic evidence. Three themes have been addressed for assessment of the cultural impact of the Roman soldiers in Britain: the ethnic character of the troops, the military communities, and religious practices.

To consider the impact of the army on cultural exchange requires an understanding of what is meant with the Roman military, something to which funerary inscriptions can aid a great deal. Analyzing these sources revealed that the troops share the nominator Roman as they hailed from territories part of the Roman Empire, yet Roman is once again an umbrella term. In the case of Roman Britain, the majority of the stationed soldiers during the first, second and early third centuries found their roots in regions where Celtic cultural influences would have been common. The composition of the Roman garrisons in Britain was mostly comprised of Romanized Celts, and the function of cultural affinities between 'Romans' and natives could have considerably affected communication between the garrisoned forces and the other inhabitants of Britain. Whilst the army was quite uniform regarding the Roman practices enforced upon its recruits, it is inevitable that smaller detachments and individuals would create their own version of how Roman cultural practices were implemented in their own lives. The diffusion of Roman culture in Roman Britain was far from being uniform as this culture would have been adopted and appropriated differently. In addition, the funerary evidence reveals that 'being Roman' was understood differently among the soldiery. Self-presentation was a key feature in many epitaphs. Individuals aligned themselves with their function as Roman soldier in different fashion, especially so among the auxilia, on occasion maintaining their ethnic origins in subtle ways by the use or lack of multiple names. The soldier was an individual of several affiliations, yet all shared a Romanized identity.

Garrisons were accompanied by *canabae* and *vici* inhabited by people interested in dealing with the soldiers, notably tradesmen, family and veterans. These would form the core of the military communities accompanying the army. On a macro-level Mattingly's point holds most merit: those who dealt with the army and its form of Roman culture would live close-by. With the army being stationary, concentrated in the north and west, their impact was restricted to the direct vicinity in those regions. However, narrowing the scope to the locality reveals a stronger connection between forts and the surrounding areas. Individual entrepreneurs like Barathes reveal more complex networks between the forts and the locality. Soldiers themselves might not venture far and often from the forts during service, but the other members of military communities settled across the island. They can thus also be found in civilian Britain. These are small clusters which function as extensions of the military communities, their existence usually related to the presence of veterans in the region. Estimating the influence and impact of the military communities regarding cultural exchange draws the main focus to the frontier regions, but it is not limited to these areas. Contact between those affiliated with military identity and provincial society did not only occur at fortresses and forts, and discarding civilian Britain from this image is to underestimate the range of military communities.

Religious beliefs were as diverse as the varying forms of (sub)Roman cultural practices. A vast plethora of divinities inhabited the ancient world. Worship was often the result of what was deemed more relevant to the individual. Soldiers were faced with the gods from their homelands, complemented by those introduced to them by the army and from the province where he was stationed. Military religion was quite limited in nature and mostly reserved to the troops, yet it was not restricted to them. A few inscriptions do refer to the communities around the forts offering religious dedications in the same fashion as the soldiers. Relevancy was most likely the decisive factor whether those outside of the military participated, an assumption tested with the cults of Jupiter Dolichenus and Mithras. It can explain why Jupiter Dolichenus was virtually nowhere to be attested outside the garrisons. In the case of Mithras there was more evidence pointing to its spread in the urban setting, although here the role of civilians, (perhaps) related to the army, should be taken into account. Evidence from Bath did not yield direct evidence of contact between soldiers and civilians. There was however some from further into the civilian zone. The lack of evidence at the border might therefore suggest instead that contact between the two was more common there than expected. Neither did source material suggest that soldiers would strongly disassociate themselves from others. It

might also be concluded that, although the real contact might not be preserved, the religious practices of soldiers were subsequently followed by civilians.

The leading question as to what role the Roman army fulfilled in the Romanization of Britannia between 43 AD – 212 AD can be answered with the remark that it was considerably more than generally assumed, especially in areas considered out of reach for its influences. The soldiers of the Roman army were Roman in the sense that they were all subjected to the same structure imposed by the military. Their cultural heritage was retained throughout life and would mix with Roman influences during service from which varying Roman cultural practices emerged. Romanization was done by Romanized figures with alternating identities, resulting in a process of consistent dilution and (re)appropriation of cultural aspects. The extent to which the army affected cultural change is not solely reserved to the soldiers as these were part of the military communities in provincial society. Addressing these alongside soldiers presents Roman Britain as a more networked province in contrast to an island filled with ‘beacons of Romanization’, and its sphere of influence should correspondingly include civilian Britain. These smaller groups might appear insignificant compared to those in the north and the west, yet they indicate points of contact between different groups in provincial society which are otherwise overlooked. A strong sense of military identity might have complicated outsiders from directly integrating into the military communities, but it does not equate a restriction to interaction to their members solely. The bigger picture may not overshadow developments on lower levels. Along the same line a lack of material sources does not immediately indicate the absence of contact between soldier and civilian. The supposed barrier between the two in provincial society starts to break down upon focussing on locality rather than regionality. It reveals an army that is more accessible to outsiders than presumed, including people outside the military communities. Whereas a perspective on macro-level hints towards isolation, the micro-level reveals that points of contact can be distinguished, including locations commonly deemed outside of the reach of army and military communities. Studies on provincial societies should take this into account before setting the army to the side. Taking this into account new academic studies on provincial societies might attribute a more fitting role to the cultural impact of the army and military communities than what is currently assigned to them.

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JRA: The Journal of Roman Archaeology

JRS: The Journal of Roman Studies

Digital databases

<http://www.manfredclaus.de/>

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Figures taken from the internet

Figure 1: Military stations, civil sites and roads of Roman Britain. Image taken 04/01/2022

from <https://www.britannica.com/place/Roman-Britain>.

Figure 2: Roman forts of Hadrian's Wall and northern Britain. Image taken 19/11/2021 from

<https://www.u3ahadrianswall.co.uk/wordpress/map-of-the-northern-roman-frontier/>

Figure 3: Tombstone of Marcus Favonius Facilis. Image taken 30/12/2021 from

<https://romaninscriptionsofbritain.org/inscriptions/200>.

Appendix 3.1: Tombstone belonging to Longinus Sdapeze. Image taken 19/10/2021 from

<http://roman.archeurope.info/index.php?page=gravestone-of-longinus-sdapeze>

Appendix 3.2: Tombstone belonging to Dannicus. Image taken 19/10/2021 from

<https://coriniummuseum.org/object/b977-2/>

Appendices

Appendix 1: Epigraphic conventions

The punctuation marks used in the transcripts of inscriptions convey the following information about the remains of the physical object.³⁶⁴

- (abc) letter(s) omitted in the original by abbreviation
- [abc] letter(s) missing through weathering or damage but restorable with certainty
- [[abc]] letters deleted on the stone, but restorable with certainty
- [...] letter(s) missing in the original through weathering or damage
- ... trace of letters, not deciphered
- . . . inscription or document broken here
- | division between lines in military diplomas; in metrical texts, between verses
- ABC word or passage which cannot be interpreted
- (!) divergent spelling or mis-spelling
- ? reading or restoration not certain
- {a} letter erroneously included
- <a> letter omitted by mistake

³⁶⁴ Copied from Tomlin, *Britannia Romana*, xvi.

Appendix 2: Funerary inscriptions

The following data has been set up from a database containing 148 inscriptions. This database has been created by drawing upon the published inscriptions from *Roman Inscriptions of Britain*, Volumes I and III, complemented by several other inscriptions found in Tomlin's *Britannia Romana*.

2.1: Sorted by *origo* of soldiers

Total of 59 military funerary inscriptions explicitly stating *origo* drawn from the complete database of 148.

| <u>Region</u> | <u>Legionaries</u> | <u>Auxilia</u> | <u>Veterans/emeriti</u> |
|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| <u>Africa - 3</u> | | | |
| Africa Nova | 1 legionary | | |
| Moorish (Mauretania) | | 1 auxilia | |
| Numidia | 1 legionary | | |
| <u>Asia Minor - 1</u> | | | |
| Nicaea, Bithynia | 1 legionary | | |
| <u>Britain - 2</u> | | | |
| Britannia | 1 legionary | 1 auxilia | |
| <u>Gaul - 12</u> | | | |
| Gallia Belgica | | 1 auxilia | |
| Gallia Lugdunensis | 4 legionaries | | 1 veteran |
| Gallia Narbonensis | 4 legionaries | | 2 veterans |
| <u>Germania - 7</u> | | | |
| Germania Inferior | 3 legionaries | | 1 <i>emiritus</i> |
| Germania Superior | | 1 auxilia | |
| German Rhineland | | 2 auxilia | |

Greek Lands - 8

Greek: Epirus Vetus 1 *emeritus**

Macedonia 1 legionary

Thrace 4 legionaries 2 auxilia

Hispania - 5

Lusitania 3 legionaries 1 auxilia

Tarraconensis 1 legionary

Italy - 9

Italy 8 legionaries 1 veteran

Noricum and Raetia - 6

Norica 4 legionaries 1 auxilia

Raetia 1 legionary

Pannonia - 4

Pannonia Inferior 2 legionaries

Pannonia Superior 2 legionaries

Other – 2

Danubian province 1 legionary

Greekspeaking origins 1 auxilia

Total: 42 legionaries 11 auxilia 4 vet./ 2 em. 59

*legionary *emeritus*

2.2: Finding spots sorted by auxilia, legionary, veteran

Total amount of 148 funerary inscriptions, A distinction has been made between cavalry and infantry among the *auxilia* and between the different legions, but not between soldier and officer.

| <u>Location</u> | <u>Unknown</u> | <u>Auxilia</u> | <u>Legionary</u> | <u>Veteran</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Alchester | | | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Ambleside | | | | 1(e) | 1(e) |
| Ardoch | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Auchendavy | | | 2 | | 2 |
| Bar Hill | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Bath | | 1 | 2 | 1(e)* | 4(1e)* |
| Benwell | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Birdoswald | | 1 | 1 | | 2 |
| Birrens | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Caerleon | | | 6 | 2 | 8 |
| Carberry | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Carlisle | 1 | | 2 | | 3 |
| Carrowburgh | | 3 | | | 3 |
| Carvoran | | | 1 | | 1 |
| Chester | | | 33 | 6 | 39 |
| Chesters | 1** | 2 | | | 3 |
| Cirencester | | 2 | | | 2 |
| Colchester | | 2 | 2 | | 4 |
| Corbridge | | 1 | 2 | 1(e) | 4(1e) |
| Ebchester | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Gloucester | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| Great Bulmore | | | | 3 | 3 |
| Greta Bridge | | | | 1(e) | 1(e) |
| Halton Chesters | | 1 | | | 1 |
| High Rochester | | 2 | 1 | | 3 |

| | | | | | |
|----------------------|---|----|----|--------|-------|
| Housesteads | | 2 | | | 2 |
| ... - Great Chesters | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Ilkley | | | 1 | | 1 |
| Kirkby Thore | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Lancaster | | 2 | | | 2 |
| Lincoln | | | 8 | 3 | 11 |
| London | | | 6 | | 6 |
| Moresby | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Mumrills | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Old Carlisle | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Old Penrith | | | | 1(e) | 1(e) |
| Piercebridge | | | 2 | | 2 |
| Ribchester | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Risingham | | 1 | | | 1 |
| South Shields | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Templeborough | | 1 | | 1(e) | 2(1e) |
| Usk | | | 1 | | 1 |
| Vindolanda | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Watercrook | | | 2 | | 2 |
| Wroxeter | | 1 | 4 | | 5 |
| Y Gaer, Fenni-Fach | | 2 | | | 2 |
| York | | | 6 | 1 | 7 |
| Total | 3 | 37 | 84 | 24(6e) | 148 |

(e): *emeritus*

*legionary *emeritus*

*Inscription might be dated after time period of this study (early third century).

Unknown –3

| | |
|-----------|----|
| Carlisle | 1 |
| Chesters | 1* |
| Ebchester | 1 |

*Inscription might be dated after time period of this study (early third century).

Veterans - 18

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Alchester | 1 |
| Caerleon | 2 |
| Chester | 6 |
| Gloucester | 1 |
| Great Bulmore (close to Caerleon) | 3 |
| Kirkby Thore | 1 |
| Lincoln | 3 |
| York | 1 |

Emeritus - 6

| | |
|---------------|----|
| Ambleside | 1 |
| Bath | 1* |
| Corbridge | 1 |
| Greta Bridge | 1 |
| Old Penrith | 1 |
| Templeborough | 1 |

*legionary emeritus

Auxilia – Equites Singulares -1

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Carberry (Inveresk) | 1 |
|---------------------|---|

Auxilia – Alae – 15

| | |
|------|---|
| Bath | 1 |
|------|---|

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Cirencester | 2 |
| Colchester | 1 |
| Corbridge | 1 |
| Chesters | 2 |
| Halton Chesters | 1 |
| Lancaster | 2 |
| Old Carlisle | 1 |
| Ribchester | 1 |
| South Shields | 1 |
| Y Gaer, Fenni-Fach | 2 |

Auxilia – Cohorts – 21

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Ardoch | 1 |
| Bar Hill | 1 |
| Benwell | 1 |
| Birdoswald | 1 |
| Birrens | 1 |
| Carrawburgh | 3 |
| Colchester | 1 |
| Gloucester | 1 |
| High Rochester | 2 |
| Housesteads | 2 |
| Housesteads - Great Chesters sector | 1 |
| Moresby | 1 |
| Mumrills | 1 |
| Risingham | 1 |
| Templeborough | 1 |
| Vindolanda | 1 |
| Wroxeter | 1 |

Legio II Adiutrix -14

| | |
|---------|----|
| Bath | 1 |
| Chester | 11 |
| Lincoln | 2 |

Legio II Augusta – 16

| | |
|------------|---|
| Alchester | 1 |
| Auchendavy | 2 |
| Caerleon | 6 |
| Carlisle | 2 |
| Corbridge | 1 |
| Ilkley | 1 |
| London | 2 |
| Usk | 1 |

Legio VI Victrix - 9

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Birdoswald | 1 |
| Corbridge | 1 |
| High Rochester | 1 |
| London | 1 |
| Watercrook | 1 |
| York | 4 |

Legio IX Hispana – 7

| | |
|---------|---|
| Lincoln | 5 |
| York | 2 |

Legio XIII Gemina – 3

| | |
|----------|---|
| Wroxeter | 3 |
|----------|---|

Legio XX – Valeria Victrix – 31

| | |
|------------|----|
| Bath | 1 |
| Carvoran | 1 |
| Chester | 22 |
| Colchester | 2 |
| Gloucester | 1 |
| London | 2 |
| Watercreek | 1 |
| Wroxeter | 1 |

Legio XXII – 1

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Piercebridge | 1 |
|--------------|---|

Legionaries from unknown legion -3

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Lincoln | 1 |
| London | 1 |
| Piercebridge | 1 |

2.3: Finding spots sorted by zones

Antonine Wall and Scotland - 6 inscriptions total

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Ardoch | 1 |
| Auchendavy | 2 |
| Bar Hill | 1 |
| Carberry (Inveresk) | 1 |
| Mumrills | 1 |

Civilian Britain - 32 inscriptions total

| | |
|-------------|----|
| Alchester | 2 |
| Bath | 4 |
| Cirencester | 2 |
| Colchester | 4 |
| Gloucester | 3 |
| Lincoln | 11 |
| London | 6 |

Hadrian's Wall and northern forts -21 inscriptions total

| | |
|----------------------|-------|
| Benwell | 1 |
| Birdoswald | 2 |
| Birrens | 1 |
| Carrawburgh | 3 |
| Carvoran | 1 |
| Chesters | 3(1*) |
| Halton Chesters | 1 |
| High Rochester | 3 |
| Housesteads | 2 |
| ... - Great Chesters | 1 |
| Risingham | 1 |

South Shields 1

Vindolanda 1

*Inscription might be dated after time period of this study (early third century).

Hadrian's Wall, southern sector – 31 inscriptions total

Ambleside 1

Carlisle 3

Corbridge 4

Ebchester 1

Greta Bridge 1

Ilkley 1

Kirkby Thore 1

Lancaster 2

Moresby 1

Old Carlisle 1

Old Penrith 1

Piercebridge 2

Ribchester 1

Templeborough 2

Watercrook 2

York 7

Wales – 58 inscriptions total

Caerleon 8

Chester 39

Great Bulmore 3

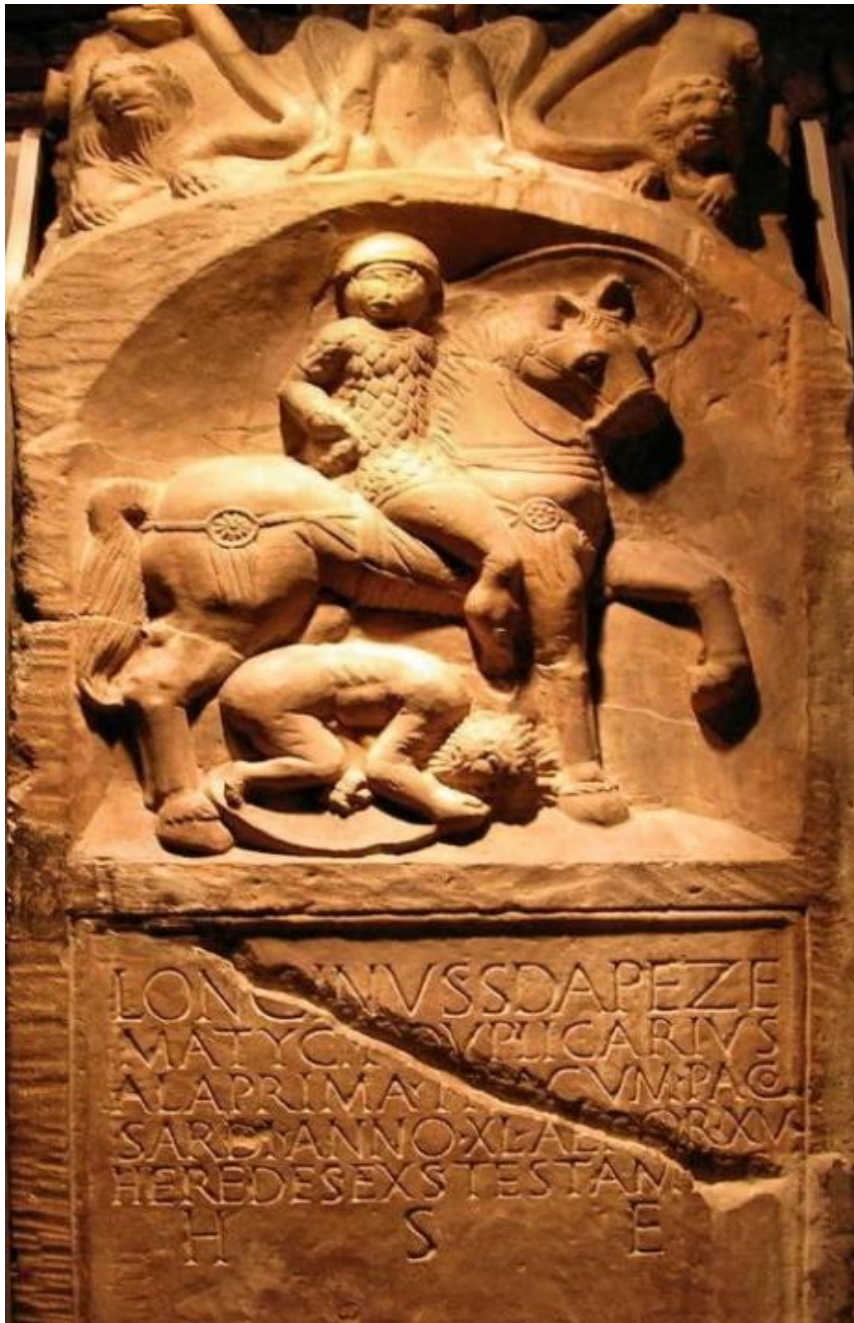
Usk 1

Wroxeter 5

Y Gaer, Fenni-Fach 2
(Brecon Gaer)

Appendix 3: Tombstones of auxiliary cavalrymen

3.1: Tombstone belonging to Longinus Sdapeze³⁶⁵



Longinus Sdapeze Matyci f(ilius) duplicarius ala prima Tracum pago Sardi(ca), anno(rum) XL, aeror(um) XV, heredes ex{s} testam(ento) [f(aciendum)] c(uraverunt), h(ic) s(itus) e(st)

³⁶⁵ Found in Colchester. RIB 201 (= AE 2002, 88, dated 43-49). Image taken 19/10/2021 from <http://roman.archeurope.info/index.php?page=gravestone-of-longinus-sdapeze>

3.2: Tombstone belonging to Dannicus³⁶⁶



Dannicus eqes alae Indian(ae), tur(ma) Albani, stip(endiorum) XVI, cives(!) Raur(icus) cur(averunt) Fulvius Natalis it(!) Fl[av]ius Bitucus ex testame(nto) h(ic) s(itus) e(st).

³⁶⁶ Found in Cirencester. RIB 108 (= CIL 07, 66; dated 43-75). Image taken 19/10/2021 from <https://coriniummuseum.org/object/b977-2/>

Appendix 4: Malpas diploma

RIB 2401 (=CIL 16, 00048, dated 103).

Conflation of inner and outer faces:

[Imp. Caesar, d]ivi Nervae f., Nerva Traian[us Aug]us[tu]s Germanicus Dacicus, pontifex maximus, tribunic(ia) potestat(e) VII, imp(erator) IIII, co(n)s(ul) V, p(ater) p(atriciae) [e]quitibus et peditibus, qui militant in alis quattuor et cohortibus decem et una, quae appellantur (1) I Thracum et (2) I Pannoniorum Tampiana et (3) Gallorum Sebosiana et (4) Hispanorum Vettonum c(ivium) R(omanorum); et (1) Hispanorum et (2) I Vangionum milliaria et (3) I Alpinorum et (4) I Morinorum et (5) I Cugernorum et (6) I Baetasiurum et (7) I Tungrorum milliaria et (8) II Thracum et (9) III Bracaraugustanorum et (10) III Lingonum et (11) IIII Delmatarum, et sunt in Britannia sub L. Neratio Marcello, qui quina et vicena plurave stipendia meruerunt, quorum nomina subscripta sunt, ipsis liberis posterisque eorum civitatem dedit et connubium cum uxoribus, quas tunc habuissent cum est civitas iis data, aut, siqui caelibes essent, cum iis quas postea duxissent dumtaxat singuli singulas.

A.d. XIII k. Febr. M'. Laberio Maximo II, Q. Glitio Atilio Agricola II co(n)s(ulibus). alae Pannoniorum Tampiana, cui praest C. Valerius Celsus, decurioni Reburro Severi f., Hispan(o).

Descriptum et recognitum ex tabula aenea, quae fixa est Romae in muro post templum [divi A]ug(usti) ad Minervam.

Q. Pompei Homeri; C. Papi Eusebetis; T. Flavi Secundi; P. Cauli Vitalis; C. Vettienu Modesti; P. Atini Hedonici; Ti. Claudi Menandri.

The Emperor Caesar Nerva Traianus Augustus, conqueror of Germany, conqueror of Dacia, son of the deified Nerva, pontifex maximus, in his seventh year of tribunician power, four times acclaimed Imperator, five times consul, father of his country, has granted to the cavalrymen and infantrymen who are serving in four alae and eleven cohorts called: (1) I Thracum and (2) I Pannoniorum Tampiana and (3) Gallorum Sebosiana and (4) Hispanorum Vettonum, Roman citizens; and (1) I Hispanorum and (2) I Vangionum, a thousand strong, and (3) I Alpinorum and (4) I Morinorum and (5) I Cugernorum and (6) I Baetasiurum and (7) I Tungrorum, a thousand strong, and (8) II Thracum and (9) III Bracaraugustanorum and (10) III Lingonum and (11) IIII Delmatarum, and are stationed in Britain under Lucius Neratius Marcellus, who have served twenty-five or more years, whose names are written below, citizenship for themselves, their children and descendants, and the right of legal marriage with the wives they had when citizenship was granted to them, or, if any were unmarried, with those they later marry, but only a single one each.

19 January, in the consulships of Manius Laberius Maximus and Quintus Glitius Atilius Agricola, both for the second time

To Reburrus, son of Severus, from Spain, decurion of ala I Pannoniorum Tampiana, commanded by Gaius Valerius Celsus.

Copied and checked from the bronze tablet set up at Rome on the wall behind the temple of the deified Augustus, near (the statue of) Minerva.

[Witnessed by]: Quintus Pompeius Homerus; Gaius Papius Eusebes; Titus Flavius Secundus;
Publius Cauius Vitalis; Gaius Vettienus Modestus; Publius Atinius Hedonicus; Tiberius
Claudius Menander.