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In 1970, in a classic article, Professor M.P.Speidel of the University of Hawaii published the text, with commentary, of the inscription on a tombstone found five years before near the site of the ancient Philippi in Macedonia:¹

Ti. Claudius
Maximus vet.
[s.]v.f.c. militavit
eque in leg. VII C.P.F. fac-
5 tus questor equit.
singularis legati le-
gionis eiusdem vexil-
larius equitum item
bello Dacico ob virtu-
10 te donis donatus ab Im-
p. Domitiano factus dupl.
a divo Troiano in ala Secud.
Pannoniorum a quo et fa-
tus explorator in bello Da-
15 cico et ob virtute bis donis
donatus bello Dacico et
Parthico et ab eode factus
decurio in ala eade quod
cepisset Decebalu et caput
20 eius pertulisset ei Ranissto-
ro missus voluntarius ho-
nesta missione a Terent[io Scau-]
riano consulare [exerci-]
tus provinciae nov[ae Dac-
iae.....]

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¹ M.P.Speidel, 'The Captor of Decebalus: A New Inscription from Philippi', JRS 60,1970,142-53 (= Sepidel 1970); cf. id., Roman Army Studies. Volume One, Amsterdam 1984,408-9.

As interpreted by Speidel, the inscription, which provides "the most detailed career of a Roman soldier so far known",² has thrown light on a variety of aspects of the Roman army and of Roman history in general. One small part of the inscription, in particular, has allowed Speidel (and others) to draw some conclusions beyond those of the original article.³ These derive from the revelation in lines 6-7 that Maximus had served as a *singularis legati legionis*, the life-guard of a legionary legate, the first such officer known. It had always been assumed since the time of von Domaszewski that a legionary legate had the *equites legionis* as his guard instead of *singulares*;⁴ Speidel, whilst accepting that the former did act as guards, postulates that the latter were guards of a higher rank.⁵

But before the discovery of this inscription it was generally accepted that, in the provinces, *singulares* were allowed only to governors of various ranks. They are recorded for praesidial procurators, the Prefect of Egypt, praetorian and consular *legati*, and proconsuls.⁶ The unit of *equites singulares Augusti*, recruited from the auxiliaries of the provinces as a cavalry guard for the emperors in the second and third centuries, was probably modelled on the cavalry element of the provincial units.⁷ The only other officers recorded as having *singulares* were the tribunes of the *cohortes urbanae* and *cohortes praetoriae*, and the Praefectus Urbi (?) and Praefecti Praetorio themselves.⁸ That tribunes in the capital had *singulares* is, pace Speidel, no argument that legionary tribunes or commanders of auxiliary units also had them, given the special status and duties of the urban units and the very large number of provincial units epigraphically recorded without a single instance of such a *singularis*. Indeed, Speidel quite rightly attributes a number of *singulares* whose attachment to a senior officer is not specified, but only their unit of origin, to the governors of their respective provinces, on the grounds that they are recorded either on tombstones not certainly sited at the bases of their respective units, or on the Dura rosters in a context which makes their attachment to the governor the most likely interpretation, or at provincial capitals.⁹

The discovery of a *singularis legati legionis*, then, came as a surprise. Before Maximus, only two legionary *singulares* had been known, both from Rome: a *singularis* of legion X

² Speidel 1970,142.

³ M.P.Speidel, 'The *Singulares* of Africa and the Establishment of Numidia as a Province', *Historia* 22,1973,125-7 (= Speidel 1973); id., *Guards of the Roman Armies: an Essay on the *Singulares* of the Provinces*, Bonn 1978 (= Speidel 1978), 20-2.

⁴ A. von Domaszewski, *Westdeutsche Zeitschrift* 14,1895,89.

⁵ Speidel 1970,144 with note 25, citing Josephus BJ III 6.2 (120), Arrian *Ektaxis* 5.

⁶ Speidel 1978,18 with notes 87-90.

⁷ M.P.Speidel, *Die Equites Singulares Augusti, Begleittruppe der römischen Kaiser des zweiten und dritten Jahrhunderts*, Bonn 1965, esp. 92-3.

⁸ Speidel 1978,18 with notes 82-5; the case for the Praefectus Urbi is, as Speidel notes, unclear since it relies only on an a fortiori argument from the tribunes of the *cohortes urbanae*, and on the *singulares* recorded in *Not.Dig.Occ.* 4,33, which cannot be regarded as good evidence for the principate.

⁹ Speidel 1978,19 with note 92; 80-1 (nos. 14, 15); 87 (no. 28); 96-8 (nos. 48, 50, 51); 104-15 (nos. 63-5); 125 (no. 83).

Fretensis based at Jerusalem and another of II Augusta based at Caerleon in Britain, neither of whom specified the officer to whom they were attached.¹⁰ Speidel has now claimed them both as *singulares legati legionis*,¹¹ but, despite Maximus, this cannot stand. The singularis of II Augusta is known from a tombstone which he erected for a *frumentarius* of the same legion. *Frumentarii* were legionaries attached to the headquarters staffs (*officia*) of provincial governors¹² and were employed as couriers between the provincial capitals and Rome.¹³ Whilst in Rome they were housed at the *Castra Peregrina* on the *Mons Caelius* and became members of the *numerus frumentariorum*, a unit with its own administrative structure and officers and headed by a legionary centurion with the title of *princeps peregrinorum*.¹⁴ *Speculatores* of the provincial *officia* were employed in much the same way and were also attached to the *Castra Peregrina* whilst in Rome.¹⁵ All the other *frumentarii* who died in Rome were commemorated by *frumentarii* of legions of the same province; similarly, a *speculator* of the British army was commemorated by a *frumentarius* from a British legion.¹⁶ This pattern and the fact that a singularis is attested as carrying a letter for the Prefect of Egypt¹⁷ strongly suggest that the singularis of II Augusta, and presumably the man from X Fretensis also, were themselves attached to the *Castra Peregrina* after having brought despatches from their respective provincial governors. To assume that they were not *singulares consularis* but *legati legionis* would imply that legionary legates could communicate with the Emperor directly, over the heads of their provincial governors, which would go against all we know of the structure of the Roman high command.¹⁸

There is no difficulty inherent in ascribing these legionaries to their governors' bodyguards. As already mentioned, several auxiliary *singulares*, who for other reasons can be assumed to have served their governor, fail to make this explicit, nor need we suppose that a governor had to recruit his *numerus singularium* exclusively from the auxiliary forces of his province since we know, on the other hand, that those governors who normally

¹⁰ CIL VI 3339 (II Augusta); 3614 (X Fretensis); the readings of CIL III 14178 and IGLS 178 are far too unclear to allow positive identifications of their subjects as *singulares*.

¹¹ Speidel 1978,20 with note 48.

¹² Denied by J.C.Mann, 'The Organization of the *Frumentarii*', ZPE 74,1988,149-50, but cf. W.G.Sinnigen, 'The Origins of the *Frumentarii*', MAAR 27,1962,213-24; M.Clauss, *Untersuchungen zu den Principales des römischen Heeres von Augustus bis Diokletian. Cornicularii, speculatores, frumentarii*, Diss. Bochum 1973,86-8, 96-109, 119-20; N.B.Rankov, 'Frumentarii, the *Castra Peregrina* and the Provincial *Officia*', below p.176-182.

¹³ See N.B.Rankov, *op.cit.* (note 12), below p.178.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, below p.176 with notes 1-2.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.181 with note 26.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.180f. with notes 25-26.

¹⁷ P.Oxy. 1022; cf. M.Clauss, *op.cit.* (note 12), 44 with note 248.

¹⁸ *Legati legionis* could of course serve as actinggovernors (see below), but one would expect them under normal circumstances to continue to make use of the usual couriers of the governor's officium. The suggestion of A. von Domaszewski, *Die Rangordnung des römischen Heeres*, Bonn 1908; 2nd ed. B.Dobson, Köln/Graz 1967,40 that these men were *singulares tribuni legionis* is even less convincing.

recruited their headquarters staffs from legionary troops did not always exclude auxiliaries.¹⁹ It would be wrong, therefore, to assume that there were hard and fast rules about this. Why such legionary *singulares*, with the exception of Maximus, should only be attested at Rome is a puzzle on whatever hypothesis is adopted. It may be suggested, however, that if a governor had, for some reason, to send a *singularis* rather than *frumentarius* or a *speculator* to the Capital, he might well choose a legionary in preference to a possibly less cultivated or well-educated auxiliary.

The significance of the existence of *singulares legati legionis* is, however, much more than simply a detail of Roman army organization; it lies rather in the arguments derived from the assumption that in the provinces only governors had such officers. Because of this it has been argued that procuratorial governors, who are recorded as having *singulares*, were not dependent on the *legati* of neighbouring provinces.²⁰ Furthermore, three different imperial legates have been identified as provincial governors rather than legionary commanders from inscriptions recording their *singulares*. Of these three, two, L. Acilius Strabo and L. Licinius Sura, have been regarded as certain governors of Lower Germany.²¹ The case of Licinius Sura is of particular interest because he is recorded as having been instrumental in arranging for the adoption of Trajan by the emperor Nerva in AD 97, when Trajan was governor of Upper Germany; it has been assumed that Sura was able to do this by adding the backing of the Lower German legions to those of Trajan.²²

The third legate was Q. Anicius Faustus, recorded on an altar found at Lambaesis in Numidia in 1955:²³

disciplinae
militari
Augustorum
aram d.d.

¹⁹ E.g. IGRR III 130, Cappadocia: β(ενεφικιάρτιος) χώρτης πρώτης ἐξ ὀφικίου Κακκίου Ἀπολλειναρίου; cf also the auxiliaries in the predominantly legionary officium of Dalmatia: CIL III 2052; 2067; 12679; AE 1964,10.

²⁰ Ph.Horovitz, *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* 17,1938,58; H.-G.Pflaum, *Les procurateurs équestres sous le Haut-Empire romain*, Paris 1950,126.

²¹ CIL XII 7709 = ILS 3456 (Strabo); AE 1923,33 (Sura). See PIR² A 82 (Strabo); L 253 (Sura); E.Ritterling, *Fasti des römischen Deutschland unter dem Prinzipat*, Wien 1932,56-7; 59-60; W.Eck, *Senatoren von Vespasian bis Hadrian*, München 1970,118 no.31; 144 no.137; Speidel 1978,75-6 nos. 7, 8; B.Thomasson *Laterculi Praesidum I*, Göteborg 1984,55-6 nos. 72, 77; W.Eck, *Die Statthalter der germanischen Provinzen vom 1.-3. Jahrhundert*. *Epigraphische Studien* 14,1985,139-40 no.15; 155-6 no. 23. Cf. also R.Syme, *JRS* 49,1959,27 identifying Fabius Iustus as governor of Lower Moesia on the basis of the *singulares* attached to him from *Cohors I Hispanorum Veterana* which are recorded in Hunt's *Pridianum* (P.Lond. 2851) line 25; now confirmed by the discovery of a building inscription from Rasova (AE 1981,746).

²² *Epit. de Caes.* 13.6; cf. R.Syme, *Tacitus*, Oxford 1958,646 note 14; C.P.Jones, *JRS* 60,1970,98-104 esp. 99; W.Eck, *Chiron* 12,1982,326-7 note 176; R.Syme, *ZPE* 59,1985,272-8 esp. 274.

²³ AE 1957,122 = M.Leglay, 'Inscriptions de Lambèse sur les deux premiers légats de la province de Numidie', *CRAI* 1956,294-300.

Q. Anicio Fausto

cos

eq. sing. pr. Af.

Anicius Faustus is known from other inscriptions to have held the consulship in AD 198/9 and the Numidian command from 197 to 201.²⁴ He was thus legate of legion III Augusta, but unlike most legionary legates held *propraetorian* rank. The usual title of the Numidian legates was *legatus Augusti pro praetore legionis III Augustae* or *legatus Augusti pro praetore exercitus provinciae Africae* or *legatus Augusti pro praetore provinciae Africae*.²⁵ This was the result of an arrangement made by Caius Caligula in AD 37, who, fearing a potential revolt by the Proconsul of Africa, the only governor appointed by the Senate who still commanded an army, took away from him the command of the legion and gave it to an imperial legate. The latter apparently also took responsibility for the administration of the territory of Numidia, although the proconsul still received staff officers from the legion.²⁶ The first legate actually recorded with the *propraetorian* title is C. Calpetanus Rantius Quirinalis Valerius Festus in AD 69/70,²⁷ and it continues to appear into the third century.²⁸ But in AD 208, for the first time, Ti. Claudius Subatianus Proculus appears with the title *leg(atus) pr(o) pr(aetore) prov(inciae) splend(idae) Numid(iae)*,²⁹ and thereafter a number of men continue to be entitled *legatus legionis III Augustae* but now with the addition of some form of *praesidial* title.³⁰ We thus have a *terminus ante quem* of 208 for the establishment of Numidia as a separate province. The discovery of the Faustus inscription, however, led H.-G. Pflaum, in accordance with the idea that only provincial governors could have *singulares*, to postulate that he was the first full governor of the province. He therefore expanded the last line, previously read as *eq(uites) sing(ulares) pr(aetorii) A(nicii) F(austi)*, as *eq(uites) sing(ulares) prae(sidis)*, reading *PRAE* not *PRAF*.³¹ But after his publication of the Ti. Claudius Maximus inscription, Speidel was able to argue in a 1973 article that, since *legati*

²⁴ PIR² A 595; RE I, 2197 no.10, cf. Suppl. I, 84. See E. Birley, 'The Governors of Numidia AD 193-268', JRS 40, 1950, 62 no. 3; M. Leglay, *op.cit.* (note 23); H.-G. Pflaum, 'A propos de la date de création de la province de Numidie', *Libyca: Archéologie-Epigraphie* 5, 1957, 61-75; B.E. Thomasson, *Die Statthalter der römischen Provinzen Nordafrikas von Augustus bis Diocletianus II*, Lund 1960, 197-210; *id.*, 'Praesides Provinciarum Africae' *Opuscula Romana* 7, 1969, 186; *id.*, RE Suppl. XIII, 319; *id.*, *Laterculi Praesidum*, Göteborg, 1984, 402-3 no. 56.

²⁵ See H.-G. Pflaum, *op.cit.* (note 24); B.E. Thomasson, *Die Statthalter der römischen Provinzen Nordafrikas von Augustus bis Diocletianus I*, Lund 1960, 82-8; *id.*, 'Zur Verwaltungsgeschichte der römischen Provinzen Nordafrikas (Proconsularis, Numidia, Mauretaniae)', ANRW 10.2, 1982, 15-17; 22-6; cf. B.E. Thomasson, *op.cit.*, 1960 (note 24), 147-237; *id.*, *op.cit.*, 1969 (note 24), 179-90; *id.*, *op.cit.*, 1973 (note 24), 315-22; *id.*, *op.cit.*, 1984 (note 24), 393-408.

²⁶ Tac. Hist. 4, 48; Dio 59, 20.7; cf. CIL VIII 2532; 2586; AE 1917-18, 57. See note 25.

²⁷ CIL V 531 = ILS 989: *leg(atus) pr(o) praet(ore) ex[er]cit(us) Afri]cae*; cf. B.E. Thomasson, *Laterculi Praesidum*, Göteborg 1984, 393 no. 4.

²⁸ See note 25.

²⁹ ILS 9488; cf. B.E. Thomasson, *Laterculi Praesidum*, Göteborg 1984, 403 no. 58.

³⁰ See B.E. Thomasson, *Laterculi Praesidum*, Göteborg 1984, 403-5 nos. 61, 64, 66, 67, 77, 86.

³¹ H.-G. Pflaum, *op.cit.* (note 24).

legionis were now known to have singulares, this conclusion was no longer valid, and suggested that the correct reading of the last line should be eq(uites) sing(ulares) pr(ovinciae) Af(ricae) and that these men were his guard as legionary legate. He therefore concluded that Numidia was not established as a separate province until after AD 198/9, the date of the inscription.³²

The ramifications of this aspect of the Maximus inscription have thus been considerable. But singulares are not the only officers who have been regarded as unique to provincial governors. The officia of the latter included two groups of officers who are not known to have been attached to any other type of official outside Rome, the commentarienses, who were apparently involved in recording the administration of justice, and the speculatores, who acted as couriers and executioners.³³ Commentarienses are otherwise attested only for the Praefectus Vigilum and Praefectus Urbi, both of whom had judicial functions, and speculatores only for the emperor himself, acting as a sort of life-guard within the Praetorian Cohorts.³⁴ Although speculatores never have a governor's title as part of their own and often record their membership of a legion, there is no doubt that they always served the governor. They erected inscriptions along with other officiales of the governor, and are never recorded at any legionary base which was not also the site of the provincial capital.³⁵ The only apparent exceptions are recorded at Lambaesis. In excavations undertaken there in 1964 and 1965 the following inscriptions were uncovered:³⁶

- 1 [L.] Vespro[ni-]
[o] Candido Sal-
3 [I]ustio Sabini-
ano consuli
[s]peculato-
6 [r]es [e]t
[be]neficiari

and

- 1 [...]miniae
[Ver]ae coniugi
3 [Pris]ci leg(ati) Aug(usti)
[pr(o) pr(aetore)] co(n)s(ulis) des(ignati)

³² Speidel 1973; cf. Speidel 1978, 21-2; 121 no. 75.

³³ Commentarienses and speculatores in the governors' officia: A. von Domaszewski, *op.cit.* (note 18), 31-2, 48; cf. 74; Ph.Horovitz. *op.cit.* (note 20), 56-7. Duties of commentarienses: G.Lopuszanski, *L'Antiquité Classique* 20, 1951, 41-2. Duties of speculatores; M.Clauss *op.cit.* (note 12), 72-5.

³⁴ Commentarienses of the Praefectus Vigilum and Praefectus Urbi: A. von Domaszewski, *op.cit.* (note 18), 8-9; 17. Speculatores Augusti: M.Durry, *Les cohortes prétoriennes*, Paris 1938, 108-10, 138-9; A.Passerini, *Le Coorti Pretorie*, Roma 1939, 70-3; M.Clauss, *op.cit.* (note 12), 46-58.

³⁵ CIL II 4122; III 3524; 4452; 7794; VIII 2586; 2746; 2751; 18276; AE 1917/18 n. 57; cf. M.Clauss, *op.cit.* (note 12), 59-72.

³⁶ AE 1967 n. 575; 577 = J.Marcillet-Jaubert, *Bulletin d'Archéologie Algérienne* 2, 1966-7, 162-4.

[spec]ulatores
6 et
[bene]ficiari

The consulship of the subject of the first inscription, L. Vespronius Candidus Sallustius Sabinianus, has been attributed to the years 174-6 and must in any case fall before his service as consular legate of Dacia about 182.³⁷ The style of the second inscription suggests the late second/early third century, and the name-ending [...]*ci* in line 3 will allow only Anicius Faustus or L. Caunius Priscus amongst the known legates of that period; since the former was the legate of two emperors, unlike this man, the inscription has been attributed to the latter, attested as legate in 186 with a wife by the name of Vera.³⁸ The inscriptions thus fall some ten to twenty years or more before the Anicius Faustus inscription interpreted by Speidel as marking a *terminus post quem* for the creation of the province of Numidia, and more than thirty years before the earliest attestation of such a province. But, as we have seen, there is no other indication that provincial *speculatores* were ever attached to legionary legates.

The legates of legion III Augusta were, however, a very special case. As we have seen, they held *propraetorian* rank, unlike ordinary legionary legates but like the praetorian governors, and the post was usually held after one or more ordinary legionary legateships and immediately before or even with the consulship.³⁹ Furthermore, at about the same period as these two inscriptions, we find for the first time the legates M. Valerius Maximianus, in office 183-5, and Ti. Claudius Gordianus, in office in 188, addressed on inscriptions as *praeses*.⁴⁰ Yet if Speidel's very plausible expansion of the last line of the Anicius Faustus inscription is correct, the legate was still serving within the province of Africa in 198. The best explanation of all this evidence is that by the later second century, if not long before, the legate of III Augusta was entitled, as *de facto* governor of the Numidian territory, to the officium of a provincial governor, which would include both *speculatores*

³⁷ PIR² V 79; RE VIII A, 1716-7; B.E.Thomasson, *op.cit.*, 1960 (note 24), 90-1, 186-7; J.Marcillet-Jaubert, *op.cit.* (note 36), 162-3; B.E.Thomasson, *op.cit.*, 1969 (note 24), 184; *id.*, *op.cit.*, 1973 (note 24), 318-9; *id.*, *op.cit.*, 1984 (note 24), 400 no. 46.

³⁸ On the inscription: J.Marcillet-Jaubert, *op.cit.* (note 36), 163-4; on L. Caunius Priscus: PIR² C590; RE III, 1806; B.E.Thomasson, *op.cit.*, 1960 (note 24), 192-3; *id.*, *op.cit.*, 1969 (note 24), 185; *id.*, *op.cit.*, 1973 (note 24), 319; *id.*, *op.cit.*, 1984 (note 24), 401 no. 50.

³⁹ See note 25.

⁴⁰ M.Valerius Maximianus: CIL VIII 2749; 4600; cf. PIR V 79; SPQR, 78-80; RE VIII A, 86-90 no. 236; H.-G.Pflaum, *Libya: Archéologie Epigraphique* 3, 1955, 135-54; B.E.Thomasson, *op.cit.*, 1960 (note 24), 190-2; *id.*, *op.cit.*, 1969 (note 24), 185; *id.*, *op.cit.*, 1973 (note 24), 319; *id.*, *op.cit.*, 1984 (note 24), 401 no. 49. Ti. Claudius Gordianus: AE 1954, 138; cf. PIR² C 880; SPQR, 30-1; RE III, 2724 no. 167; RE Suppl. XIV, 100-1 no. 167; B.E.Thomasson, *op.cit.*, 1960 (note 24), 193-4; *id.*, *op.cit.*, 1969 (note 24), 185; *id.*, *op.cit.*, 1973 (note 24), 319; *id.*, *op.cit.*, 1984 (note 24), 401 no. 51.

and *singulares*. Consequently, Anicius Faustus had *singulares* as a governor, not as a legionary legate.⁴¹

This finding now lends weight to a suggestion made by the editors of *L'Année Epigraphique* in recording the Maximus inscription: 'On peut se demander si celui-ci n'était pas simultanément gouverneur de Mésie Supérieure.'⁴² Is it possible that Maximus' commander was an acting governor? Such a suggestion is not without its difficulties. If the legate of III Augusta was entitled to a gubernatorial officium, each new governor simply inherited such a staff from his predecessor. A legate of VII Claudia could only become acting governor of Moesia or Moesia Superior in the absence or on the death of the consular governor, a situation which could only be very temporary in view of the military importance of the province. In such a situation one would again expect the legate to have taken over the existing officium. But on this hypothesis, Maximus too would have had a temporary appointment, lasting only for the duration of the legate's acting governorship, since he did not progress to be *singularis consularis* when the new governor arrived. Why should such a temporary appointment have been necessary? Clearly, in order to make sense of this hypothesis, we would have to postulate an extraordinary situation in which both the governor and his *singulares* had to be replaced.

Fortunately, we can date Maximus' appointment with a fair degree of precision. A *terminus ante* is provided by the award of *dona* in Domitian's Dacian War, that is by AD 89 at the latest.⁴³ Maximus had apparently joined the legion as an *eque(s)* and then become *qu(a)estor equitum* (treasurer of the legionary cavalry), *singularis legati legionis* and *vexillarius equitum* in turn, winning his first set of *dona* in this last rank.⁴⁴ Speidel argues that he cannot have held all these posts in less than five years and that Maximus must therefore have joined the army before 85: he also argues that since Maximus was fit enough to win *dona* for the third time as a *decurio alae* in Trajan's Parthian War which began in 114, he is unlikely to have been born earlier than about 65.⁴⁵ Maximus, therefore, was probably enrolled in the legion sometime between, say, 80 and 85, and he will have been *singularis legati legionis* sometime between 80 and 89. We may now ask whether there did occur between those dates the sort of extraordinary situation which the above hypothesis requires.

In fact, we do know of an occasion at precisely this period when we can be almost certain that a legionary legate took control of Moesia. In AD 85, Oppius Sabinus, consular governor

⁴¹ Cf. IGLS 9176, a *benefic(iarius) leg(ati) leg(ionis) III Cyr(enaicae)* at Bostra, discussed by M.P.Speidel, 'The Roman Army in Arabia', ANRW II 8,1977,697 with note 31a; this legate would normally be the governor of Arabia, so that the legionary title may there have been interchangeable with the provincial, although Speidel offers other possible explanations.

⁴² AE 1969/70, 583 p.156; cf. F.A.Leeper and S.S.Frere, *Trajan's Column*, Gloucester 1988,252.

⁴³ Speidel 1970, 143 with note 8.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 143-6.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 143.

of the province, was killed, apparently resisting a Dacian invasion.⁴⁶ Sabinus was, it has now been argued, replaced by M.Cornelius Nigrinus Curiatius Maternus, first as governor of the undivided province, then as governor of Moesia Inferior after the division in 86.⁴⁷ There is no reason to suppose that Maternus was already in the province, since his last post had been as governor of Aquitania, probably from 79 to 82, before holding the consulship, perhaps in late 83.⁴⁸ Consequently, there must have been an interregnum while news of the death of Sabinus was sent to Rome and Nigrinus was selected and despatched. We can only guess how long this took, but with a governor dead and, presumably, an army defeated and Dacians loose in the province, someone will have had to take command. That can only have been one of the province's legionary legates.⁴⁹

Now in Syria, on the three occasions when we hear of a legionary legate taking over as acting governor, the post was always held by the legate of IV Scythica, namely Cn. Pompeius Collega in 69/70, before the arrival in the province of Caesennius Paetus,⁵⁰ A. Larcus Priscus, a senator of only quaestorian rank, recorded on inscriptions as *legatus Augusti leg(ionis) IIII Scythicae pro legato consulare provinc(iae) Syriae*, apparently in 97 or 98 when the loyalty of the governor of Syria was in doubt,⁵¹ and C. Iulius Severus, who deputized while the governor was dealing with the Jewish Revolt in 135.⁵² It has been suggested that the legate of this legion always deputized for the governor because it may have been the legion closest to the governor's usual seat at Antioch.⁵³ Elsewhere we know of C. Vettius Sabinianus who was *leg(atus) leg(ionis) XIII Gem(inae) cum iurisdictione Pannoniae Superioris*, probably in 170-2, while the governor was engaged elsewhere in fighting off the Marcomanni;⁵⁴ his legion was at this time based at Carnuntum, the provincial capital. There is, therefore, some reason to believe that in the absence of a governor one particular legionary legate in each province would be expected to deputize, and that it would normally be the legate closest to the capital. We do not know where the governor of the undivided Moesia had his headquarters, but after the division of the province in 86 the

⁴⁶ Suet. Dom. 6.1; Eutropius 7, 23.4; Iordanes *Getica* 13(76). For the conventional date of winter 85/6 for the invasion, see St.Gsell, *Essai sur le règne de l'empereur Domitien*, Paris 1894,209-12; C.Patsch, *Der Kampf um den Donauraum unter Domitian und Trajan (Beiträge zur Völkerkunde von Südosteuropa V/2)*, Wien 1937,5-6; A.Stein, *Die Legaten von Moesien*, Budapest 1940,34-8, cf. R.Syme, *JRS* 35,1945,110-11; for an earlier date of spring 85, see G.Alföldy and H.Halfmann, *Chiron* 3,1973,358-9.

⁴⁷ G.Alföldy and H.Halfmann, *op.cit.* (note 46), 356-61.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 353-6.

⁴⁹ Cf. B.G.Campbell, *JRS* 65,1975,20.

⁵⁰ Josephus *BJ* 7, 3.4 (58); cf. E.Ritterling, *RE* XII, 1562.

⁵¹ AE 1908,237; ILS 1055; cf. Pliny *Ep.* 9,13.10-11 with E.Groag, *JÖAI* 29,1935, Beiblatt 190-3; R.Syme, *Philologus* 91,1936,238-45; the disloyal governor may have been M. Cornelius Nigrinus Curiatius Maternus, cf. G.Alföldy and H.Halfmann, *op.cit.* (note 46), 361-9.

⁵² ILS 8826; cf. B.G.Campbell, *loc.cit.* (note 49).

⁵³ E.Ritterling, *RE* XII, 1560; R.Syme, *Tacitus*, Oxford 1958,631.

⁵⁴ AE 1920,45; cf. A.Betz, *RE* VIII A, 1864.

governor of Moesia Superior was probably based at Viminacium on the Danube.⁵⁵ It is likely that this was already the site of a legionary camp which guarded the approach to the Dacian capital, Sarmizegethusa Regia, and the invasion route later used by Trajan in the First Dacian War,⁵⁶ which could just as well have been employed by the invading Dacians in 85. It is generally accepted that the legion based at Viminacium in 85 would have been VII Claudia.⁵⁷

It is a reasonable assumption, therefore, that it was Maximus' commander who became acting governor of Moesia on the death of Oppius Sabinus. It might be objected that if this was the case, and if Maximus was appointed *singularis* while his legate was acting in that capacity, he would, in such a detailed inscription, have told us so. But even *de facto* governors of Numidia often called themselves only *legatus Augusti pro praetore legionis III Augustae*,⁵⁸ and it may be that an actual governor of Arabia could on occasion be referred to simply as *legatus legionis III Cyrenaicae*.⁵⁹ Furthermore, of the acting governors of Syria and Pannonia Superior mentioned above, one describes himself as *legatus Augusti leg(ionis) III Scythicae pro legato consulare provinc(iae) Syriae*, another is referred to as ἡγεμόνα λεγεῶνος δ' Κκ[υ]θηκῆς καὶ [δι]οικῆσαντα τὰ ἐν Κυρίᾳ πράγματα ἡνίκα Πουβλίκιος Μάρκελλος διὰ τὴν κίνησιν τὴν Ἰουδαϊκὴν μεταβέβηκε[ι] ἀπὸ Κυρίας, and a third as *legatus leg(ionis) XIII Gem(inae) cum iurisdictione Pannoniae Superioris*.⁶⁰ These inscriptions show both that such an acting governor continued to be referred to as *legatus legionis* and that there was no other standard title for him to adopt. Maximus' rank would therefore have been *singularis legati legionis* in any case, and even if his legate did take an additional temporary title (not to be done lightly without the express permission of an emperor like Domitian), it would probably have been too long even for Maximus' wordy inscription.

As for the need for the legate to appoint his own *singulares*, we may reasonably be confident that Sabinus did not die alone and that, if they did not run away, many, if not most, of his bodyguard fell with him.⁶¹ The function of the *singulares* in battle is described by Arrian, who says that they 'stood around the commander' (ἀμφ' αὐτὸν Ξενοφῶντα ἔστρωσαν); a letter on papyrus from a hospital doctor records the death of 15 *singulares* 'besides the legionaries and *evocati*', possibly in order to emphasize the severity of the action

⁵⁵ A.Mócsy, *Pannonia and Upper Moesia*, London 1974,82.

⁵⁶ Priscian 6, 13 p.205: Traianus in I Dacorum: inde Berzobim, deinde Aizi processimus.

⁵⁷ E.Ritterling, RE XII, 1620-1; A.Mócsy, *op.cit.* (note 55), 82-3.

⁵⁸ See note 25.

⁵⁹ See note 41.

⁶⁰ See notes 51-2, 54.

⁶¹ And in any case, military law prescribed death for troops who failed to protect their commander: Digest 49, 16.3.22 (Modestinus): qui praepositum suum protegere noluerunt vel deseruerunt, occiso eo capite puniuntur; 49, 16.6.8 (Arrius Menander): qui praepositum suum non protexit, cum posset, in pari causa factori habendus est.

in which they fought; and two tombstones record the deaths of singulares in action.⁶² All these pieces of evidence suggest the likelihood of heavy casualties amongst the singulares in 85. So even if the acting governor could have made use of Sabinus' secretarial staff, he may well have had to put together an emergency guard, especially since as governor he might have to move independently of his legion. In the circumstances further action must have been a real possibility, and such a guard would be not merely honorific but a necessity, put together from whatever troops were available, legionary or auxiliary.

Certainly Ti. Claudius Maximus would have been an ideal candidate for such a posting. In some ways, his career moved remarkably slowly; after winning his first *dona* by 89 at the latest, he remained a *vexillarius equitum* for at least 9 years, until his transfer into the *Ala Secunda Pannoniorum* under the auspices of Trajan, who became emperor in 98 (lines 11-13). But whatever were the qualities which held him back, his courage and his eagerness for battle must have been self-evident. If Speidel has interpreted the inscription correctly, he must have reenlisted for the Parthian War after his honourable discharge (lines 21-4).⁶³ The triple *dona* and his selection by Trajan as an explorer (lines 13-15) mark him out as a very brave man indeed, and his most daring feat, the capture of Decebalus (lines 18-21), remarkable enough to be depicted on Trajan's column,⁶⁴ must have been performed at the very spearhead of the Roman forces and well behind enemy lines, suggesting nothing short of recklessness. It is hard to imagine a character more suitable to be a life-guard.

The extraordinary circumstances required by the hypothesis that Maximus was the *singularis* of an acting governor have been found. It remains a hypothesis which only further epigraphic finds could confirm. But in view of the unique attestation of Maximus' post and the probability that the legates of III Augusta were allowed such officers because they were *de facto* governors, the hypothesis that ordinary legionary legates had this right must also await confirmation. And in the meantime, any historical conclusions based on the question of the right to *singulares* should be regarded as not proven.

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⁶² Cited by Speidel 1978,48-50: Arrian *Ektaxis* 22; P.Ross *Georg.* III, 1 (= Speidel 1978,119 no. 71); CIL VIII 3050 cf. 18164 (= Speidel 1978,93-4 no. 45); CIL VIII 9292 cf. 20857 (= Speidel 1978,123-4 no. 81).

⁶³ M.P.Speidel, *Roman Army Studies. Volume One*, Amsterdam 1984,408-9.

⁶⁴ Speidel 1970,149-51.