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LEGATI AUGUSTI PRO PRAETORE MOESIAE INFERIORIS A.D. 193–
217/218

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LEGATI AUGUSTI PRO PRAETORE MOESIAE INFERIORIS
A.D. 193–217/218¹

A fresh study² of all available numismatic and epigraphic sources on Lower Moesia and Thrace under the early Severi offers new proof of triennial tenure of *legati Augusti*,³ both in consular provinces such as Lower Moesia and praetorian ones with no legion such as Thrace. This opens up new horizons to revamp existing lists of Lower Moesian and Thracian governors⁴ in the period A.D. 193–217/218. This article argues an original chronology of Lower Moesian legates, attributing to military or political turmoil the irregular *triennia* at the start and close of our timeframe.

P. Septimius Geta⁵ – (?)190–193/194

Strong disagreement over Geta's tenure in Lower Moesia was unavoidable.⁶ For over 50 years, the only trace of his governorship there was one inscription from Leptis Magna⁷ citing Severus' brother as *leg(atus) Augg[g](ustorum trium) pr(o) pr(aetore) provinciae Mysiae inferioris*. A new inscription has since been found in Oescus, Lower Moesia, which

¹ For the English version of this article I am indebted to Mr. Arthur Borges, to whom I would like to express my deepest gratitude for devoting so much time and attention to its editing.

² D. Boteva, *Lower Moesia and Thrace in the Roman Imperial System, A.D. 193–217/218* (Dissertation 1993), Sofia (in press); see also D. Boteva, *Historical Development of the Roman Provinces of Lower Moesia and Thrace in the period A.D. 193–217/218*, *Bulgarian Historical Review*, 1994, 4, 5–17 (please read Dec. 10, not Dec. 19, on p. 9; misspellings occur on pp. 5, 7, 9 and 11 which should read Pollienius Auspex, Cosconius Gentianus and Aurelius Gallus).

³ W. Eck, *ANRW II-1*, 214–215 (with the literature); P. M. M. Leunissen, *Konsuln und Konsulare in der Zeit von Commodus bis Severus Alexander (180–235 n. Chr.)*, Amsterdam 1989, 15–16.

⁴ A. Stein, *Römische Reichsbeamte der Provinz Thracia*, Sarajevo 1920; A. Stein, *Die Legaten von Moesien*, Budapest 1940, 81–92; J. Fitz, *Die Laufbahn der Statthalter in der römischen Provinz Moesia inferior*, Weimar 1966, 49–50; G. Alföldy, *BJ* 168, 1968, 156–157; Em. Doruțiu-Boilă, *Legati Moesiae inferioris între 175–180 și 198–212*, *StCl XXII*, 1984, 109–113; B. Thomasson, *Laterculi Praesidum*, vol. I, Göteborg 1984, col. 138–141, 169–171, nos. 104–115, 42–49; Leunissen 250–252, 290–292.

⁵ PIR S 326; Stein, *Moesien* 81–82; Fitz 28, 49; Alföldy 156; Thomasson, col. 138, no. 104; Leunissen 250.

⁶ See Leunissen 149 (incl. footnote 86) and 198–199 for a critique of Em. Doruțiu-Boilă, *ZPE* 58, 1985, 198–201. The dating for P. Septimius Geta and the identification of Cn. Suellius Rufus with Cosconius Gentianus advanced by Doruțiu-Boilă are accepted by Kl. Wachtel, *Zu den Statthaltern von Moesia Inferior unter Commodus*, *Terra Antiqua Balcanica II*, Sofia 1987, 284–287 and by T. Ivanov, *Der Fortuna-Tempel in der Colonia Ulpia Oescensium (heute VR Bulgarien)*, *Recherches sur la culture en Mésie et en Thrace (Ier–IVe s.)*, Sofia 1987, 35. B. Thomasson also argues against this dating and identification in *Laterculi Praesidum*, *Addendorum series altera*, 5, 20:101 and 20:106.

⁷ Stein 81; G. M. Berssanetti, *P. Settimio Geta, fratello di Settimio Severo*, *Epigraphica* 4, 1942, 105–129; see also *AE* 1946, 131 = IRT 541.

honours P. Septimius Geta as *leg(atus) Augg(ustorum duorum) pr(o) pr(aetore)*.⁸ I suggest the two *Augusti* in this inscription are Commodus and Pertinax,⁹ which would date it between 1st January and 28th March 193. Recalling the remark by ancient authors that Pertinax ‘did not remove any of those whom Commodus had put in charge of affairs’,¹⁰ the three *Augusti* in the Leptis Magna inscription would then be Commodus, Pertinax and Severus.¹¹

We should also look to *Historia Augusta*, v. *Sev.* 8.10, which states Severus extended Geta’s tenure over the ‘province entrusted him’ when war broke out against Niger, although Geta had ‘hoped for something else’. Rightly called “cryptic” by Birley,¹² this remark should be construed to mean that Geta’s term in Lower Moesia was nearing an end when Severus met him. If Geta had indeed pinned his hopes on some existing regulation, then it may well have been the *triennium*. This leads me to accept 190 for his appointment by Commodus. Thus, his term was to end in 193 and Severus prolonged it by a few months – we remain unsure if he stepped down in Lower Moesia in 193 or early 194 but he is on record as governor of Dacia in 195.¹³

Pollienus Auspex (minor)¹⁴ – 193/194–195

Auspex succeeded Geta as governor of Lower Moesia and his tenure was uncommonly brief. The key to accurate dating is an analysis of Lower Moesian coins bearing his name and others minted under Cosconius Gentianus. Most Auspex coins originated in Nicopolis ad Istrum,¹⁵ with a smaller quantity out of Marcianopolis.¹⁶ Two remarks are needed here. First, coins in the name of Auspex were minted for only a brief while. Second, the Marcianopolis mint was already striking coins in the name of Cosconius Gentianus before Caracalla was proclaimed *Caesar* on a date which is still highly controversial. I find the evidence from Lower Moesia and Thrace argues more easily in favour of mid-195, as proposed by Birley and Halfmann.¹⁷ This would end Auspex’ tenure in Lower Moesia before mid-195.

A clue to why Auspex was relieved so abruptly may lie in the inscription from Xanthus¹⁸ which identifies him first as provincial governor of Britain and second, as governor of

⁸ Gratefully acknowledged personal communication from the excavator, Professor Teofil Ivanov (publication forthcoming).

⁹ See B. Thomasson, *Zum Gebrauch von Augustorum, Augg. und Aug. als Bezeichnung der Samtherrschaft zweier Herrscher*, ZPE 52, 1983, 125–135.

¹⁰ HA, v. *Pert.* XII, 8; see A. Birley, *The African Emperor Septimius Severus*, London 1988, 92.

¹¹ The literature on “Auggg.” is given in Leunissen 250, footnote 193.

¹² Birley 109. For a review of the literature, see G. Mihailov, *Septimius Severus in Moesia Inferior and Thrace*, Acta Antiqua Philippopolitana. Studia Historica et Philologica, Sofia 1963, 113–115.

¹³ CIL III 905 (Potaissa).

¹⁴ PIR P 410; Stein 82–84; Fitz 27–28, 49; Alföldy 156; Thomasson, *Laterculi*, col. 138, no. 105; Leunissen 139–140, 250; see also G. Alföldy, *Fasti Hispanienses*, Wiesbaden 1969, 53–56.

¹⁵ B. Pick, *Die antiken Münzen Nord-Griechenlands*, Bd. I, *Dacien und Moesien*, Erster Halbband, Berlin 1898, nos. 1252–1263.

¹⁶ Pick, no. 543.

¹⁷ Birley 120; H. Halfmann, *Itinera principum*, Stuttgart 1986, 220.

¹⁸ IGRR III 618 = Dessau 8841.

Moesia (inferior). As generally agreed, offices are given in descending order.¹⁹ Thus some compelling reason must have forced Severus to dispatch him from Lower Moesia to Britain on short notice. That reason would have been the conflict festering between the emperor and his first *Caesar*, Clodius Albinus,²⁰ which was to erupt into civil war only months later.

Cosconius Gentianus²¹ – 195–198

The Constantza Museum of History and Archaeology has just examined an unpublished Greek inscription²² from its collections which mentions the provincial governor [. . .] *Gentianus Ge[---]*. He must be Cosconius Gentianus. His full style obviously included a second cognomen, but *Ge[---]* remains to be restored.

As said, Gentianus began his tenure in Lower Moesia before mid-195. Dating is firm thanks to coins struck in Marcianopolis for Severus; reverses bear the name of Gentianus and came out shortly before Caracalla became *Caesar*.²³ Because similar coins from Nicopolis ad Istrum²⁴ are synchronous with small denomination issues for Caracalla-*Caesar*,²⁵ we draw an important conclusion: although the issues of Marcianopolis and Nicopolis ad Istrum both identify Gentianus as provincial governor on the reverses, they were not struck simultaneously, i.e. the two mints did not operate at the same time (as will be seen, coin production was always being toggled between these two mints throughout our timeframe).

The end of his tenure is already reliably dated to 198 by the inscription from Olbia,²⁶ set up when Caracalla was already *Augustus*²⁷ and by the fact that Ovinus Tertullus was already *legatus* of Lower Moesia in that year.

¹⁹ See Leunissen 140, 231.

²⁰ Severus surely did not dismiss Auspex as *legatus* of Lower Moesia because of the personal conflict noted by Dio (76,9,3–4), as I claimed in “Historical Development . . .”, 11. Such a conflict would have precluded direct posting to Britain from Moesia. B. Thomasson is probably right in arguing that Dio’s quote refers to Auspex major (Senatores procuratoresque Romani, Göteborg 1975, 56).

²¹ PIR² C 1526; Stein 84; Fitz 28, 49; Alföldy, BJ 168, 1968, 156; Thomasson, Laterculi, col. 138, no. 106; Leunissen 250–251; see also footnote 5 above.

²² M. Bărbulescu, Al.Avrăm, Pontica 25, 1992, no. 4, (in press). I should like to thank my Romanian colleagues for the privilege of consulting the original inscription.

²³ Pick, nos. 544–553.

²⁴ Pick, nos. 1264–1270.

²⁵ Pick, nos. 1489–1515; L. Ruzicka, NZ 50, 1917, 139–141, nos. 1490a, 1511a.

²⁶ IGR I 854; see also Stein 84.

²⁷ Caracalla’s proclamation as *Augustus* is tentatively dated at 28th January 198 by J. Guey, 28 janvier 98 – 28 janvier 198, ou le siècle des Antonins: à propos du Feriale Duranum, col. I, l. 14–16, REA 50, 1948, 60–70, as well as by A. Mastino, Le titolature di Caracalla e Geta attraverso le iscrizioni (indici), Bologna 1981, 15. Proclamation is 2nd June 198 in Der Kleine Pauly, I, 1964, col. 1049, a date now accepted by P. J. Sijpesteijn, ZPE 100, 1994, 264–265. The later date is consistent with P. Mich. inv. no. 4302 from the village of Philadelphia in Fayum, a sitologos receipt issued on “Payni 23, year 6 of Lucius Septimius Severus Pius Pertinax Augustus Arabicus Adiabenicus Parthicus maximus”, i.e. 17th June, 198. Personally, I hold that the numismatic and epigraphic evidence for Lower Moesia and Thrace is more consistent with 28th January, 198 but somewhat later is equally arguable.

C. Ovinus Tertullus²⁸ – 198–201

The earliest evidence for Tertullus' tenure in Lower Moesia is a Latin inscription set up on 20th July 198 in honour of Severus.²⁹ However, the synchronous historical background for Lower Moesia and Thrace³⁰ argues plausibly for appointment one to four months earlier.

Apart from epigraphic evidence,³¹ Tertullus appears as governor of Lower Moesia on coins struck in Nicopolis ad Istrum,³² while we have no certified coins with his name from Marcianopolis.³³ This underpins the assertion that the Marcianopolis mint was not operating at the time.

The imperial letter on the *immunitas* of Tyras notes Tertullus was still governing Lower Moesia on 17th February 201.³⁴ His tenure must have ended about mid-year because the Marcianopolis mint was already issuing coins in the name of his successor by the end of 201.³⁵

L. Aurelius Gallus³⁶ – 201–(?)204

Coins in the name of L. Aurelius Gallus were minted for Severus,³⁷ Caracalla-Augustus³⁸ and Geta-Caesar with the *praenomen* Lucius.³⁹ To date, we have no certified issue from Marcianopolis for Plautilla, Caracalla's wife. Therefore, Gallus probably only saw this mint operate from late 201 to early 202. This inclines me to accept 201 for the start of his tenure.

²⁸ PIR² O 127; Stein 84–86; Fitz 49; Alföldy 156; Thomasson, col. 139, no. 107; Leunissen 15, 155, 251.

²⁹ B. Gerov, *Inscriptiones Latinae in Bulgaria repertae*, Sofia 1989 (further cited as ILBulg.), no. 260 = CIL III 14428 = Dessau 8915 (at Sostra, an ancient mutatio on the road from Oescus to Philippopolis, north of the Trojan Pass in the Balkan Mountains).

³⁰ Boteva, Lower Moesia, (in press).

³¹ Numerous inscriptions attest to Tertullus' tenure in Lower Moesia (see Thomasson, col. 139, no. 107) and the supply is rising steadily (AE 1980, 798; see also M. Bărbulescu, A. Rădulescu, *Pontica* 24, 1991, 123–126 incl. footnote 3 on p. 125).

³² Pick, nos. 1271–1283 (Severus); 1450–1452 (Domna); 1516–1534 (Caracalla-Aug.); 1622–1625 (Caracalla-Aug. and Geta-Caes. with the *praenomen* Lucius).

³³ See Pick 186, 199–200.

³⁴ IOSPE I, 3 = CIL III 781 = Dessau 423 = IGR I 598.

³⁵ I question Stoian's reading of the Tomis inscription in SCIV 10, 1959, 321–334 (see Fitz 42). At present, the only certainty about this monument is the name of Tertullus, which does not tally with the name of Plautilla; she only married into the imperial family under the Lower Moesian tenure of Aurelius Gallus, as is being established from the coinage of Marcianopolis and Nicopolis ad Istrum.

³⁶ PIR² A 1517; Stein 86–87; Fitz 50, 59; Alföldy 156; Thomasson, col. 139, no. 108; Leunissen 251.

³⁷ Pick, nos. 554–559.

³⁸ Pick, nos. 608–609.

³⁹ Pick, no. 696.

Moreover, the inscriptions in Nicopolis ad Istrum, dated thanks to the *legatio* of Gallus, correlate with the imperial visit of Septimius Severus,⁴⁰ Caracalla-Augustus,⁴¹ Geta-Caesar⁴² and Iulia Domna⁴³ to the city early in 202.⁴⁴

Coinage for Plautilla⁴⁵ proves that Gallus issues from the mint of Nicopolis ad Istrum come after Caracalla's marriage, which was an established fact on 29th August 202.⁴⁶ Given the Gallus coins struck for Geta-Caesar with the *praenomen* of Lucius,⁴⁷ dating leeway stops in 204 when Geta's *praenomen* became Publius.⁴⁸

(?) C. Iunius Faustinus [? Pl]a[ci]dus Postumianus⁴⁹ – (?)204–(?)207

Sir Ronald Syme once quipped: 'When an age happens to bequeath no good witness to posterity (and perhaps never had any), one uses what material one can. Notably inscriptions.'⁵⁰ For 204–207, the local situation is even worse: all evidence amounts to a single inscription, found *extra fines provinciae*.⁵¹ And we have yet to explain this epigraphic and numismatic void. At present, we must be content to confess that C. Iunius Faustinus is the only available candidate for this *triennium*.

L. Iulius Faustianus⁵² – (?)207–210

The governorship of L. Iulius Faustianus now falls into place thanks to a recently discovered Latin inscription from Novae set up on 15th May 208.⁵³

⁴⁰ IGBulg. II, 620 = AM 48, 1923, 104, no. 10.

⁴¹ IGBulg. II, 621 = AM 48, 1923, 105, no. 11.

⁴² IGBulg. II, 622 = AM 48, 1923, 105–106, no. 13.

⁴³ IGBulg. II, 623 = AM 48, 1923, 105, no. 12.

⁴⁴ Halfmann 221.

⁴⁵ Pick, nos. 1626–1632.

⁴⁶ Halfmann 221–222; Leunissen 251, footnote 197. Dating is 13th–19th April, 202 in J. Hasebroek, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Kaisers Septimius Severus*, Heidelberg 1921, 193.

⁴⁷ Pick, nos. 1654–1659.

⁴⁸ See Regling in B. Pick, K. Regling, *Die antiken Münzen Nord-Griechenlands*, Bd.1, Dacien und Moesien, Zweiter Halbband, Berlin 1910, 765; J. Jurukova, *Le monnayage des villes en Mésie inférieure et en Thrace pendant le IIe–IIIe siècle: Hadrianopolis (in Bulg.)*, Sofia 1987, 14. Jurukova accepts Regling's dating at 203/204. Birley 218, no. 22 mentions that the change of *praenomen* may stem from the death in 204 of Severus' brother, Geta. According to I. Touratsoglou, *Die Münzstätte von Thessaloniki*, Berlin/New York 1988, 53, footnote 96, his *praenomen* remains Lucius and Publius until 204, after which it appears solely as Publius.

⁴⁹ PIR² I 751; Stein 87–88; Fitz 25–27, 49; Alföldy 156; Thomasson, col. 139–140, no. 109; Leunissen 161, 251. See also Alföldy, *Fasti Hispanienses*, 49–53, especially p.52.

⁵⁰ R. Syme, *Governors of Pannonia Inferior*, *Historia* 14, 1965, 354.

⁵¹ CIL VIII 597 (vgl. 11754, S.2729 and AE 1982, 942) found near Thuggam, Africa proconsularis.

⁵² PIR² I 304; Stein 88–89, Fitz 50; Alföldy, BJ 168, 1968, 157; Thomasson, col. 140, no. 110; Leunissen 164, 251.

⁵³ ILBulg., 268 ter = AE 1982, 849 = V. Božilova, J. Kolendo, L. Mrozewicz, *Inscriptions latines de Novae*, Poznan 1992, no. 28.

Marcianopolis was the only mint in Lower Moesia to strike coins in his name.⁵⁴ At present, two lacunae deserve notice here. First, we have no Marcianopolis coins for Plautilla. Second, we have no coins for Geta-*Augustus* which name Faustianus on the reverses. These numismatic details are compatible with governorship in Lower Moesia from after 22nd January 205⁵⁵ to before October/November 210.⁵⁶ Personally, I see his tenure starting in 207 to accommodate the *triennium* of his predecessor. This would end his tenure about mid-210, because Flavius Ulpianus was already in Lower Moesia several months before Geta's inauguration.

Flavius Ulpianus⁵⁷ – 210–(?)213

Four Greek inscriptions set up at Nicopolis ad Istrum during the governorship of Ulpianus in honour of the imperial family⁵⁸ prove he was already in Lower Moesia before Geta became *Augustus*. This dating is supported by some issues from Marcianopolis that start his tenure in about mid-210.⁵⁹

Later Marcianopolis issues identify Geta as *Augustus*⁶⁰ and fall between October/November 210 and 4th February 211.⁶¹

Ulpianus continued appearing on coins from Nicopolis ad Istrum issued after 4th February 211⁶² through to Geta's assassination in late 211/early 212.⁶³

Stein concludes Ulpianus still governed Lower Moesia after Geta's death⁶⁴ from an inscription honouring Domna as wife of Severus but only mother of Caracalla.⁶⁵ However, his dating of the monument overlooks the *tribunicia potestas* of Severus⁶⁶, which shows the emperor still ruled. Hence, it even antedates 4th February 211.⁶⁷

Nonetheless, Stein's supposition that Ulpianus still governed Lower Moesia after Geta's death does find real support if we re-assess IGBulg. 629 (Nicopolis ad Istrum). Set up in

⁵⁴ Pick, nos. 560–577 (Severus), 610–621 (Caracalla).

⁵⁵ Date of Plautianus' overthrow according to Hasebroek 136.

⁵⁶ Dating of Geta's inauguration proposed by G. Di Vita-Evrard and supported by Birley 218, no. 22.

⁵⁷ PIR² F 402; Stein 89–90; Fitz 50; Alföldy 157; Thomasson, col. 140, no. 111; Leunissen 252.

⁵⁸ IGBulg. II, 268 (Severus); 630 (Caracalla-*Augustus*); 627 (Geta-*Caesar* = AM 48, 1923, 108–109, no. 17); 631 (Domna = AM 48, 1923, 107, no. 15). All style Ulpianus as ΠΙΠΕΣΒ.ΣΕΒΒ.ΑΝΤΙΣΤΡΑ, offering further proof they antedate Geta's inauguration.

⁵⁹ Pick, nos. 578–584 (Severus), 622–626 (Caracalla).

⁶⁰ Pick, nos. 649–652 (Caracalla and Geta *Augg*).

⁶¹ See Pick, nos. 595–602 (Severus and Domna).

⁶² Pick 370.

⁶³ See discussion in RE II A, 1923, col. 1569–1570. Dating is either 26th December, 211 or 26th February, 212 (see W. Eck, *EpigrStudien* 14, 1985, 201, footnote 2). The earlier date now looks more likely both to Birley 218, no. 22 and to H. Halfmann, *Chiron* 12, 1982, 229–230, incl. footnote 49.

⁶⁴ Stein 89.

⁶⁵ IGBulg. II, 631. See footnote 57 above.

⁶⁶ See IGBulg. II, 631, line 3.

⁶⁷ See footnote 57 above.

honour of Caracalla, this monument styles Ulpianus as (ΠΡΕΣΒ.)ΣΕΒ.ΣΕΒΒ.ΑΝΤΙΣΤΡΑ.⁶⁸ Because the first four inscriptions mentioned above identify him as ΠΡΕΣΒ.ΣΕΒΒ.ΑΝΤΙΣΤΡΑ,⁶⁹ the editor decided the carver had made a mistake. Hence angular brackets were added, resulting in <ΣΕΒ>ΣΕΒΒ.

But another explanation is available and the breakthrough comes once we assert there is no carver's mistake. I suggest the discordant inscription records two distinct imperial periods. ΠΡΕΣΒ.ΣΕΒ.ΑΝΤΙΣΤΡΑ refers to the moment when the monument was erected and Ulpianus was *legatus* to the single *Augustus* honoured in the inscription, i.e. Caracalla. An earlier period is indicated by ΠΡΕΣΒ.ΣΕΒΒ.ΑΝΤΙΣΤΡΑ, when Ulpianus was *legatus* to both Severus and Caracalla. It refers to the time before October/November 210 and might be synchronised with the moment when the first four inscriptions were set up. The intermediate period when Geta was third *co-Augustus* would have passed in silence due to the *damnatio memoriae*. Thus, angular brackets are inappropriate! As to the Lower Moesian tenure of Ulpianus it definitely included 212 and quite possibly some of 213 too.

Quintilianus⁷⁰ – (?)213–(?)216

Evidence on Quintilianus and his Lower Moesian tenure is so flimsy that it would seem foolhardy to attempt a precise chronology. The Marcianopolis mint struck prolifically in his name but tight dating is impossible because these coins only show either Caracalla⁷¹ or Caracalla and Domna.⁷²

Stein himself fell victim to a publisher's oversight. Because of Mouchmoff's coin no. 138, he claimed Marcianopolis struck coins for Caracalla and Geta.⁷³ But this coin got classified under Quintilianus although Ulpianus' name figures plainly on the reverse.⁷⁴ Moreover, Mouchmoff adds the coin is a variant of Pick's coin no. 652 and cursory inspection shows it too was minted under Ulpianus. So that rules out a mix-up of photos at the printer's.

Thus, Quintilianus began his term in Lower Moesia when Caracalla was sole *Augustus*, but after late 212/early 213. With triennial tenure, he would have stepped down sometime in 216.

⁶⁸ IGBulg. II, 629 = AM 48, 1923, 108, no. 16; see line 5.

⁶⁹ See footnote 57 above.

⁷⁰ PIR Q 13; Stein 90; Fitz 50; Thomasson, col. 140, no. 112; Leunissen 252.

⁷¹ Pick, nos. 635–648.

⁷² Pick, nos. 653–695.

⁷³ Stein 90 incl. footnote 9.

⁷⁴ N. Mouchmoff, Une trouvaille de monnaies de la Mésie Inférieure et de la Thrace, R.Num., 1922, 151; and Plate 1, no. 138. Of course.

M. Staius Longinus⁷⁵ – (?)216–June/August 217

Dating is based on coinage of Nicopolis ad Istrum, the sole known Lower Moesian producer of coins in the name of Longinus for Macrinus and his son, Diadumenianus.⁷⁶ These issues should be dated after mid-June 217⁷⁷ because the latter is styled as *Caesar* and *Antoninus*. Dating leeway stops in August because we have Pontianus coinage within 217 and Agrippa coins that date to late 217/earliest 218.

Such precise dating only became possible once Clay had shed light on the chronological, not geographical, meaning embedded in the differing beard lengths of Macrinus.⁷⁸ The idea was hardly new,⁷⁹ but it was Clay who forcefully mustered proof that the short beard belongs to the start of Macrinus' reign and the long, to the end. Applying this to the coins of the Lower Moesia, I ascribe all except some Agrippa issues to the first half of his rule because the beard is short.⁸⁰

Pontius Fu(rius) Pontianus⁸¹ – June/August–November/December 217

Pontianus lasted four to six months, as established from coinage in the names of his immediate predecessor and successor.

Marcus Clau(dius) Agrippa⁸² – November/December 217–(?)218

Most coinage in Agrippa's name was struck in Nicopolis ad Istrum.⁸³ So far, only one type of reverse is known from the Marcianopolis mint and it ties in with an obverse depicting Macrinus facing his son, *Caesar* Diadumenianus.⁸⁴

Agrippa coinage overwhelmingly depicts Macrinus with a short beard. A review of obverse dies published to date reveals only one portrait of Macrinus with a medium-length beard.⁸⁵ But coins with this obverse are die-linked to some reverses which were combined with short-bearded portraits of Macrinus.⁸⁶ As Clay argues, this is typical of Macrinus' second issue, which dates to late 217/early 218.⁸⁷ So, these last Agrippa coins were struck

⁷⁵ PIR S 631–632; Stein 90–91; Fitz 50; Thomasson, col. 140, no. 113; Leunissen 171, 252.

⁷⁶ Pick, nos. 1720–1785 (Macrinus), 1827–1872 (Diadumenianus).

⁷⁷ C. L. Clay, *The Roman Coinage of Macrinus and Diadumenianus*, NZ 93, 1979, 34.

⁷⁸ Clay, 21–40; D. Salzmann, *Die Bildnisse des Macrinus*, JDAI 98, 1983, 352–381.

⁷⁹ K. Pink, review on: H. Mattingly, E. A. Sydenham, C. H. V. Sutherland, *Roman Imperial Coinage*, IV-ii; Macrinus to Pupienus, (London 1938), JRS 29, 1939, 258.

⁸⁰ Boteva, *Lower Moesia*, (in press).

⁸¹ D. Boteva, *On the cursus honorum of P. Fu... Pontianus* (PIR² F 496), *Provincial Governor of Lower Moesia*, ZPE 1996 (in press).

⁸² PIR² M 224; Stein 91–92; Fitz 50; Thomasson, col. 141, no. 115; Leunissen 15, 29–30, 252.

⁸³ Pick, nos. 1683–1719 (Macrinus), 1792–1826 (Diadumenianus).

⁸⁴ Pick, no. 785.

⁸⁵ Pick, nos. 1695, 1696, 1705, 1717.

⁸⁶ Pick, nos. 1716, 1718.

⁸⁷ Clay 23, 34.

in that late timeframe. I therefore hold that, at some point after he became *legatus Augusti Daciae* (Cass.Dio 78,13,2), Agrippa temporarily governed both Dacia and Lower Moesia. This extraordinary situation would have befallen him because Macrinus probably lacked reliable lieutenants. We are still unsure of when Agrippa's tenure in Lower Moesia ended, but it probably did not survive long after the assassination of Macrinus on 6th June 218.

Conclusion:

Legati Augusti pro praetore Moesiae inferioris
A.D. 193–217/218

| Year of Appointment | Year of Discharge | <i>Legatus Augusti</i> |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| (?)190 | 193/194 | P. Septimius Geta |
| 193/194 | 195 | Pollienus Auspex (minor) |
| 195 | 198 | Cosconius Gentianus Ge[---] |
| 198 | 201 | C. Ovinus Tertullus |
| 201 | (?)204 | L. Aurelius Gallus |
| (?)204 | (?)207 | (?)C. Iunius Faustinus [? Pl]a[ci]dus Postumianus |
| (?)207 | 210 | L. Iulius Faustinianus |
| 210 | (?)213 | Flavius Ulpianus |
| (?)213 | (?)216 | Quintilianus |
| (?)216 | June/Aug. 217 | M. Staius Longinus |
| June/Aug. 217 | Nov./Dec. 217 | Pontius Fu(r)ius Pontianus |
| Nov./Dec. 217 | (?)218 | Marcus Clau(dius) Agrippa |