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PHILIP RANCE

## The Third *Equites Stablesiani* at Cyrrhus

The *Notitia dignitatum* (400/401–ca.425) lists at least fifteen units of *equites stablesiani* deployed throughout the empire, seven in the East, eight in the West.<sup>1</sup> Four are classed as *vexillationes comitatenses* and assigned to regional field armies, two under the *magister militum per Orientem*, and two under the *comes Africae*.<sup>2</sup> The remaining

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The research for this paper was facilitated by a Humboldt-Forschungsstipendium für erfahrene Wissenschaftler, hosted by the Institut für Byzantinistik, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, München, 2009–11. Abbreviations: ACO = E. SCHWARTZ – J. STRAUB (ed.), *Acta conciliorum oecumenicorum* (ser. 1), 1914–84; AZÉMA I–IV = Y. AZÉMA (ed., Fr. trans.), *Théodoret de Cyr, Correspondance, Sources chrétiennes* 40, 98, 111, 429, 1955–98, 4 vols; BRENNAN 1998 = P. BRENNAN, *Divide and Fall: the Separation of the Legionary Cavalry and the Fragmentation of the Roman Empire*, in: T. W. HILLARD – R. A. KEARSLEY – C. E. V. NIXON – A. M. NOBBS (ed.), *Ancient History in a Modern University*, II 238–44; HOFFMANN 1969–70 = D. HOFFMANN, *Das spätrömische Bewegungsheer und die Notitia Dignitatum*; JONES 1964 = A. H. M. JONES, *The Later Roman Empire 284–602*; MANSI = J. D. MANSI et al. (ed.), *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, 1759–1962; MILLAR 2009 = F. MILLAR, *Imperial Government and the Maintenance of Orthodoxy: Justin I and Irregularities at Cyrrhus in 520*, *SCI* 28, 117–38; PG = *Patrologiae cursus completus, series graeca*, ed. J.-P. MIGNE, 1857–1912; SCHOR 2011 = A. M. SCHOR, *Theodoret's People. Social Networks and Religious Conflict in Late Roman Syria*; SPEIDEL 1974 = M. P. SPEIDEL, *Stablesiani. The Raising of New Cavalry Units During the Crisis of the Roman Empire*, *Chiron* 4, 541–46, repr. in: idem, *Roman Army Studies* 1, 1984, 391–96; SPEIDEL 2008 = M. P. SPEIDEL, *Das Heer*, in: K.-P. JOHNE – U. HARTMANN – T. GERHARDT (ed.), *Die Zeit der Soldatenkaiser, Krise und Transformation des römischen Reiches im 3. Jahrhundert n. Chr. (235–284)*, I 673–90; URBAINCZYK 2002 = T. URBAINCZYK, *Theodoret of Cyrrhus. The Bishop and the Holy Man*.

<sup>1</sup> For the date of the *Notitia dignitatum* see JONES 1964, 1417–24; HOFFMANN 1969–70, I 25–53; with refinements by C. ZUCKERMAN, *Comtes et ducs en Égypte autour de l'an 400 et la date de la Notitia Dignitatum Orientis*, *AntTard* 6, 1998, 137–47; and additional remarks by E. L. WHEELER, *Notitia Dignitatum*, Or. 38 and Roman Deployment in Colchis: Assessing Recent Views, in: B. CABOURET – A. GROSLAMBERT – C. WOLFF (ed.), *Visions de l'Occident romain. Hommages à Y. le Bohec*, 2012, II 621–76 at 621–22.

<sup>2</sup> ND Or. 7.29–30; Oc. 6.21 = 6.64 = 7.182, 6.39 = 6.82 = 7.180. Apparent internal inconsistency in the *Notitia dignitatum* may reflect subsequent transfers and negligence in revising the document. The occidental part registers two units of *equites stablesiani* in the general listing of *vexillationes comitatenses* under the *magister equitum praesentalis* (Oc. 6.21 = 6.64, 6.39 = 6.82), but three units occur in the *distributio numerorum*, two under the *comes Africae* (7.180, 182) and a third under the *comes Britanniarum* (7.203). The latter unit, styled simply *equites stablesiani*,

eleven units are classed as *limitanei* and stationed in frontier provinces under the command of *duces* or *comites limitis*, with one unit each in Egypt, Moesia II, Dacia Ripensis, Pannonia I, Valeria, Britannia, two in Scythia and three in Raetia.<sup>3</sup> The distribution of the *equites stablesiani* broadly coincides with the deployment of other categories of cavalry *vexillatio* created between the 260s and 290s and typically styled *equites*, principally *equites Mauri*, *equites Dalmatae*, *equites scutarii* and *equites promoti*. It is generally agreed that these *vexillationes* originally constituted the main mounted component of the mobile forces attached to the *comitatus* of the emperor(s) during the military instability of the second half of the third century. Later, probably under Diocletian and Constantine, they were in many instances permanently allocated to the garrisons of provinces along the newly stabilised frontiers.<sup>4</sup> Additional evidence for *equites stablesiani* is supplied by epigraphic sources, in all cases predating the Notitia, sometimes by up to a century or more. Five funerary inscriptions appear to commemorate the personnel of two of the units of *equites stablesiani* listed in the Notitia.<sup>5</sup> Two further memorials document two units of *equites stablesiani* not listed in

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has been identified as a doublet of the *equites stablesiani Gariannonenses* listed under the *comes litoris Saxonici* (28.17), and thus transferred to the field army of the *comes Britanniarum* at a later stage in the textual evolution of the Notitia. See HOFFMANN 1969–70, I 171, 252, 352; M. W. C. HASSALL, *The Historical Background and Military Units of the Saxon Shore*, in: D. E. JOHNSTON (ed.), *The Saxon Shore*, CBA Research Report 18, 1977, 7–10.

<sup>3</sup> ND Or. 28.16, 39.14–15, 40.17, 42.19; Oc. 28.17 = 7.203, 33.27; 34.15; 35.14–16.

<sup>4</sup> The literature is extensive, see selectively E. RITTERLING, *Zum römischen Heerwesen des ausgehenden dritten Jahrhunderts*, in: *Festschrift zu Otto Hirschfelds 60. Geburtstag*, 1903, 345–49; A. ALFÖLDI, *Der Usurpator Aureolus und die Kavalleriereform des Gallienus*, *ZfNum* 37, 1927, 197–212; R. SAXER, *Untersuchungen zu den Vexillationen des römischen Kaiserheeres von Augustus bis Diokletian*, 1967, 53–62, 123–25; P. K. COOPER, *The Third-Century Origins of the «New» Roman Army*, DPhil. Diss. Oxford University 1968, 346–85; HOFFMANN 1969–70, I 243–79; SPEIDEL 1974; idem, *Ethnic Units in the Roman Army*, in: *ANRW* II 3, 1975, 202–31 at 220–26, repr. in: idem, *Roman Army Studies* 1, 1984, 117–47; H.-G. SIMON, *Die Reformen der Reiterei unter Kaiser Gallien*, in: W. ECK – H. GALSTERER – H. WOLFF (ed.), *Studien zur antiken Sozialgeschichte. Festschrift Friedrich Vittinghoff*, 1980, 435–52; B. BLECKMANN, *Die Reichskrise des III. Jahrhunderts in der spätantiken und byzantinischen Geschichtsschreibung*, 1992, 226–37; BRENNAN 1998; A. LEWIN, *The Egyptian cunei*, *Tyche* 18, 2003, 73–76; SPEIDEL 2008, 677–84.

<sup>5</sup> Three memorials to soldiers of *equites stablesiani* were found in Mauretania Caesariensis: CIL VIII 8490 = 20350 = ILS 2794 (Sitifis/Sétif; 284–312); AE 1916.7 = 8 (Sitifis/Sétif; 284–312); AE 1937.35 (Thamallula/Ras el Oued; pre 312). These men presumably belonged to the *equites stablesiani Africani* (ND Oc. 6.21 = 6.64 [Africani] = 7.182 [seniores]), see HOFFMANN 1969–70, I 252 nn. 496–97. Two similar memorials occur in Venetia et Histria: CIL V 4376 = ILS 2793 (Brixia/Brescia; 284–312): *vexil(latio) eq(uitum) stablesianorum*; AE 1974.342 (Colombara; the deceased apparently drowned at Aquileia): *ex n(umero) stabl(esianorum)*. B. BRUSIN, *I Aquileia II 2858* reads alternatively *ex(archus) n(umeri) eq(uitum) stabl(esianorum)*. This unit may have been the *equites stablesiani Italiciani* before its transfer to Africa (ND Oc. 6.39 = 6.82 = 7.180), but the possibility of a different unit, not listed in the Notitia, cannot be excluded; see HOFF-

the Notitia, which seem to have been destroyed, disbanded, reorganised or renamed before its composition.<sup>6</sup> The existence of yet more units, though currently undocumented, can be inferred from regimental titles in both the Notitia and the epigraphic record.<sup>7</sup> The origin of the *equites stablesiani* and the significance of their designation remain uncertain, as none of the explanations proposed so far is entirely convincing.<sup>8</sup>

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MANN 1969–70, I 252 n. 498, 263, although publication of the second inscription postdates his analysis and invalidates some of his conjectures.

<sup>6</sup> First, SEG 6, 1932, 187 (Sebaste, Phrygia; late IV): ἀπὸ κώρτας σταβλησιανῶν. For differing interpretations see [W.] RUGE, RE 3 A 2, 1929, 1925–26 s. v. Stablesiano; HOFFMANN 1969–70, I 263; II 108 n. 570; SPEIDEL 1974, 545. Second, AE 1927.153 = 1974.466 (Deurne, Germania inferior; early IV): (*vexillatio equitum*) *stablesia(norum)* VI. See H. KLUMBACH (ed.), Spät-römische Gardehelme, 1973, 60, pl. 19–21, with dating evidence discussed at 66–72. Some scholars have discerned another possible witness to *equites stablesiani* in CIL III 371 = ILS 2783 = IK-18 482 (Cyzicus/Erdek): *vixillatione fesianesa*; see T. MÖMSEN in CIL III 1, 72; H. DESSAU in ILS I 550; HOFFMANN, 1969–70, II 199 n. 85.

<sup>7</sup> The *equites secundi stablesiani* and *equites tertii stablesiani*, placed under the command of the *magister militum per Orientem* (ND Or. 7.29–30), signal the prior existence of an unattested *equites primi stablesiani*, if this unit is not to be identified with the otherwise undistinguished *equites stablesiani* allocated to the *comes Aegypti* and stationed at Pelusium (Or. 28.16). Similarly, the (*vexillatio equitum*) *stablesia(norum)* VI documented in AE 1927.153 = 1974.466 (Deurne) testifies to the existence of *equites sexti stablesiani*, not found in the Notitia, and thus also to the loss or redesignation of at least two other units, *quarti* and *quinti*, in this numerical sequence. For regimental numeration in general see HOFFMANN 1969–70, I 262–64; R. SCHARF, Equites Dalmatae und cunei Dalmatarum in der Spätantike, ZPE 135, 2001, 185–93; SPEIDEL 2008, 679–80, 682–83.

<sup>8</sup> HOFFMANN 1969–70, 251–52 suggested that the *equites stablesiani* were created from an existing (but hypothetical) corps of «Pferde- und Troßknechte», which he imagines was attached to the new cavalry forces created under Gallienus (260–68). SPEIDEL 1974 argued that units of *equites stablesiani* were raised from *stratores*, soldiers (both legionary and auxiliary) previously seconded to the staff of provincial governors as equeries, bodyguards and grooms, who, in the dire military emergencies of the third century, were constituted as independent cavalry regiments, along similar lines to the creation of *equites promoti* from the *equites legionis* in the same period. SPEIDEL supposed that the commanding officers of these units may have been entitled (unattested) *stablensis* or *stabulensis*, although the linguistic dimension of this argument is strained. See likewise M. P. SPEIDEL, Stablesiani, RE Suppl. 14, 1974, 743–44. Alternatively, BRENNAN 1998, 243 rightly stresses the regionality of military developments during the Tetrarchy. He draws attention to the western orientation of *equites stablesiani* within the original tetrarchic dispositions still traceable in the Notitia, observing that the units of *equites stablesiani* stationed in Egypt and in the Danubian provinces west of Noricum are the result of subsequent modifications undertaken by Constantine. BRENNAN conjectures that *equites stablesiani* may be a western counterpart to *equites promoti*, which were created from the *equites legionis* in the eastern part of the empire controlled by Diocletian and Galerius. Most recently, SPEIDEL 2008, 682–83, rejecting his earlier hypothesis (1974), identifies *equites stablesiani* as those *equites*, of unspecified origin, which were temporarily concentrated in northern Italy during the reign of Gallienus and placed under the command of Aureolus. On the basis of Zonaras, Epit. hist. 12.24: τῶν βασιλικῶν ἕπιπων φροντιστῆς, SPEIDEL identifies Aureolus as *stabulensis* or «Vorsteher des kaiserlichen Marstalls», from whose office these units drew their regimental titulature.

In any case, the initial institution of this type of *vexillatio*, allowing for the likelihood that some regiments were later creations, belongs to the large-scale reorganisation and augmentation of the Roman cavalry which began during the reign of Gallienus (260–68) and continued under the Tetrarchy (285–324).<sup>9</sup>

Previous studies, considering the *Notitia dignitatum* to be the latest evidence for *equites stablesiani*, have overlooked two subsequent sources. Both concern the city of Cyrrhus in the province of Euphratensis and, directly or indirectly, its celebrated bishop Theodoret (in office 423–57).<sup>10</sup> The first source is a letter by Theodoret, dated towards the end of 432 or beginning of 433. It concerns the immediate consequences of the First Council of Ephesus in 431, at which the party of Cyril, Archbishop of Alexandria, triumphed over the ‘two-nature’ Christology of the Antiochene party and secured the deposition of Nestorius, Archbishop of Constantinople (428–31). Subsequently Theodoret, a proponent of the Antiochene cause, was active in state-sponsored attempts to reconcile the contending parties, but this endeavour alienated some of his own associates and he became obliged to defend himself against charges of treachery. He addressed a series of letters to his more intractable colleagues, including a response to his metropolitan, Alexander, Bishop of Hierapolis, who headed the irreconcilable partisans of Nestorius.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> There are two criteria for dating. First, the regimental precedence implied by their listing in the *Notitia dignitatum* suggests that *equites stablesiani* were first created later than *equites Dalmatae*, documented from 268, but before *equites promoti*, which BRENNAN 1998 conclusively assigns to the reign of Diocletian, see e.g. ND Or. 7.27–31, 42.13–19; Oc. 28.16–17. The relative position and/or titulature (i.e. *seniores/iuniores* or regional designations) of other units of *equites stablesiani* clearly indicate later developments or subdivisions based on cadres. Second, in the epigraphic record the use of the imperial *gentilicium* Valerius by six of the personnel of two units of *equites stablesiani* indicates service during the Tetrarchy and before Flavius supplanted Valerius in the nomenclature of soldiers and civil officials in territories controlled by Constantine I, cf. CIL VIII 8490 = 20350 = ILS 2794 (Sitifis/Sétif); AE 1916.7 = 8 (Sitifis/Sétif); CIL V 4376 = ILS 2793 (Brixia/Brescia). See HOFFMANN 1969–70, I 252 nn. 494–95, 263; SPEIDEL 1974, 545. The *gentilicium* Aurelius borne by two other men, possibly belonging to one of the same units, may point to an even earlier date of creation, cf. AE 1937.35 (Thamallula/Ras el Oued). For nomenclature as a dating criterion in late Roman military contexts see J. G. KEENAN, The Names Flavius and Aurelius as Status Designations in Later Roman Egypt, ZPE 11, 1973, 33–63; M. P. SPEIDEL, Cataphractarii clibanarii and the Rise of the Later Roman Mailed Cavalry: a Gravestone from Claudiopolis in Bithynia, EA 4, 1984, 151–56, repr. in: idem, Roman Army Studies 2, 1992, 406–13; B. SALWAY, What’s in a Name? A Survey of Roman Onomastic Practice from ca. 700 B.C. to A.D. 700, JRS 84, 1994, 124–45 at 137–40; U. KRAFT, Eine Reitermatrikel der Tetrarchenzeit aus Ägypten (P.Strasb. L 8), APF 54, 2008, 17–78 at 65–66.

<sup>10</sup> For a convenient summary of Theodoret’s life and works see URBAINCZYK 2002, 3–5, 10–28 with older bibliography. His personal connections and cultural milieu are now examined by SCHOR 2011.

<sup>11</sup> For the historical and theological context see recently URBAINCZYK 2002, 23–26; SCHOR 2011, 81–109. For Theodoret’s relationship and correspondence with Alexander, Bishop of Hierapolis, see AZÉMA IV 24–26; SCHOR 2011, 100–108. The prominent role of Euphratensis in the ensuing doctrinal disputes is examined by MILLAR 2009, 127–34.

Theodoret's letter to Alexander survives owing to complex textual and historical circumstances. The original Greek text is lost but its content and, to some extent, wording are preserved in a later Latin translation incorporated into the Synodicon of Rusticus. The Synodicon is a lengthy compendium of originally Greek documents, including conciliar *acta* and episcopal correspondence, which were arranged and translated into Latin by Rusticus, a Roman deacon and nephew of Pope Vigilius, at Constantinople in the later 560s. The sole manuscript witness is the twelfth-century codex Casinensis 2, in which the Synodicon forms the second half of the so-called *Collectio Casinensis*. Rusticus' objective, among other matters, was to provide western readers with a selective polemical record of the aftermath of the First Council of Ephesus in 431, with a view to refuting the recent anathematizing of some of Theodoret's writings in the so-called 'Three Chapters' controversy (543–53).<sup>12</sup> Rusticus drew extensively on an existing documentary compilation entitled 'Tragoedia', now lost, which had been compiled and annotated more than a century earlier by *comes* Irenaeus, a prominent courtier and supporter of the Antiochene party, who had attended the First Council of Ephesus. Irenaeus originally assembled this dossier of apologetic material in ca. 435–36 with the aim of vindicating his friend Nestorius.<sup>13</sup> The Latin translation of Theodoret's letter to Alexander preserved in the Synodicon is preceded by a superscription which indicates that Rusticus derived the Greek text from Irenaeus' Tragoedia. The textual transmission of this letter can therefore be traced back to an epistolary collection put together within Theodoret's lifetime.<sup>14</sup>

For the present purposes the relevant passage concerns Theodoret's efforts to justify his conduct by pointing out to his superior the many occasions in the past when he had expressed his doctrinal views but was never previously suspected of heresy. SCHWARTZ's critical edition reads:

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<sup>12</sup> Rusticus' Synodicon is edited by E. SCHWARTZ in ACO I.3–4 (1922–23). For the theological and historical background see R. M. PRICE, *The Three Chapters Controversy and the Council of Chalcedon*, in: C. CHAZELLE – C. CUBIT (ed.), *The Crisis of the Oikoumene: the Three Chapters and the Failed Quest for Unity in the Sixth-Century Mediterranean*, 2007, 17–38.

<sup>13</sup> For Irenaeus see PLRE II 624–25, Irenaeus<sup>2</sup>. The scope and character of the Tragoedia are examined by E. SCHWARTZ, *Aus den Akten des Concils von Chalkedon*, Abh. Bayer. Akad. d. Wiss., phil.-hist. Abt. 32.2, 1925, 13–20; and the prefaces in ACO I.3 xi–xvii, I.4<sup>2</sup> viii–xvi; F. MILLAR, *A Greek Roman Empire: Power and Belief under Theodosius II*, 408–450, 2006, 157–84, esp. 170–81; idem, *Community, Religion and Language in the Middle Euphrates Zone in Late Antiquity*, SCI 27, 2008, 67–94, esp. 77–80, 91–93. Irenaeus was himself the recipient of several letters from Theodoret: ep. 14 (Coll. Pat.); 3, 12, 16, 35 (Coll. Sirm.).

<sup>14</sup> The codex Casinensis 2 (= *Collectio Casinensis* ep. 161) transmits the superscription *Epistula Theodoretii rescripta ad Alexandrum Hieropolitanum, (sicut) Irenaeus dicit*. The critical edition is by E. SCHWARTZ in ACO I.4<sup>2</sup> (1922–23) 108.32–109.12 (= MANSI V 849B–850A = PG 84 680C–681B); reprinted with French trans. in AZÉMA IV 196–99 (ep. 14), with remarks at 50–52, 59–60 and dating at 182 n. 2.

*Et haec autem pro condescensione suscepi et putans nec tuam contradicere sanctitatem; haec vero in Antiochia et in Beroea et in Hierapoli sumus saepius collocuti; haec et domino meo sanctissimo et Deo amicissimo episcopo Andreae per honorandissimum et reverentissimum decurionem [MS diaconum] fortissimorum tertio stabilisianorum, dum illic adveniret, scripsi* (ACO I.4<sup>2</sup> 109.5–9 = AZÉMA IV 198.21–7, ep. 14).

«Moreover, these views I embraced upon your sufferance and thinking that Your Sanctity did not hold any objection; for in truth we have rather often discussed these views in Antioch and Beroea and Hierapolis, and I also communicated them in writing to my lord the most holy and most dear to God Bishop Andrew through a most honourable and most reverend *decurio* [MS *diaconus*] of the most courageous Third Stablesiani, when he was passing that way.»

Theodoret refers to Andrew, Bishop of Samosata, in the north of Euphratensis, who broadly shared his reconciliatory approach. Andrew was the addressee of two previous letters by Theodoret, also preserved in Latin translation in both the Synodicon and other collections. The second of these letters, dated to autumn 432, appears to be the correspondence mentioned here.<sup>15</sup> There can be no doubt as to the identity of the military unit styled *fortissimorum tertio stabilisianorum*. Drawn up three decades previously, the *Notitia dignitatum* (Or. 7.29–30) lists the *equites secundi stablesiani* and *equites tertii stablesiani* among the *vexillationes comitatenses* assigned to the command of the *magister militum per Orientem*.

The title and status of the messenger require clarification owing to a tangled editorial history dating back to the earliest editions. The unique manuscript witness, codex Casinensis 2, reads here *diaconum*. As early as 1683, ÉTIENNE BALUZE printed *diaconum* but in a footnote proposed the emendation *decanum*.<sup>16</sup> BALUZE's annotation was reprinted in standard collections of conciliar and patristic sources, notably by GIAN DOMENICO MANSI (1761) and, indirectly, by JACQUES-PAUL MIGNE (1860).<sup>17</sup> In his critical edition EDUARD SCHWARTZ (1922–23) emended *diaconum* to *decurionem*, which is less likely than *decanum*, on both palaeographical and historical grounds.<sup>18</sup> Subsequently YVAN AZÉMA (1998) reprinted SCHWARTZ's text, but with-

<sup>15</sup> For Andrew, Bishop of Samosata, see P. ÉVIEUX, André de Samosate. Un adversaire de Cyrille d'Alexandrie durant la crise, REByz 32, 1974, 253–300; AZÉMA IV 26–27. For the two letters see AZÉMA IV 72–79 (ep. 2ab, dated 431), 170–75 (ep. 10ab, autumn 432).

<sup>16</sup> É. BALUZE (Baluzius) (ed.), Nova Collectio Conciliorum, 1683, I 775, note a, «Puto rependum *decanum fortissimorum tertio stabilisianorum*. Habetur in codice Theodosiano titulus *De decanis*.» The editio princeps had been published the previous year in: C. LUPUS (ed.), Ad Ephesinum Concilium variorum Patrum epistolae, ex manuscripto Cassinensis Bibliothecae codice desumptae, 1682, 159–60, who printed *diaconum* without comment.

<sup>17</sup> MANSI V, 1761, 849D (with note a) reprints BALUZE's text and annotation. J.-P. MIGNE, PG 84, 1860, 681 n. 27 reprints J. L. SCHULZE, Theodoret Opera omnia, 1769–74, which incorporates BALUZE's annotation at V 717 n. 3 (ascribed to «B.»), see V 608 for identification of BALUZE).

<sup>18</sup> ACO I 4<sup>2</sup>, 1922–23, 109.8 app. crit.

out its apparatus criticus and neglecting to alert readers to the editorial intervention; indeed AZÉMA himself appears to be unaware of the textual history.<sup>19</sup> These conjectures are complicated by the fact that neither *decurio* nor *decanus* is otherwise documented as an officer-grade in the hierarchy of a late Roman cavalry *vexillatio*, and so, whatever Greek word Theodoret originally employed, it is highly unlikely that Rusticus (still less Theodoret) could have used either term as a valid title or terminus technicus. Fortunately the wider textual evidence eliminates the need for such guessing games. Literary, epigraphic and papyrological sources, from the first half of the fifth century onwards, attest to priests and deacons assigned to the staff of specific regiments for their spiritual and pastoral guidance.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, an examination of Theodoret's surviving correspondence in Greek supplies an exact parallel. In a letter to Eusebius, Bishop of Ancyra, dated to the early 440s, Theodoret commends the courier, a «most reverend deacon» (ὁ εὐλαβέστατος διάκονος) named Agapetus, who has recently been appointed as a regimental chaplain to an unspecified unit stationed in Thrace. Theodoret implies that this was a widespread and perhaps universal practice.<sup>21</sup> Above all, the honorifics *honorandissimum et reverentissimum* accorded to the

<sup>19</sup> AZÉMA IV, 1998, 198.26. AZÉMA appends a note (198–99 n. 3) on the rarity of the title *decurio* in the late Roman army, but does not acknowledge that the term is in fact SCHWARTZ'S emendation.

<sup>20</sup> The evidence is assembled and variously interpreted by A. H. M. JONES, *Military Chaplains in the Roman Army*, HThR 46, 1953, 239–40; JONES 1964, 632–33; R. S. O. TOMLIN, *Christianity and the Roman Army*, in: S. N. C. LIEU – D. MONTSERRAT (ed.), *Constantine: History, Historiography and Legend*, 1998, 21–51 at 27–28; B. PALME (ed.), *Corpus Papyrorum Raineri XXIV.1: Griechische Texte XVII. Dokumente zu Verwaltung und Militär aus dem spätantiken Ägypten*, 2002, 92–97; R. HAENSCH, *La christianisation de l'armée romaine*, in: Y. LE BOHEC – C. WOLFF (ed.), *L'armée romaine de Dioclétien à Valentinien I<sup>er</sup>. Actes du Congrès de Lyon, 12–14 sept. 2002, 2004*, 525–32 esp. 525–27; A. D. LEE, *War in Late Antiquity. A Social History*, 2007, 183, 191–92. Theodoret's letter to Alexander, Bishop of Hierapolis, in 432/33 (AZÉMA IV 198, ep. 14), now freed of erroneous emendation, should be included in future discussions. I plan to pursue this topic elsewhere.

<sup>21</sup> Theodoret, ep. 2 (Coll. Pat.): Οὐ γὰρ μόνον ἔθνη καὶ πόλεις καὶ κώμας καὶ ἀγροὺς καὶ ἐσχατιὰς ἰθύνουσι τῆς εὐσεβείας οἱ τρόφιμοι καὶ οἱ τῆς ἱερωσύνης ἠξιωμένοι, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὰ τῶν στρατιωτῶν τὰ τάγματα, ἐν πόλεσι καὶ κώμαις διάγοντα, ἀφιερωμένους ἔχει νομέας. Τούτων εἰς ἐστὶ καὶ ὁ εὐλαβέστατος διάκονος Ἀγαπητός, ὃς ἀρχεῖ μὲν πόλιν τὴν τῆς ἡμετέρας ἐπαρχίας μητρόπολιν, στρατιωτικὸν δὲ τάγμα ἐτάχθη πρὸς τὰ θεῖα ῥυμίζειν· οὐ δὴ χάριν καὶ νῦν ἐπὶ τὴν Θράκην ἀπήρεν· ἐκεῖ γὰρ τοῦτου συμβαίνει διάγειν τὸν ἀριθμὸν (AZÉMA I 75.2–10); «For not only do men nourished on piety and those who have been deemed worthy of the priesthood now direct peoples and cities and villages and fields and frontiers, but also the regiments of soldiers, stationed in cities and villages, have their own consecrated shepherds. And one of these is the most reverend deacon Agapetus, who proudly claims as his city the metropolis of our province, and who has been appointed to guide a military regiment in divine matters. And on this account he has now set out for Thrace, for his unit happens to be stationed there.» For the date see AZÉMA I 74 n. 4. This Agapetus is possibly to be identified with the homonymous priest (πρεσβευτής) whom Theodoret mentions as the bearer of ep. 47 (Coll. Pat.) (AZÉMA I 117.20–22); see remarks of AZÉMA I 75 n. 2, 117 n. 4.



unnamed messenger from the third *equites stablesiani* leave no doubt that he is a clergyman and not a soldier.<sup>22</sup> The textual interventions of BALUZE and SCHWARTZ were therefore both invalid and unnecessary; the received reading *diaconum* is correct. In 432, Theodoret wrote a letter to his episcopal colleague at Samosata and entrusted its delivery to a *diaconus* in the third *equites stablesiani*, who happened to be journeying in that direction.

Detailed discussion of other individual points of interest in this letter will be postponed until after the introduction of the second source, as the two texts share certain features. The second document again concerns events in Cyrrhus, but in this instance almost a century later, in 520. In August of that year Justin I (518–27) wrote a letter to Hypatius, *magister militum per Orientem*, instructing him to investigate alleged religious irregularities in the city.<sup>23</sup> It has been persuasively argued that this correspondence belongs to a category of imperial ordinance or directive known as a «divine pragmatic sanction» (θεῖος πραγματικὸς τύπος), which conveyed precise instructions relating to

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<sup>22</sup> The phrase ὁ εὐλαβέστατος διάκονος, applied to Agapetus in ep. 2 (Coll. Pat.), equates directly to *reverentissimum diaconum* in the manuscript reading of Theodoret's letter to Alexander. In inscriptions, papyri, epistolography and conciliar *acta* the epithet εὐλαβέστατος / *reverentissimus* is routinely bestowed on ecclesiastical personages – bishops, archimandrites, archdeacons, deacons, subdeacons, priests, monks, lectors. See LIDDELL – SCOTT – JONES s.v. εὐλαβής, II.2; G. W. H. LAMPE, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, 1961–68, 567, s.v. εὐλαβής, I.c. For εὐλαβέστατος / *reverentissimus* see O. HORNICKELE, *Ehren- und Rangprädikate in den Papyrusurkunden. Ein Beitrag zum römischen und byzantinischen Titelwesen*, 1930, 13–14; E. CHRYSOS, *Die Bischofslisten des V. Ökumenischen Konzils (553)*, 1966, 61–63, 67, 69, 73–74. In the letters of Theodoret that survive in Latin translation three other figures are addressed or referred to as *reverentissimus*; two are bishops, the other a priest: cf. ep. 23c (AZÉMA IV 256.3): Nestorius, (former) Bishop of Constantinople, autumn 433; ep. 29 (Coll. Cas. 239 = IV 294.5–6): Alexander, Bishop of Hierapolis, ca. late 434; ep. 30 (Coll. Cas. 248 = IV 300.25–6): Basil, a priest, ca. late 434. The last specimen, another of the letters translated into Latin by Rusticus in his *Synodicon*, is especially instructive, in that Basil, like our messenger, is described as *honorandissimum et reverentissimum presbyterem*. This wording in turn undoubtedly translates the formula τιμώτατος καὶ εὐλαβέστατος, found in the Greek corpora of Theodoret's letters, which the author employs in reference to four deacons, a priest and a lector. Cf. Coll. Sirm. 11.19 (lector); 24.10 (deacon); 37.22 (deacon); 132.9 (two deacons); 133.26 (priest). Cf. likewise a synodical letter of the Council of Constantinople in 382 quoted in Theodoret, HE 5.9 (in reference to bishops). Beyond these instances, Theodoret uses εὐλαβέστατος, alone or in combination with other honorific adjectives, only in connection with ecclesiastical personnel: Coll. Pat. 33.17 (priest); 46.7 (deacon); Coll. Sirm. 10.13 (subdeacon); 47.6 (bishop); 70.23 (deacons); 81.59 (clergy); 83.45 (clergy); 86.8 (priests), 33 (clergy); 112.54, 85 (clergy); 113.130 (priests/rural bishops); 114.1 (priest); 115.4 (priest); 126.59 (priest/archimandrite).

<sup>23</sup> On this episode see now in detail MILLAR 2009. See also A. A. VASILIEV, *Justin the First: an Introduction to the Epoch of Justinian the Great*, 1950, 232–33, 242; W. E. KAEGI, *Byzantine Military Unrest, 471–843: An Interpretation*, 1981, 82–83, 85–86; B. CROKE, *Justinian under Justin: Reconfiguring a Reign*, *ByzZ* 100, 2007, 13–56 at 35–36. For Hypatius see PLRE II, Hypatius<sup>6</sup>, with G. GREATREX, *Flavius Hypatius, quem vidit validum Parthus sensitque timendum. An Investigation of his Career*, *Byzantion* 66, 1996, 120–42.

a specific episode or circumstances without expressing or embodying a general legal principle.<sup>24</sup> In his letter Justin explains that he had read (*lecta sunt nobis*) a routine report written by the *defensor civitatis* of Antioch concerning juridical proceedings conducted (*gesta confecta*) before him at Antioch, «in which were inserted the testimony of soldiers who gave evidence» (*quibus inferebantur testimonia militum significantium*). These soldiers testified that they had witnessed a ceremony at Cyrrhus, in which two local clergymen, Andronicus and George, had mounted a portrait of the late Bishop Theodoret on a cart and made a processional entry into the city singing psalms. As some of Theodoret's opinions, though not yet officially condemned, had since fallen under suspicion of Nestorian heresy, such a demonstration was of concern to the court in Constantinople, especially given Justin's desire to enforce Chalcedonian orthodoxy. It was further alleged, apparently by the same soldiers, that following the subsequent arrival of the newly elected bishop, Sergius, he too had convoked an assembly (*collectio*) at Cyrrhus in honour of Theodoret together with two other similarly controversial theologians, Diodorus of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia, and even Nestorius, whom Sergius had reportedly claimed to be a martyr. Justin expresses formal surprise at Hypatius' ignorance of or inaction with regard to such legal proceedings transacted in Antioch, his own headquarters. The emperor continues that, shortly afterwards, he had read a second set of court proceedings (*gesta*), in this case conducted before the *defensor civitatis* of Cyrrhus, as reported in documentation supplied by the secretaries (*responsales*) of Bishop Sergius, apparently a record of an investigation carried out locally in response to the allegations made previously by the soldiers at Antioch. These proceedings, in contrast, contain statements by many witnesses (*multorum voces*) to the effect that no assembly in honour of Nestorius had in fact taken place. Justin observes that this version of events is supported by petitions (*preces*) from Sergius and other bishops of the province of Euphratensis, in which they declare their unanimous rejection of Nestorius and his views. Faced with conflicting testimonies, Justin enjoins the *magister militum* to conduct an urgent enquiry into these matters, whereby he is to interview the alleged participants and witnesses, and specifically the soldiers who made the original allegation before the *defensor civitatis* of Antioch:

*sed convocare quidem sine dilatione Cyrestenae civitatis episcopum ibi degentem, sicut audivimus, trahere autem ad se milites etiam, qui testimonia in gestis Antiochiae confectis praestitisse inveniuntur de numero tertio stabilisianorum, nec non etiam Andronicum et Georgium, qui ea quae de imagine dicta sunt, fecisse dicuntur ...* (ACO IV.1 200.2–6).

«summon without delay the bishop of Cyrrhus [Sergius] residing there, as we have heard, and also bring before you those soldiers from the unit of the Third Stablesiani who are found to have given evidence at the proceedings at Antioch, and also An-

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<sup>24</sup> See MILLAR 2009, 122–23, with 125–27 for analysis of the procedures and governmental mechanisms delineated in the letter. On this type of ordinance see generally D. FEISSEL, Un rescrit de Justinien découvert à Didymes (1<sup>er</sup> avril 533), *Chiron* 34, 2004, 285–365, esp. 307–10.

dronicus and George, who are alleged to have performed what was reported about the portrait [of Theodoret] ...»

Justin stipulates precisely the points of fact that Hypatius is to establish and lays great emphasis on an immediate and thorough investigation:

*et si quidem inveniuntur milites per omnia falsa dixisse et neque pro imagine neque pro collectione vera dixisse, non tantum ea quae in Nestorium referuntur, sed etiam illa quae in Theodoretum et Theodorum et Diodorum, mox fortissimo numero eiciantur, in quo noscuntur militare, et omnibus tormentis eorum corpora crucientur* (ACO IV.1 200.15–18).

«If the soldiers are found to have lied on any of these matters, and to have told the truth about neither the portrait nor the assembly, not only what relates to Nestorius but also to Theodoret, Theodore and Diodorus, they are to be immediately expelled from the most courageous unit in which they are known to serve, and their bodies are to be subjected to every torture.»

To assist the *magister militum* in his enquiries the emperor gives orders that the original record of the juridical proceedings from Cyrrhus and copies of those from Antioch be sent to Hypatius.

The documentation for these events again comes to us by a circuitous route. The text of Justin's letter (*epistola*) of 520, shorn of its address and preambular context, is preserved as an extract within the *acta* of the Fifth Ecumenical Council convened by Justinian at Constantinople in May–June 553. On that emperor's instructions, the *quaestor sacri palatii*, Constantine, read out Justin's letter towards the end of an oration he delivered during the seventh and penultimate session of the council on 26 May. As a supplementary matter, Constantine introduced details of the episode at Cyrrhus thirty-three years earlier in order to demonstrate that Justinian's attitude to Theodoret and the other theologians implicated in the current 'Three Chapters' controversy did not, as some bishops had alleged, deviate from the policy of Justin I, his (adoptive) father and predecessor.<sup>25</sup> Consequently a question hangs over the current form and language of the letter. There can be no doubt that in 520 Justin wrote to Hypatius in Latin, but at the council in 553 Constantine would have addressed the assembled bishops in Greek, which entailed quotation of all Latin documents in Greek translation. The extant *acta* are in turn a Latin translation of those conciliar proceedings transacted in Greek. It remains uncertain, therefore, whether the received text of Justin's letter is a copy of the original, as deposited in an imperial archive, or a Latin re-translation of a Greek version prepared for the benefit of the bishops.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> J. STRAUB (ed.), ACO IV.1, 1971, 186.35–187.6 (summary), 199.22–200.27 (text) (= MANSI IX 349, 364B–365D). For the 'Three Chapters' controversy see PRICE (n. 12) with older bibliography. For the *quaestor* Constantine see PLRE IIIA, Constantinus<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>26</sup> See the remarks of MILLAR 2009, 122–23.

The two documents examined here contain valuable data relating to the history of the late Roman army in Oriens. First, we learn that the third regiment of *equites stablesiani*, created between the 260s and 290s, and assigned to the field army of the *magister militum per Orientem* in the Notitia dignitatum (400/401), was based in proximity to Cyrrhus in Euphratensis in 432/33 and was apparently stationed in the same locality in 520. The evidence for *equites stablesiani* is therefore extended by some 120 years into the early sixth century. This individual case is consistent with the broader evidence for the long-term continuity of East Roman regimental structures and titulature between the late third and late sixth centuries, and sometimes beyond.

Second, even accepting the difficulties posed by the transmission and/or translation of both documents, the terms used to describe this unit of *equites stablesiani* exhibit ambiguities typical of late Roman regimental titulature. The Notitia dignitatum designates the unit as *equites tertii stablesiani*. In contrast, Rusticus' Latin rendering of Theodoret's letter mentions a *diaconum fortissimorum tertio stabilisianorum*, while Justin's letter refers to soldiers *de numero tertio stabilisianorum*. If the latter text had alone survived, the interpretation 'from the third unit of *stablesiani*' would be undoubted, on the assumption that *tertio* here is an ablative adjective qualifying *numero*. In the former case, however, grammar and syntax demand that *tertio* must have a different function. A wider survey of the evidence of the Notitia dignitatum, inscriptions, papyri and Justinianic legislation reveals many examples of a numeral used in an adverbial form in the title of a late Roman regiment. These include, to cite only instances of *tertio*, the *equites tertio Dalmatae*, *equites tertio sagittarii* and, in transliteration, ἀριθμὸς τῶν τερτιοδελημάτων. It therefore becomes clear that certainly in Theodoret's letter, and probably in Justin's also, the word *tertio* is in fact adverbial and conforms to this well-documented usage.<sup>27</sup>

Third, both texts apply the adjective *fortissimus* to the third *equites stablesiani*: the Latin translation of Theodoret's letter refers to *fortissimorum tertio stabilisianorum*, while Justin's letter of 520 requires that any soldier found to have committed perjury should be expelled from *fortissimo numero*. Usage of *fortissimus*, 'most courageous', in military contexts is sporadically attested from the mid third century, in both inscriptions and imperial legislation, with greater frequency from the end of the fifth century. While this pattern in part reflects the changing quantity and character of different categories of source-material in Latin over this period, the evidence nevertheless gives

<sup>27</sup> Cf. ND Or. 5.36: *equites quinto Dalmatae*; 37: *equites nono Dalmatae*; 6.37: *equites sexto Dalmatae*; 7.27: *equites tertio Dalmatae*; Oc. 6.13 = 56 = 7.174: *equites octavo Dalmatae*; 6.26–9 = 96–72 = 7.188–91: *equites primo sagittarii*; *equites secundo sagittarii*; *equites tertio sagittarii*; *equites quarto sagittarii*. Cf. ILS 2805 = ILCV 522 = AE 1891.105: *ex numero / octavo Dalmatas*; Just. Ed. 4.2: ἀριθμὸς τῶν τερτιοδελημάτων; P.Cair.Masp. II 67126.65–6 (541): ἐν τῷ ἀριθμῷ τῶν γενναϊστ(άτων) Σεξτοδαλημάτων. See also Σεξτοδαληματοί in unpublished P.Vindob. G 30121 (VI), previewed in F. ΜΙΤΤΗΟΦ, Annona Militaris. Die Heeresversorgung im spätantiken Ägypten, 2001, II 561 (194A).

the impression that *fortissimus* became an increasingly formulaic epithet for military personnel in the late fifth and early sixth centuries. In the overwhelming majority of cases *fortissimus* is a collective appellation accorded to «soldiers» (*milites*) as a group or profession, or the «soldiery».<sup>28</sup> Much more rarely, and only after the beginning of the sixth century, is *fortissimus* applied to military units (*numeri*), and then only in general and not with regard to specific regiments.<sup>29</sup> The wider linguistic significance of this designation is clarified thanks to the bilingualism of Justinian's Novellae, in that the Latin translator of Novella 103 (dated 536) used *fortissimus* to translate γενναϊότατος in the context of a military unit.<sup>30</sup> In the more voluminous Greek documentation of the late Roman army, especially in the papyrological record of the fifth and sixth centuries, the honorific γενναϊότατοι, «most courageous», is frequently prefixed to the official titles of regiments and also accorded to soldiers collectively. The instances are far too numerous to examine in detail, but it suffices here to observe the formal correspondence between *fortissimorum tertio stabilisianorum* in the Latin version of Theodoret's letter, translated in the 560s, and, for example, τῶν γενναϊοτ(άτων) Σεξτοδαλμάτων in a papyrus contract of 541.<sup>31</sup> The received texts of Theodoret's letter and Justin's letter therefore provide further examples of the corresponding usage of *fortissimi*, which functioned as an official, or at least widely recognised, Latin counterpart to γενναϊότατοι. Accordingly, Rusticus' translation becomes

<sup>28</sup> Collective appellation for *milites*: e.g. inscriptions: CIL VIII 22765 = ILS 8923 = AE 1895.17 = 1902.46 (Talatati/Ras el-Ain Tlalet; 265): *fortissimis militibus suis ex limite Tripolitano*; AE 1994.1797 = 1996.1623 = 2001.1975-6 (Qasr el-Azraq; ca. 272 to early IV): *per mil(it)es fortiss(im)os suos legg(ionum)*. Legislation: CJ 12.37.6 (377): *fortissimi ac devotissimi milites*; 39.3 (396): *fortissimis militibus nostris per Illyricum*; *ibid.* 4 (423): ... *fortissimis militibus*; 50.22.pr. (457-74): *in transitu fortissimorum militum*; 12.35.18.pr. (492): *fortissimos milites*; *ibid.* 2 (492): ... *quam fortissimis prospiciatur militibus*; *ibid.* 8 (492): ... *fortissimi praesentales milites*; 37.17.pr. (491-518): *fortissimi milites ex quocumque numero*; 8.53.36.1 (531): *fortissimis praestant militibus*; Just. Nov. 103 (536). Individual soldiers: CIL VI 41332 = AE 1969/70.21 = AE 1975.15 (Rome; 357): *fortissimo [mil]iti*.

<sup>29</sup> CJ 1.29.4 (491-518): *nominaque fortissimorum numerorum, in quibus idem milites referuntur*; Just. Nov. 102.3 (536): *ex numero ... fortissimo militari* (see following note).

<sup>30</sup> Just. Nov. 103.3 (SCHÖLL 498.33-5): ἐξ ... γενναϊοτάτου στρατιωτικοῦ καταλόγου > *ex numero ... fortissimo militari*. The Latin translation is from Auth. 33; the complex debates about its date, location and status are of no immediate concern.

<sup>31</sup> P.Cair.Masp. II 67126.65-6 (541): ἐν τῷ ἀριθμῷ τῶν γενναϊοτ(άτων) Σεξτοδαλμάτων. Further examples range in date between the beginning of the second and early seventh centuries, but accumulate in the fifth and sixth. The use of γενναϊότατοι as a collective designation for soldiers (στρατιῶται) dates back to the Severan period; the earliest instance appears to be PSI VI 683.19 (Arsinoites 199). To my knowledge, the earliest specimen of γενναϊότατοι prefixed to regimental titulature is BGU I 316.10-11 (Ascalon 359). The evolution and detailed chronology of this usage requires further study. See general remarks of F. PREISIGKE, *Fachwörter des öffentlichen Verwaltungsdienstes Ägyptens in den griechischen Papyrusurkunden der ptolemäisch-römischen Zeit*, 1915, 42, s.v.; F. PREISIGKE, rev. and ed. E. KIESSLING, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Papyrusurkunden III*, 1931, 184-85; HORNICKEL (n. 22) s.v.

the only instance, so far indentified, of *fortissimus* affixed to regimental titulature or applied to a specific named unit.<sup>32</sup>

Finally, the letters of Theodoret and Justin permit a closer location of the *equites tertii stablesiani* in the fifth and sixth centuries. The Notitia dignitatum gives no indication of the deployment of the individual units of *comitatenses* under the command of the *magister militum per Orientem* in 400/401. In his letter of 432/33, however, Theodoret specifies that in autumn 432 he had sent a letter from Cyrrhus to Samosata with the *diaconus* of the *equites tertii stablesiani* «when he was passing that way» (*dum illic adveniret*). In 520 soldiers of the same regiment were again at Cyrrhus, where they claimed to have witnessed a religious demonstration in memory of Theodoret, and they were still there sometime later when the new bishop, Sergius, allegedly convened another unorthodox gathering. The evidence stops short of certainty, but it seems reasonable to infer that the *equites tertii stablesiani* were based in Theodoret's see. Cyrrhus was a substantial city about 60 miles (96 kms), or roughly three or four days' travel, northeast of Antioch. Formerly a legionary base for *legio X Fretensis* in the first half of first century, Cyrrhus appears to have functioned as a major point of concentration for troops engaged in offensive operations in Armenia and Upper Mesopotamia until the early third century. Changing strategic circumstances diminished its military importance in the later Roman period, when the more southerly highway via Beroea and Hierapolis became the favoured route from Antioch to the frontier, but Cyrrhus remained a significant transit station on the road from Antioch to the Euphrates crossings at Zeugma and, further north, at Samosata. Certainly Justinian deemed Cyrrhus of sufficient importance to invest heavily in its refortification and refurbishment (before ca. 551/52).<sup>33</sup> It is generally believed that «mobile» units of *comitatenses* typically lacked permanent stations and, when not on campaign, were temporarily billeted in or encamped around towns and cities, although much remains obscure about the realities and detailed operation of this peripatetic existence. The long-term stationing

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<sup>32</sup> The complexity of the evidence requires a note of caution: there is little reason to doubt that in Rusticus' translation of Theodoret's letter *fortissimorum* renders γενναιοτάτων in the original; his gratuitous addition of the Latin designation seems most improbable. As previously observed, however, the use of *fortissimus* in relation to *numeri*, rather than *milites* collectively, is not directly documented before the early sixth century. Strictly speaking, Rusticius' translation can only bear witness to Latin regimental titulature in the 560s, although the papyrological evidence for the use of γενναιοτάτοι as a regimental epithet from the mid fourth century leaves little doubt that the absence of direct evidence for the same use of *fortissimi* at an earlier date is simply a consequence of the dearth of comparable Latin documentation.

<sup>33</sup> For the limited data concerning Cyrrhus see E. HONIGMANN, Κύρρος, RE 12.1, 1924, 199–204; E. FRÉZOULS, Cyrrhus et la Cyrrestique jusqu' à la fin du Haut-Empire, in: ANRW II.8, 1977, 164–197 esp. 182–89; F. MILLAR, The Roman Near East, 31 B.C.-A.D. 337, 1993, 104, 229–30; N. POLLARD, Soldiers, Cities, and Civilians in Roman Syria, 2000, 261–62; URBAINCZYK 2002, 21–23. Justinian's restoration: Proc. Aed. 2.11.2–7. See also generally A. BREITENBACH – S. RISTOW, Kommagene (Euphratesia), Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum XIX, 1999, 234–73.

of the *equites tertii stablesiani* at Cyrrhus would augment evidence that, at least in Oriens, *comitatenses* were gradually dispersed in urban garrisons, often at strategic points towards or even on the *limes*, a development that can be traced as early as the second half of the fifth century, and perhaps earlier still, and which reflected a combination of defensive and logistical considerations.<sup>34</sup> An alternative hypothesis, in my view less likely, cannot be excluded: the distance between Antioch and Cyrrhus allows for the possibility that the *equites tertii stablesiani* were based at or in the vicinity of Antioch, the headquarters of the *magister militum per Orientem*, and selected regimental personnel were required to travel to or through Cyrrhus in the course of their duties.<sup>35</sup> In any case, the recurrence of the *equites tertii stablesiani*, and no other regiment, in the meagre historical record of Cyrrhus cannot plausibly be explained by chance.

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<sup>34</sup> For examples dating back at least to the reign of Zeno (474–91), and possibly Theodosius II (408–50), see JONES 1964, 655, 660–61, 685–86, and generally L. M. WHITBY, Recruitment in Roman Armies from Justinian to Heraclius (ca. 565–615), in: A. CAMERON (ed.), *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East 3: States, Resources and Armies*, 1995, 61–124 at 70–72; G. RAVEGNANI, *Soldati di Bisanzio in età giustiniana*, 1998, 94–95.

<sup>35</sup> Clearly travel between Cyrrhus and Antioch was unproblematic. Theodoret indicates that he was often in Antioch to preach (e.g. ep. 83, dated 448, ed. AZÉMA II 206, 208) or to consult the archbishop (e.g. ep. 14, dated 432/33, in AZÉMA IV 198.23–4). Furthermore, Justin's letter to Hypatius notes that Sergius, Bishop of Cyrrhus, was «said to be *residing there* [i.e. Antioch] in the company of the most reverend Paul [Patriarch of Antioch 518–21]» (*cum ibi degere Sergius diceretur et cum Paulo reverentissimo esse*) when the soldiers first testified to the irregularities at Cyrrhus. Indeed, Justin's subsequent directive that Hypatius «summon without delay the bishop of Cyrrhus *residing there*, as we have heard» (*convocare quidem sine dilatione Cyrestenae civitatis episcopum ibi degentem, sicut audivimus*) leaves in doubt whether Sergius is still in Antioch or has by now returned to Cyrrhus. It also remains unclear why the soldiers in 520 gave evidence before the *defensor civitatis* of Antioch concerning events they had allegedly witnessed at Cyrrhus, especially when the two cities were in different provinces, respectively Syria I and Euphratensis. See MILLAR 2009, 126, 135. One possibility, offered here only as conjecture, is that the soldiers, whose number is never specified, had accompanied Sergius from Cyrrhus to Antioch as his escort.