

**Fleets and Manpower on Land and Sea: the Italian *classes* and the
Roman Empire 31 BC – AD 193**

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Abstract

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This thesis re-evaluates the nature and roles of the Italian *classes* (fleets) of the Roman empire between 31 BC and AD 193. Studied through the prism of naval history, the *classes* have been portrayed either as ineffective forces left to decay, or maritime institutions supporting military logistics. By starting from the position that the *classes* cannot easily be compared to other fleets, I argue that they should be regarded as a flexible manpower pool, placed in the same broad category as other soldiers in the Roman empire, who were drawn upon to perform a range of tasks on land and sea to the benefit of the Emperor, and who were integrated into systems supporting the functioning of the empire, which I term imperial organics. Chapter One discusses primarily epigraphic evidence for the *classis* servicemen, to argue that they considered themselves and were considered as *milites* who were trained to row, and who could be given tasks suitable to their abilities and places of deployment. Chapter Two, building on earlier discussion of the origins of the servicemen, examines second century AD papyrological evidence for recruitment from the Egyptian Fayoum. It posits recruitment systems which relied on several elements outside the control of Roman authorities, but which nonetheless ensured that the Italian *classes* were a well supplied manpower pool, perhaps because they did not rely on the so-called *gens de mer*. Chapter Three re-examines the main “naval bases” of the *classes* at Misenum and Ravenna, arguing that rather than purely military ports they should be understood as sites concentrating imperial resources to aid imperial activity in regions where concentrations of imperial property are attested. Drawing on arguments in the previous chapters, Chapter Four considers three case-studies for the functions of the Italian *classes*: their role in Roman military mobilisation and redeployment systems, their involvement in imperial communications, and their possible place in a coastal system on the western coast of Italy suggestive of imperial authority and benefaction. In all three it seeks to present evidence for imperial organics, low-level systems, possibly engendered by imperial activity, but which could persist of their own accord and which were essential to the workings of empire.

Preface

First thanks are to Nicholas Purcell, who in supervising this thesis has encouraged me in directions which I did not know existed, and who has a remarkable ability to see in the evidence what I have missed. He deserves great credit as sympathetic reader of my ideas. Secondly, I express my eternal gratitude to Jonathan Prag, for stepping in as supervisor for a term while Nicholas was away, for giving so much time when I was a wholly confused MPhil student, and for generally offering a great deal of help. My examiners, Anna Clark and Greg Woolf, made a potentially unnerving experience enjoyable and informative, and have given me much to ponder as I take the work forward. I must also record my thanks to Anna Clark, Georgy Kantor and Christina Kuhn for their invaluable input as my transfer and confirmation assessors. Their comments undoubtedly saved the world from a piece of writing for which it may never be ready. For their small but invaluable words of wisdom on things Egyptian, Italian and maritime I express my gratitude to Amin Benaissa, Ed Bispham, Alan Bowman and Andrew Wilson. Katherine Clarke, whose undergraduate tutorials sparked my Roman interests, deserves special mention. The writing of this thesis would not have been the same without several members of the Oxford graduate community, whether in sharing ideas, or inevitably trying to avoid Classics “chat”.

For better or worse, this thesis could not have been written without the support of my parents, who have never pressured me into doing anything sensible. Nor my siblings, to whom I hope I offer a cautionary tale, and who will doubtless surpass me in all they do. And lastly some words for Rachael, who has put up with more than is reasonable, and who may now reclaim me from the charms of the Sackler.

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List of Abbreviations

<i>AAAd</i>	<i>Antichità altoadriatiche</i> . Udine (1973-)
<i>AE</i>	<i>L'Année Épigraphique</i> . Paris (1888-)
<i>AEA</i>	<i>Annona Epigraphica Austriaca</i> (1979-)
<i>ANRW</i>	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i> (ed. H. Temporini and W. Hases, 1972-)
<i>BGU</i>	<i>Berliner Griechische Urkunden (Ägyptische Urkunden aus den Kgl. Museen zu Berlin)</i> . Berlin (1895-1912)
<i>CAG</i>	<i>Carte archéologique de la Gaule</i> . Paris (1990-)
<i>CAH</i>	<i>Cambridge Ancient History</i>
<i>CARB</i>	<i>Corso di cultura sull'arte ravennate e bizantina</i> . Ravenna (1956-98)
<i>CCID</i>	M. Hörig and E. Schwertheim, <i>Corpus Cultus Iovis Dolicheni</i> . Leiden (1987)
<i>ChLA</i>	<i>Chartae Latinae Antiquiores</i> . Basel (eds. A. Bruckner, R. Marichal <i>et al.</i> , 1954-)
<i>CIG</i>	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum</i> . Berlin (1828-77)
<i>CIL</i>	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i> (ed. T. Mommsen <i>et al.</i> , 1863-)
<i>CILA</i>	<i>Corpus de Inscripciones Latinas de Andalucia</i> . Seville (ed. J. González Fernández <i>et al.</i> , 1989-)
<i>C. Pap. Hengstl.</i>	<i>Griechische Papyri aus Ägypten als Zeugnisse des öffentlichen und privaten Lebens</i> . Munich (ed. J. Hengstl <i>et al.</i> , 1978)
<i>CPL</i>	<i>Corpus Papyrorum Latinarum</i> . Wiesbaden (ed. R. Cavenaile, 1958)
<i>Diz. Epigr.</i>	<i>Dizionario epigrafico di antichità romana</i> (ed. E. de Ruggiero, 1886-)
<i>EE</i>	<i>Ephemeris Epigraphica, Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum Supplementa</i> . Berlin (1872)
<i>FIRA</i>	<i>Fontes iuris Romani anteiustiniani</i> . Florence (1940-3)

- Haines C. R. Haines, *The Correspondence of Marcus Cornelius Fronto with Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, Lucius Verus, Antoninus Pius, and Various Friends*. London (1919-20)
- IDRE *Inscriptiones Daciae Romanae. Inscriptiones extra fines Daciae repertae*. Bucharest (ed. C. C. Petolescu, 1996-)
- IG *Inscriptiones Graecae*. Berlin (1873-)
- IGLS *Inscriptions Grecques et Latines de la Syrie*. Beyrouth and Paris
- IGRRP *Inscriptiones Graecae ad Res Romanas Pertinentes*. Rome (ed. R. Cagnat et al., 1964)
- IKöln B. and H. Galsterer, *Die römischen Steininschriften aus Köln*. Mainz (2010)
- IKyzikos *Die Inschriften von Kyzikos und Umgebung*. Bonn (ed. E. Schwertheim, 1980-3)
- ILA Nitiobrogēs *Inscriptiones latinae d'Aquitaine*. Agen (eds. B. Fages and L. Maurin, 1991)
- ILGN *Inscriptions latines de Gaule (Narbonnaise)*. Paris (ed. E. Espérandieu, 1929)
- ILLConcordia F. Broilo, *Iscrizioni lapidarie latine del museo nazionale Concordiese di Portogruaro*. Rome (1980-84)
- ILLRP *Inscriptiones Latinae Liberae Rei Publicae*, (ed. A. Degrassi, 1957-63)
- ILN *Inscriptions latines des Narbonnaise*. Paris (1985-2013)
- ILS *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*. Berlin (ed. H. Dessau, 1892-1916)
- ILTun *Inscriptions latines de la Tunisie*. Paris (ed. A. Merlin, 1944)
- InscrAq J. Baptista Brusin, *Inscriptiones Aquileia*. Udine (1991-3)
- Inscr. It. *Inscriptiones Italiae* (1931-)
- IScM *Inscriptiones Scythiae Minoris graecae et latinae*.
- Ital. Landes. H. Nissen, *Italische Landeskunde* 2 vol. Berlin (1883-1902)
- M.Chr. L. Mitteis and U. Wilcken, *Grundzüge und Chrestomatie der Papyruskunde II*. Berlin-Leipzig (1912)

- Mons Claudianus* *Mons Claudianus. Ostraca Graeca et Latina.* Cairo (eds. J. Bingen and H. Cuvigny, 1992-)
- MRR* T. R. S. Broughton. *The Magistrates of the Roman Republic*, 3 vols. New York (1951-60)
- Naber* S. A. Naber *M. Cornelii Frontonis et M. Aurelii imperatoris epistulae.* Leipzig (1867)
- P. Athen.* *Papyri Societatis Archaeologicae Atheniensis.* Athens (ed. G. A. Petropoulos, 1939)
- P. Diog.* *Les archives de Marcus Lucretius Diogenes et textes apparentés.* Bonn (ed. P. Schubert, 1990)
- P. Fouad* *Les Papyrus Fouad I.* Cairo (ed. A. Bataille, 1939)
- P. Gen.* *Les Papyrus de Genève,* Geneva (1896-)
- P. Graux* *Papyrus Graux.* Geneva (1923-2004)
- PIR¹* *Prosopographia Imperii Romani.* Berlin (ed. E. Krebs, 1897-98)
- PIR²* *Prosopographia Imperii Romani. Editio altera.* Berlin (1933-)
- P. Lond.* *Greek Papyri in the British Museum.* London (1893-)
- P. Mich.* *Michigan Papyri.* Ann Arbor (1931-)
- P.Oxy.* *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri.* London (1898-)
- PSI* *Papiri Greci e Latini. Pubblicazioni della Società italiana per la ricerca del papiri greci e latini in Egitto* (1912-)
- RE* *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft* (ed. G. Wissowa, E. Kroll *et al.*, 1893-)
- RIB* R. G. Collingwood, R. P. Wright *et al.*, *The Roman Inscriptions of Britain.* Oxford (1965-)
- RIC¹* H. Mattingly, E. A. Sydenham *et al.*, *Roman Imperial Coinage.* London (1923-67)
- RIC²* C. H. V. Sutherland and R. A. G. Carson, *Roman Imperial Coinage I.* London (1984)
- RMD* *Roman Military Diplomas.* London (eds. M. M. Roxan and P. A. Holder, 1978-2006)

<i>RMM</i>	B. Pferdehirt, <i>Römische Militärdiplome und Entlassungsurkunden in der Sammlung des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums</i> . Mainz (2004)
<i>Röm. Staatsr.</i>	T. Mommsen, <i>Römisches Staatsrecht</i> ³ , 3 vols. Leipzig (1887-88)
<i>RRC</i>	M. H. Crawford, <i>Roman Republican Coinage</i> . London (1974)
<i>RTAR II</i>	V. Blanc-Bijon <i>Recueil de timbres sur amphores romaines. II 1989-1990 et compléments 1987-1988</i> . Aix-en-Provence (1998)
<i>SB</i>	<i>Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Aegypten</i> . Wiesbaden (1915-)
<i>SEG</i>	<i>Supplementum epigraphicum Graecum</i> . Leiden (1923-)
<i>Sel. Pap.</i>	<i>Select Papyri</i> . London and Cambridge, Mass. (eds. A.S. Hunt, C. C. Edgar and D. L. Page, 1932-42)
<i>Staatsver.</i>	J. Marquardt, <i>Römische Staatsverwaltung</i> ² 3 vols. Leipzig (1881-85)
<i>SupIt</i>	<i>Supplementa Italica</i> , Rome (1981-)
<i>Tab. Peut.</i>	K. Miller, <i>Die Weltkarte des Castorius: gennant die Peutingerische Tafel</i> . Ravensburg (1887-88)
<i>TitAq</i>	<i>Tituli Aquincenses</i> . Budapest (ed. P. Kovács <i>et al.</i> , 2009-11)
<i>W.Chr.</i>	L. Mitteis and U. Wilcken, <i>Grundzüge und Chrestomatie der Papyruskunde I</i> . Berlin-Leipzig (1912)

Other abbreviations are those found in *Année Philologique*, and in the *Oxford Classical*

*Dictionary*³.

Where an inscription is cited for the first time in a given chapter, all concordances are provided. Afterwards, only the principal publication is given.

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Prologue

In 1955, Hans-Georg Pflaum published an inscription on a marble base from Diana Veteranorum in Numidia. It recorded the career of M. Valerius Maximianus, a successful general in the Marcomannic wars and suffect consul of AD 186. He had also been *praepositus* of vexillations of the *classes Misenensis, Ravennas* and *Britannica*:¹

allecto ab Imp(eratore) M(arco) Antonino Aug(usto) et misso in procinctu / Germanic(ae) exped(itionis) ad deducend(a) per Danuvium quae in annonam Panno(niae) / utriusq(ue) exercit(uum) denavigarent praepos(ito) vexillation(um) clas(sium) praetor(iarum) / Misenatis item Ravennatis item clas(sis) Brit{t}an(n)ic(ae) item equit(um) Afror(um) et Mauror(um) / elector(um) ad curam explorationis Pannoniae.

Michel Reddé interpreted this as showing that vexillations of three *classes* combined under one commander to provide grain for the Pannonian armies during the wars of Marcus Aurelius.² Reddé followed the view of Pflaum that the *equites* patrolled the Danubian banks while the *classes* transported provisions.³ This was against Dobias and Leglay, who argued that the cavalry were specifically to patrol Pannonia, and that technically, if on the north bank of the Danube, they would have been outside the provinces. Therefore, the cavalry were not escorting supplies, but scouting in Pannonia.⁴

We shall return to this proposition. But the analysis of Reddé is fundamental for his argument that the main role of the imperial *classes*, especially in the

¹ *AE* 1956 124 (= 1959 183; *cf.* *AE* 1962 390) ll.3-7.

² Reddé (1986) 379-80, largely following Pflaum (1955); see Pflaum (1960-1) I 476-94 for his career; *cf.* Kissel (1995) 268-71; Birley (2000) 172; Roth (1999) 268 erroneously dates his position to the second Germanic war.

³ Reddé (1986) 381.

⁴ Leglay (1957) 107-8 translates the main points of J. Dobias in *Listy Filologické* 5 (1957), 179-96.

Mediterranean, was to support military logistics.⁵ He thus contributes to the debate over the purpose of the *classes*, understanding them as war fleets. Yet this inscription is the only direct evidence supporting his position, and it is worth a brief reconsideration to show that his argument is far from proven, that there are complications in assuming that the *classes* were simply war fleets, and to suggest an alternative.

The precise circumstances in which Maximianus undertook his duties are unclear, though Kissel has cogently proposed the troubles facing the Roman army in AD 170/1.⁶ Intending to advance against the Iazyges, the Romans were outflanked by the Costoboci, who overran Thrace and Macedonia, while the Quadi and Marcomanni made their way into the Julian Alps, Raetia and Noricum.⁷ Roman supply lines were imperilled, and therefore Maximianus was granted special responsibility for guaranteeing grain provisions. If correct, this endows the command with an emergency character.

We cannot overlook this point: Reddé argues that the *classes* were habitually involved in military provisioning. Yet this example seems to relate to an emergency or at the very least a time of particular difficulty.⁸ Its unusual characteristics are highlighted by the involvement of *milites* from the *classis Britannica* in the Danube region. Thus, the only inscription that apparently attests the normal involvement of *classes* in military supply appears substantially less decisive, and dangerous to extrapolate from.

⁵ Reddé (1986) 370-99; Reddé (2001) and below pp. 11-12. Already briefly suggested by Keppie (1984b) 186. Followed by Le Bohec (1994) 164; Roth (1999) 332 cites only Le Bohec. Koenen (2002) offers little direct evidence to support his belief that the provincial *classes* transported troops and supplies. Saddington (2007) 210 suggests that the *classes* were not used for 'large-scale transport' until the latter half of the second century AD.

⁶ Kissel (1995) 268; *cf.* Saxer (1967) 38, who suggested shortly after the death of Verus in 169. Forni (1967) 276 without explanation proposed 173-4.

⁷ *Amm. Marc.* 29.6.1.

⁸ Herz (2002) 27-8 considers the inscription as an example of 'Notsituationen'.

But we can go further. Pflaum argued that the responsibility of Maximianus for the *annona* was concurrent with his command of the *vexillationes classium* and the cavalry.⁹ Reddé essentially follows this interpretation. For a parallel to this joint command of *classarii* and cavalry, Pflaum pointed to a passage from the *De munitionibus castrorum*.

In the ideal Roman army camp presented in that text, there were to be five hundred men from the *classis Misenensis*, and eight hundred from the *classis Ravennas*.¹⁰ They were to camp among the *Mauri equites* and *Pannonii veredarii*, because those units could provide protection as the *classici* secured routes ahead: *classici omnes ideo praetendunt quod ad vias muniendas primi exeunt et quo sint tutiores, a Mauris equitibus et Pannoniis veredariis operantes protegentur*.¹¹

Other scholars have suggested that this does not match the tasks described in our inscription, and that we must set the text aside. For instance, Forni argued that the only reason that *classis* servicemen would have been detached from their fleets would have been to escort cargo ships, and that, if they were linked to the *cura explorationis*, this was an entirely different task from that described by Ps. Hyginus.¹²

Dobias was similarly unconvinced: based on his strict interpretation of the cavalry duties, they could not have patrolled along the Danube because its north bank was outside Pannonia.¹³ Therefore, they were to scout out Pannonia before the Roman assault began in AD 172. Thus, they had nothing to do with the *annona* or the

⁹ Pflaum (1955) 141-2; cf. (1960-1) 482-3.

¹⁰ [Hyg]. *De Mun. Cast.* 30: *classici Misenates D, Ravennates DCCC*. Its dating and authorship are disputed. Domaszewski (1887) 69-72 considered it second century AD, probably pre-Hadrianic. Some scholars connected it with particular dates and wars e.g. Birley (1953) 234, (1981) and (1982) 277-9 argued for the Marcomannic wars of M. Aurelius. Frere (1980) favoured the Danubian conflicts of Domitian. However, I prefer Lenoir (1979) viii-xvi, who argues that the text is theoretical and should not be attributed to a specific conflict, proposing an early second century dating. That the text is a compilation is a problem not fully considered (though see Birley (1982) 279-81).

¹¹ [Hyg]. *De Mun. Cast.* 24.

¹² Forni (1967) 276; cf. Lenoir (1979) 60-1.

¹³ See above p. 1 n.4.

vexillationes classium, making their command by Maximianus subsequent to his supply task, and therefore Ps. Hyginus irrelevant.

Dobias may have been correct to question the connection made by Pflaum between *ad deducend(a) per Danuvium quae in annonam Panno(niae) utriusq(ue) exercit(uum) denavigarent* and *ad curam explorationis Pannoniae*. However, his contestation that the cavalry and *vexillationes classium* had nothing to do with each other is harder to substantiate. This argument only really follows if we assume that the duties of *classis* servicemen were always connected to boats. We shall see over the course of this thesis that this was not so.

Saxer suggested that we could couple the duties of the *classis* servicemen with those of the cavalry but separate them from provisioning tasks.¹⁴ I do not follow his argument entirely: he suggested that the inscription provides a precise parallel for Ps. Hyginus, that therefore the cavalry and the *classis* men must be under the same command and, for Dobias to be right in asserting that the cavalry had no provisioning role, both were deployed *ad curam*. But the evidence of *De munitionibus castrorum* is not a precise parallel. Valerius Maximianus also had members of the *classis Britannica* under his command, not mentioned in the text. Moreover, he had no *Pannonii veredarii*.

But we do not need the description in *De munitionibus castrorum* to precisely copy the forces and duties listed in the inscription for the former to provide a useful parallel, and indicate the unit types that the Romans could combine to perform particular tasks. The text describes *classici* and cavalry dispatched from the camp to prepare the way forward for the army. This could well be termed *exploratio*. A

¹⁴ Saxer (1967) 38-9.

Suetonian comparison, if not entirely convincing, is the use by Tiberius of a centurion to clear the way ahead of his litter:¹⁵

in quodam itinere lectica, qua vehebatur, vepribus impedita exploratorem viae, primarum cohortium centurionem, stratum humi paene ad necem verberavit.

This man was described as *explorator viae*, perhaps parodying army practice.¹⁶

Based on the above, it seems possible that the *vexillationes* of the *classes* were deployed under Valerius Maximianus alongside cavalry forces to secure routes through Pannonia. It does not necessarily follow that we should completely dissociate these men from the task of supplying the armies. Such missions seem potentially related. However, I suggest that we could go further than Dobias in detaching not only the cavalry from the Danube but also the *vexillationes classium*. Both groups had a wider role in securing overrun parts of Pannonia up to the Danube in preparation for a Roman advance, an advance supported by the provisions directed by Maximianus.

The career of Valerius Maximianus provides at most an isolated example of an emergency use of *classis* servicemen to escort supplies to the Pannonian armies. It may even advance no such evidence at all, and could simply show a pattern we shall see elsewhere: the redeployment of the manpower pool of *classis* servicemen on land to carry out duties, broadly considered *militia*, which could be unrelated to travel by water.

¹⁵ Suet. *Tib.* 60.

¹⁶ Cf. e.g. Hirt. *B Gall.* 8.35; Vell. Pat. 2.112.5 for *exploratores* as scouts.

Introduction

The ideological significance of power over land *and* sea had its roots in the Hellenistic kingdoms.¹⁷ Greeks had bestowed praise on Pompey for his mastery of both elements; he was declared ἐπόπτης γῆς καὶ θαλάσσης, and elsewhere was lauded for bringing peace and freedom through ending war on land and sea.¹⁸ The Romans had their own tradition of naval imagery and triumphs, suggesting that maritime power had a well-established importance in Roman society.¹⁹

The language of power on land and sea attained its apogee under Augustus. His *Res Gestae* records wars fought and affairs successfully accomplished on land and sea (*[b]ella terra et mari c[ivilia ex]ternaeque...[gessi]; ...ob res a...terra ma[ri]que pr[o]spere gestas*).²⁰ As a less weighty example demonstrating the cultural capital of the idea in the first century AD, Seneca lampoons it in the *Apocolocyntosis* during the debate on whether Claudius should become a god. The divine Augustus asks: *in hoc terra marique pacem peperit?*²¹

Sea power and its trappings were reflected in art and architecture. The captured rams attached to the Actian monument proclaimed peace achieved on land and sea (*pace parta terra [marique]*).²² A triumphal triple arch at Orange, probably Tiberian, has four panels decorated with warships, anchors, tridents and other naval

¹⁷ Momigliano (1942); Schuler (2007).

¹⁸ *I.Kyzikos* II 24; *AE* 2000 1387 (= *SEG* 49 1509 = 51 1589); cf. Schuler (2007) 383-93.

¹⁹ For naval triumphs see Dart and Vervaet (2011). For an example of Republican naval imagery see Coarelli (1997) 397-446 on the *aedes* of Neptune in the Circus Flaminius. Naval imagery (especially prows) on coins was common towards the end of the third century BC and throughout the second: see e.g. *RRC* 35, 64/2-6c, 161/2-6, 199/2-6b, 289/2-5. See Zanker (1990) 39-42 for the Triumviral period.

²⁰ Aug. *RG.* 3.1; 4.2; cf. 13; 26.4.

²¹ Sen. *Apocol.* 10.2.

²² Murray and Petsas (1989); Zachos (2003). For the inscription see Murray and Petsas (1989) 76 (= Šašel Kos (1979) no.158 = *AE* 1928 15 = 1999 1448).

imagery.²³ Similar elements appear on a group of Capitoline plaques, previously considered Trajanic or Hadrianic but now Augustan.²⁴

Within this context, Augustus established separate, permanent *classes* at Misenum, the outermost promontory in the north-west of the Bay of Naples, and Ravenna, on the Adriatic shore of north-eastern Italy. Their creation is directly attested by Suetonius, who stated: *classem Miseni et alteram Ravennae ad tutelam Superi et Inferi maris conlocavit.*²⁵ Tacitus says of the *classes* in AD 23:²⁶

Italiam utroque mari duae classes, Misenum apud et Ravennam, proximumque Galliae litus rostratae naves praesidebant, quas Actiaca victoria captas Augustus in oppidum Foroiuliense miserat valido cum remige.

One should note the significance of Forum Iulii in this scheme, though I shall refer little to it here because of the very small amount of evidence, and its arguably short lifespan as a *classis* port.²⁷ In any case, the stationing of *classes* at several locations can therefore be placed in the early Augustan period, but I shall not attempt greater chronological precision: there is simply no good evidence.²⁸

²³ Amy *et al.* (1962) esp. 94-106, 157-8.

²⁴ *Ibid.* 96. Note also Boube (1996) esp. 19-31 for the Augustan naval monument from the forum of St-Bertrand-de-Comminges; *cf.* Picard (1957) 257-9, 270-4.

²⁵ Suet. *Aug.* 49.1. The suggestion that the *classes* were created *ad tutelam* the seas around Italy may be schematic. As Brunt (1963) 172 noted, Suetonius was writing under the ‘notoriously defensive’ Hadrian, and he may have construed the role of the *classes* in light of his general presentation of Augustus as militarily defensive (Suet. *Aug.* 21.2, 25; *cf.* Tac. *Ann.* 1.11; Cass. Dio 56.33.5-6). For further criticism of Suetonius, see Starr (1960²) 24.

²⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 4.5.

²⁷ For recent re-evaluation of the Forum Iulii port layout and relationship to the sea see Goudineau and Brentchloff eds. (2009); Gébara and Morhange (2010); Rivet (2010). Of older bibliography, see esp. Ihm in *RE* VII (1912), *s.v.* *Forum Iuli*, 69-70; Donnadiu (1935); Février (1963). For Forum Iulii and the *classes* see e.g. Fiebiger (1894) 328-9; Chapot (1896) 44-5; Starr (1960²) 12-13; Reddé (1986) 171-7; Gébara and Morhange (2010) 16.

²⁸ For attempts to date Ravenna to the early 20s BC see Starr (1960²) 21; *cf.* Reddé (1986) 177-8. For Misenum see Chapot (1896) 67; Fiebiger in *RE* III (1899), *s.v.* *classis*, 2623 (before 22 BC); Starr (1960²) 13-14 (27-15 BC); Reddé (1986) 187-9 (possibly after 20-19 BC). For the suggestion that Misenum was established before the death of Agrippa see e.g. Vitucci (1977) 182-3; *cf.* Susini (1967a)

Lacking direct information, scholars have estimated the combined number of *classis* ships at between seventy five and one hundred and twenty five, with around two hundred men per boat, giving fifteen to twenty five thousand servicemen.²⁹ The creation of these *classes* could be interpreted as a response to the desire for power over land and sea, or at least its appearance, and therefore appear a logically straightforward act.

Yet the picture is more complicated. The Romans of the Republic had no great tradition of maintaining permanent fleets, but were often content to receive allied naval contributions.³⁰ Previous work has paid considerable attention to why the permanent imperial *classes* appeared, and whether their development can be traced in the Late Republican or Triumviral periods.³¹

I shall offer some comments on the second question at the end of this thesis. However, my prime focus will be the problem of why permanent Italian *classes*, which at a quick glance resemble war fleets, were maintained in a period without naval battles, and when Rome was unchallenged at sea. The answers reached by scholars have so far often proved unsatisfactory, partly because of the assumption that the *classes* can be treated just like other Mediterranean war fleets, and partly due to their isolated study as military institutions. I shall briefly review major treatments to provide a sense of the problem.

368; not dismissed entirely by Reddé (1986) 188-9; *cf.* Roddaz (1984) 182-3. Bollini (1990) 297 unconvincingly used Suetonius and Tacitus to argue for their establishment immediately after Actium.

²⁹ Starr (1960²) 16-17 based his lower estimate on the formation of the *legiones Adiutrices* in AD 68 – 70. See Reddé (1986) 550-4 for the higher, following a comment by John Lydus (*Mens.* 1.27) that the strength of the naval forces at the start of the fourth century amounted to 46,562 men, and suggesting that the *classes* of the High Empire had a force roughly equivalent, half deployed in the Italian ones.

³⁰ Starr (1960²) 1-10; Thiel (1946) and (1955); Steinby (2007). Noting that the *duoviri navales* commanded squadrons of ten ships each (Livy 3.30.4; 40.18.7; 41.1.2-3; *cf.* Thiel (1946) 201, 421-31; and (1954) 9, 23-4, 26-7, 37, 48; *cf.* Steinby (2007) 60-1), scholars have posited a small number of permanent ships. This appears to be supported by *navalia* at Rome (e.g. Livy 8.14.12; 40.51.6; 41.9.2; for further references and discussion see Rankov (2013) 31-2, 39-41).

³¹ E.g. Chapot (1896) 19-23, 38-9; Starr (1960²) 1-8; Reddé (1986) 458-72 and below p. 306.

The first serious studies of the imperial *classes* were undertaken by E. Ferrero, using the epigraphy then available; certainly valuable, if outdated.³² However, his work established lines of scholarly inquiry: explanations for their creation, catalogues of ports, ship-types, ranks, organisation and studies of their crews, considering especially terms of service and recruitment.

Mommsen devoted some space to the *classes* in works on the Roman army, emphasising their initial status as a private force of the Emperor.³³ This was followed by useful treatments from de la Berge and Fiebiger, before Victor Chapot published his book on the *classis Misensis* in 1896.³⁴

Following Ferrero, these studies were interested in institutional and organisational aspects of the *classes*. Chapot included perhaps the most detailed study of the lower ranks of the *classis Misensis* specifically, commenting on their origins, status, conditions of service, rewards and punishments, their *honesta missio* and their wives.³⁵ All examined motivations for their creation. De la Berge suggested several: the need for protection for merchant fleets, war fleets to use against upstart governors from Greece and the East, the projection of power over land and sea, the provision of lawful employment for piratical Dalmatians and Cilicians, and the creation of a loyal military force in an Italy without legions.³⁶ These arguments were largely followed by

³² Ferrero (1878), (1884a), (1884b), (1899); *cf.* his entry in *Diz. Epigr.* II.1 (1892), *s.v. classis*, 271-80. Note the bibliographical essay of De la Berge (1886) 5-8 for earlier works, esp. Garrucci (1852).

³³ Mommsen (1881) and (1884).

³⁴ De la Berge (1886); Fiebiger (1894); *cf.* Fiebiger in *RE* III (1899), *s.v. classis*, 2632-49; Chapot (1896).

³⁵ Chapot (1896) 171-220.

³⁶ De la Berge (1886) 67-8.

Chapot, who depicted the Italian *classes* as maritime peacekeepers and police forces, but often left with little of great value to do, and at the service of imperial whims.³⁷

The next vital publication was *The Roman Imperial Navy* of Chester G. Starr, still the only serious English monograph-length treatment.³⁸ Starr covered much old ground, examining the creation of the permanent *classes*, their bases, their ships, their officers and the duties of the rank and file. However, his treatment of social aspects of the *classes* was of greater depth than previous work, partly because he had access to a greater number of documentary sources. Indeed, the source material has not really expanded since. Starr also challenged several established hypotheses: for instance, he argued against the position of Mommsen that the *classes* were initially a private possession of the Emperor and crewed by his slaves, proposing instead that they were public war fleets from their very beginning.³⁹

This work remains valuable. Yet, as is evident from the title, Starr saw the *classes* as a modern navy, and applied the terminology and expectations of what such a navy should do to his interpretations. He writes of the *classis* members being “sailors”, a decision which will be revealed as problematic.

Starr argued that the *classes* were a public organisation created primarily to assist in military control of the Mediterranean.⁴⁰ Because the Romans dominated its shores and peace was apparently easy to maintain, the “navy” was given additional tasks, such as supporting commerce (especially the grain trade), transporting dignitaries and working on infrastructural projects.⁴¹ However, the “navy” was of

³⁷ Chapot (1896) 42-8.

³⁸ Starr (1960²); cf. Starr (1989). For a recent, derivative study see Pitassi (2009). Roughly contemporary was Courtois (1939), arguing that the Italian *classes* were established by Augustus for a maritime threat which never emerged, and were then ignored.

³⁹ Below p. 47.

⁴⁰ Starr (1960²) 168-90.

⁴¹ Note Starr (1989) 75, putting much greater emphasis on carrying messages.

primary import as insurance: Starr believed that Augustus established a doctrine of naval preparedness, which was reinforced by the events of AD 69-70 but which disintegrated in the second century AD through neglect, with only respect for tradition preserving the “navy”.⁴² While we shall see that the *classes* undertook many of the tasks Starr attributed to them, we are not compelled to assume that they were of a secondary nature.

Articles by Wickert and Sander returned to technical and organisational aspects of the *classes*, and argued against Starr on the composition of *classis* manpower.⁴³ Some of these points were considered by Dietmar Kienast in his monograph *Untersuchungen zu den Kriegsflotten der römischen Kaiserzeit*.⁴⁴ Kienast concentrated on select problems: the praetorian epithet received by the Italian *classes*, the social background of the servicemen, and the relationship of both the Italian and provincial *classes* to political history. Kienast connected the history of the Italian *classes* with high political developments in Rome. This provided a rather restrictive interpretation of the *classes* and one which is difficult to sustain in light of trends minimising the historical role of individual Emperors.

We come to the most important recent study, *Mare Nostrum. Les infrastructures, le dispositif et l'histoire de la marine militaire sous l'Empire romain* by Michel Reddé.⁴⁵ Again, one might note that the title emphasises the maritime, implying that we are dealing with war fleets. Reddé provides a thorough treatment of the Italian and provincial *classes*, dealing in turn with their ships, ports, roles and manpower. While an invaluable reference work, Reddé sometimes adds little himself,

⁴² Starr (1960²) 171; cf. Starr (1989) 72-3.

⁴³ Wickert (1949-50); Sander (1957).

⁴⁴ Kienast (1966).

⁴⁵ Reddé (1986); cf. Susini (1967a); Bollini (1968) and Viereck (1975), with criticism from L. Casson in *Gnomon* 49 (1977), 520-1.

largely because his interests are mostly those of traditional naval history, and there is not much more to say.

As mentioned, Reddé has made a useful contribution to work on the purpose of the *classes* by emphasising their military logistics role, but I have already exposed the limitations of this argument.⁴⁶ He also proposed that the *classes* were responsible for maintaining Mediterranean security, but on a much greater scale than previous scholars, pointing to endemic piracy around places like Cilicia, and the speed with which peace could be disrupted by major outbreaks of violence, such as the raids of the Costoboci under Marcus Aurelius.⁴⁷ This does not seem unlikely, though there is no good evidence to support the hypothesis and derives from the desire of Reddé to present the *classes* as military institutions.

Since Reddé, articles have focused on specific topics, including the study of social relations at Misenum by Parma, an onomastic investigation by Salomies and an exploration of the identities of Dalmatian servicemen by Dzino.⁴⁸ The *classes* have been granted cursory overviews in works on the Roman army, or other general histories.⁴⁹ There have also been treatments of the provincial *classes*, considered alongside the Italian *classes* in the major books.⁵⁰ But nothing working along traditional lines has changed how we think about the imperial *classes*.

⁴⁶ See Prologue. Though not a wholly new idea; see e.g. Marquardt in *Staatsver.* II 501; Ferrero in *Diz. Epigr.* II.1 (1892), s.v. *classis*, 273; Starr (1960²) 134, 187; cf. Starr (1989) 74, more critical of the idea. See the review by B. Campbell in *JRS* 78 (1988), 239, where doubts are expressed concerning the importance of the *classes* to Roman military strategy. While Campbell achieves only a partial view by considering the *classes* purely from a military perspective, I support his conclusions on the significance of the *classes* to military logistics.

⁴⁷ Reddé (1986) 323-30.

⁴⁸ Parma (1994); Salomies (1996); Dzino (2010).

⁴⁹ E.g. Webster (1989³) 157-66; Le Bohec (1994) 133-4; 164-5; Keppie (1996) 383-4; Hassall (2000) 321; Saddington (2007).

⁵⁰ See also below p. 21 n.93.

I therefore propose to return to fundamentals, and ask what kind of institution the Italian *classes* were. Although they shared commonalities with Mediterranean war fleets of other periods, they display sufficient differences that we should be cautious about assuming we can study them similarly. We should first consider the term *classis*, to show the breadth of its original semantic range.

Writers of the later first century BC believed that five (or six) *classes* were created by Servius Tullius when he instituted the census. These had political and military functions, expected to provide different levels of service and military equipment dependent on wealth. Livy wrote: *censum enim instituit... tum classes centuriasque et hunc ordinem ex censu descripsit, vel paci decorum vel bello.*⁵¹ Dionysius of Halicarnassus related the same divisions, saying ἐγένοντο δὴ συμμαορία μὲν ἕξ, ἃς Ῥωμαῖοι καλοῦσι κλάσσεις.⁵²

Earlier, Polybius provided a slightly different account. In describing how the Roman army was summoned, he mentions four στρατόπεδα into which Roman forces had originally been divided.⁵³ He notes that these στρατόπεδα comprised four διαφοραὶ, the *velites*, *hastati*, *principes* and *triarii*, ranked by age and equipment.⁵⁴ These divisions resemble the *classes* described by Livy and Dionysius.⁵⁵ Otherwise, a passage of Gellius implies that, when summoned under arms, the Roman army was considered the *classis*: *<item religio est> classem procinctam extra pomerium, id est exercitum armatum, videre.*⁵⁶

The relationship between these accounts, and the degree to which the *classes* developed from purely military to political divisions has drawn attention, but the

⁵¹ Livy 1.42.5; see also 1.43.

⁵² Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 4.18.2; cf. 4.16-17.

⁵³ Polyb. 6.19.4.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* 6.21.7-8.

⁵⁵ Cf. Plin. *NH* 33.43; Festus *Gloss. Lat.* p. 331.

⁵⁶ Gell. *NA* 10.15.4.

evidence is obscure.⁵⁷ However, it is striking that even in Augustan or later literature a *classis* could be understood as an organisational grouping not directly connected to a war fleet.⁵⁸

By the Late Republican period at least, *classis* appears to have been attached primarily to fleets.⁵⁹ In 67 BC, Cicero lamented the attack on a *classis* in Ostia by pirates: *nam quid ego Ostiense incommodum...rei publicae querar, cum...classis ea...a praedonibus capta atque oppressa est?*⁶⁰ Sallust had C. Cotta (cos. 75 BC), bemoan the small *classis* maintained on the sea: *ita classe, quae commeatus tuebatur, minore quam antea navigamus.*⁶¹ A coin series minted in Sicily between 42 and 40 BC by Sextus Pompeius refers to his fleet command on the reverse: *praef(ectus) clas(sis) et orae marit(imae).*⁶²

The imperial period is similar. Velleius Paterculus referred to Staius Murcus, entrusted with a fleet by Cassius, as *qui classi et custodiae maris praefuerat.*⁶³ Tacitus described exploration and raids from the sea undertaken by the *classis* of Agricola in Britain.⁶⁴ Later, Vegetius clearly thought of the *classes* as war fleets in allocating their field of action as the seas and rivers (*classibus maria vel flumina... servantur*).⁶⁵ Therefore, from the Augustan period *classis* primarily meant nothing other than an organised force equipped with warships. However, the word did not

⁵⁷ See e.g. Mommsen in *Röm. Staatsr.* III 262-3; Kübler in *RE* III (1899), s.v. *classis*, 2630-2.

⁵⁸ This applies to cognates e.g. Gell. *NA* 6.13.1: '*classici*' dicebantur non omnes, qui in quinque classibus erant, sed primae tantum classis homines. *Classicus* was also used for the summons in the *castra*, and the men who sounded it (e.g. Caes. *B Civ.* 3.82.1; Livy 28.27.15; Veg. *Mil.* 2.22.3).

⁵⁹ Nb. the *elogium* connected with the rostral column of Duilius (cos. 260 BC), probably an Augustan re-inscription, celebrating his naval victory over the Carthaginians: *CIL* I² 25 (= VI 1300 = *ILS* 65 = *Inscr. It.* XIII 3.69 = *ILLRP* 319 *add.* p. 325) esp. ll.6-7: *...c[eset copiasque] / [c]lasesque navales primos ornavet [paravetque]*; cf. Gordon (1983) 124-7; Kondratieff (2004).

⁶⁰ Cic. *De imp. Cn. Pomp.* 33; cf. Cass. Dio 36.22.2. For further Ciceronian examples see e.g. *Verr.* 2.5.101; *Arch.* 21; *Flac.* 27.

⁶¹ Sall. *Hist.* 2.47.7.

⁶² *RRC* 511; cf. Cass. Dio 46.40.3.

⁶³ Vell. *Pat.* 2.72.4.

⁶⁴ E.g. Tac. *Agr.* 25, 29, 38.

⁶⁵ Veg. *Mil.* .2.1.4.

mean only that, and to think of *classes* solely as war fleets lacks nuance. I prefer to emphasise its meaning as an organisational category detached from assumed duties.

Scholarship has normally assumed that the Italian *classes* were simply like other (Mediterranean) war fleets, encouraging a comparative study. Yet differences between the Italian imperial *classes* and other war fleets discourage simple comparisons.

These differences partly reflect the very different political character of the Roman Mediterranean. For most of our period, the region was politically united under the Emperor in Rome.⁶⁶ At other times, multiple political entities existed, often in competition. This led to conflict, which given the centrality of the sea often resulted in naval battles. Therefore typical war fleets were needed, often constructed, collected or manned *ad hoc*. They were frequently deployed for particular battles, where one or both sides would be destroyed, necessitating the preparation of new fleets. The numerous examples include Aegospotami in 405 BC, the Battle of the Masts in AD 655 and Lepanto in AD 1571.

In the sixteenth century it was characteristic of the Ottomans to produce large fleets from scratch because of their good access to construction materials.⁶⁷ Although in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the Venetians did maintain a relatively large fleet in their Arsenal, their regular requirements were minimal, only calling up most of their citizen naval force in times of trouble.⁶⁸ In AD 648 Muawiyah, the Arab ruler of Syria who established the Umayyad dynasty, collected a fleet one thousand seven

⁶⁶ See Abulafia (2011) 208-11 for the political uniqueness of the imperial Mediterranean.

⁶⁷ Brummett (1994) 96.

⁶⁸ Lane (1973) 49.

hundred strong to attack Cyprus.⁶⁹ He did not possess a permanently organised naval force, and had to gather ships from various coastal towns.

While for much of the fifth and fourth centuries BC the Athenians possessed comparatively organised naval forces, they still had to construct ships and call up men for specific ventures, as Thucydides describes in his account of preparations for the Sicilian expedition beginning in 415 BC.⁷⁰ Closer to our period, Octavian created a series of war fleets in the early 30s BC to combat Sextus Pompeius. Preparations begun in 38 BC after the loss of a fleet at Scyllaeum demonstrate the somewhat chaotic process of creating a fleet.⁷¹ Our sources do not always agree on the details, but it appears that Octavian collected ships and men from multiple cities, then gathered in the Bay of Naples and Tarentum.⁷² Appian says that friends and cities promised ships: οἱ τε φίλοι καὶ τῶν πόλεων τινες αὐτῷ ναῦς ὑπισχνοῦντο καὶ ἐποίουν.⁷³ Dio mentions ships built along the coast of Italy: ἐγένετο μὲν γὰρ ἐν πάσῃ τῇ παραθαλασσίῳ Ἰταλίᾳ τὰ σκάφη.⁷⁴

The above contrasts with the permanence of the Italian *classes*. The Romans did create fleets for particular expeditions, especially outside the Mediterranean. For instance, Drusus created a *classis* for his German campaign in 12 BC.⁷⁵ Similarly, Trajan constructed ships around Nisibis during his Parthian expedition.⁷⁶ But these should be considered separately.

A second critical distinction is the nature of service in the Italian *classes*. Other Mediterranean war fleets drew on relatively small bodies of citizen sailors who

⁶⁹ Lewis (1951) 54-5.

⁷⁰ Thuc. 6.30-2.

⁷¹ App. *B Civ.* 5.89; Dio 48.47-8.

⁷² Vell. Pat. 2.79.2; Suet. *Aug.* 16.1; App. *B Civ.* 5.92, 96; Cass. Dio 48.49.1, 4, 51.5; Flor. 2.18.5-6.

⁷³ App. *B Civ.* 5.92.

⁷⁴ Cass. Dio 48.49.4.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* 54.32.2.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* 68.26.1.

only served for reasonably short periods, or on mercenaries who might be poached by a rival power. Slaves were used when required. Examples of citizen forces include the Athenian fleets of the fifth century and those of Hellenistic Rhodes.⁷⁷ A rower shortage in the Hellenistic period led to the Greek kingdoms hiring mercenaries from across the Mediterranean.⁷⁸ While the Venetian fleets of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries relied primarily on citizens, outsiders were increasingly recruited from Dalmatia and Greece. At the start of the 1350-55 war with Genoa, around one third of Venetian ships were crewed by these peoples.⁷⁹ By the sixteenth century, convicts were being used as rowers.⁸⁰ In the same century, Spanish ships were crewed by paid soldiers and slave or convict rowers.⁸¹

These recruitment strategies countered what Fernand Braudel identified as a chronic shortage of maritime manpower in the Mediterranean in comparison with the North Sea and Atlantic.⁸² Thus while the Ottomans in the sixteenth century could construct ships with relative ease, crewing them was more challenging.⁸³ This manpower shortage encouraged the use of slaves as rowers. Even the Romans, generally hostile to the military employment of slaves, had them manning Republican war fleets in emergencies.⁸⁴

In contrast, the members of the imperial *classes* occupied something like professional positions, receiving regular and fixed pay, and defined benefits upon discharge, at least from the Claudian period. A fixed period of service to obtain these benefits was established in the first century AD. Moreover, as I shall argue later,

⁷⁷ However, Gabrielsen (1997) 96 has argued that the proportion of Rhodian citizen sailors has been overstated.

⁷⁸ Casson (1991²) 112.

⁷⁹ Lane (1973) 175-6.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* 368.

⁸¹ Guilmartin (1974) 110-11.

⁸² Braudel (1972) 138-40.

⁸³ Brummett (1994) 90 with 214 n.5.

⁸⁴ Below p. 47 n.172.

recruitment was often voluntary and relied mostly upon free peregrine peoples. There were no visible manpower problems. Servicemen were not exclusively recruited from maritime communities, but Egyptians from the Arsinoite and Coptite *nomes* served alongside recruits from inland Thrace.

The last point raises the uses to which the *classes* were put. As is clear from our comparative examples, large Mediterranean war fleets were typically deployed for maritime combat, or to support invasions that required crossing the sea, possibly transporting armies. They have few other clearly identifiable uses.

In contrast, the Italian *classes* were variously employed. Sometimes their duties were comparable to those typical of war fleets, or at least involved travel over the sea. We shall see that Otho employed the *classis Misenensis* as a war fleet in AD 69.⁸⁵ In the same year, two triremes *e classe Misenensi* were given to Calpurnius Asprenas, set in charge over Galatia and Pamphylia by Galba.⁸⁶ Their purpose was to pursue the false Nero who had arisen in the area, eventually capturing him on the island of Cythnus.

However, we shall also observe that *classis* servicemen were transferred to land armies on several occasions, implying their similar competence to other *milites*. Furthermore, Chapter Four will argue that while the Italian *classes* supported imperial maritime communications, their servicemen may also have acted as land couriers. The *classes Misenensis* and *Ravennas* both possessed *castra* in Rome, and those based there were probably entrusted with duties untypical of men serving in war fleets.⁸⁷ An inscription from Lambaesis shows that between AD 137 and 152 *classici*

⁸⁵ See below p. 222.

⁸⁶ Tac. *Hist.* 2.8-9.

⁸⁷ We cannot say precisely when servicemen began to be based at Rome, and when they received permanent *castra*. Mommsen (*Röm. Staatsr.* II.2 862 n.3), following SHA *Comm.* 15.6, believed that this could only be dated with security to the late second century AD. Marquardt (*Staatsverw.* II 511

militēs worked alongside Gesates tunnelling through a mountain near Saldae in Mauretania Caesarensis.⁸⁸ Members of the *classis Alexandrina* were found at the quarries of Mons Claudianus in the Red Sea Desert, as we know from two *ostraca* from AD 140 and 141.⁸⁹ While again pertaining to provinces, the *classes Britannica* and *Germanica* had some part in the extraction of iron and stone respectively.⁹⁰

If we then recall that *classis* not only meant ‘war fleet’, these tasks need not have been the occupations given to a fleet with nothing better to do, but duties otherwise performed by Roman *militēs* also entrusted to *classis militēs* as a particular organisational category. The above encourages a departure from a maritime focus on the Italian *classes*, adopting instead an approach which acknowledges that this group had both maritime and terrestrial occupations.

With this background in mind, I propose to consider the nature and roles of the Italian *classes* between 31 BC and AD 193. Primarily, my thesis will argue that the *classes* were conceptualised and employed throughout our period as a flexible manpower pool of *militēs* to perform *militia*, broadly tasks in support of imperial activity, on

n.7) noted Jos. *AJ* 19.253, where after the murder of Gaius Caligula ἐπέται were described as running into τὸ στρατόπεδον. This could suggest that *classis* servicemen were at least quartered with the praetorians by AD 41, but as Fiebiger (1894) 342 and Chapot (1896) 86 observed, this is far from necessary. Both noted that epitaphs indicate that the permanent *classis* presence began no earlier than the Flavian period. Twentieth century scholarship has usually dated the creation of the *castra* to the Flavians (Starr (1960²) 20; Kienast (1966) 74-5; Reddé (1986) 202-3), in particular the *castra* for the *classis Misensis*, which the *Forma Urbis* (Lanciani (1989) 30 and Richardson (1992) 77-8; cf. *CIL* VI 1091, an inscription from AD 240 mentioning the *castra*) indicates was on the Esquiline near the Colosseum, and thus could have been erected in association with that building; cf. Richardson (1992) 79 for the *castra Ravennatis*.

⁸⁸ *CIL* VIII 2728 (= *ILS* 5795 = *AE* 1941 117 = 1996 1802); cf. Campbell (1994) no.204.

⁸⁹ *Mons Claudianus* III 540-1. These documents record money loaned by *classis* members. On Mons Claudianus see Peacock and Maxfield (1997); Maxfield (2001); Maxfield and Peacock (2001); Bülow-Jacobsen (2009); Hirt (2010) 179-84.

⁹⁰ *Britannica*: large numbers of stamped tiles belonging to the *classis* have been found in locations associated with large slag heaps in the Weald region. For a summary of the evidence and bibliography, see *RIB* II.5 pp. 1-4 and more recently Hirt (2010) 190-2. *Germanica*: attested by inscriptions mentioning quarrying or *dolabrarii*: *CIL* XIII 8036 (= *ILS* 2907; cf. Saxer (1967) no.253); *CIL* XIII 7723; cf. Matijević (2010) no.44, cautious over whether these workmen were involved in quarrying. See also Hirt (2010) 175-6.

land and sea. I shall contend that this *classis* manpower pool was integrated into systems of recruitment, manpower mobilisation, communications and coastal “management” which supported the functioning of the Roman empire, or at least the position of the Emperor within it. In Chapter Four, I shall define these systems, which often functioned without interference from a central authority, and may have emerged without concerted design, as imperial organics. Overall, I hope to provide a different interpretation of the *classes* from their portrayal as useless war fleets or military logistics forces.

The date range has been chosen because most of the evidence, especially funerary epigraphy, comes from the first and second centuries AD. Its distribution tends towards the latter century.⁹¹ Its virtual disappearance after the early third century makes extremely challenging any later comprehensive study. The period begins with Actium, the final major sea battle in the Mediterranean until the battle of the Hellespont in AD 324. On a conventional analysis, Actium led to the defeat and deaths of Antony and Cleopatra and the political unification of the Mediterranean and Roman empire under Augustus, establishing conditions which remained broadly constant in our period. AD 193 arguably sees a change in those conditions with the beginning of the Severan period and repeated outbreaks of conflict within the empire.

I shall concentrate on the Italian *classes* because we possess the most evidence for them. These *classes* operated largely within the Mediterranean, a region which has received renewed attention as a testing-ground for historical analysis.⁹² This approach will inevitably lead to a focus on Italy, perhaps to the neglect of other parts of the

⁹¹ For consequences see below p. 32.

⁹² Horden and Purcell (2000); Harris ed. (2005); Abulafia (2011); Miller ed. (2012). See fundamentally Braudel (1972). Note also Pryor (1988).

Mediterranean, let alone the empire. However, establishing whether any conclusions can be applied to other regions could be a future project.

This decision relegates the provincial *classes* (*Alexandrina*, *Britannica*, *Germanica*, *Moesiaca*, *Pannonica*, *Perinthia*, *Pontica* and *Syriaca*) to the sidelines.⁹³ The small amount of extant evidence hampers any study. As an extreme example, there is only one reference to the *classis Perinthia* in a dedication from Perinthos, dated to AD 88-90.⁹⁴ Around twelve inscriptions mention the *classis Syriaca*.⁹⁵ We have several thousand brick and tile stamps of the *classis Britannica*, but this evidence can only tell us so much in isolation.⁹⁶

Moreover, whereas the Italian *classes* operated under broadly similar conditions, the historical and environmental circumstances in which the provincial *classes* were located were often quite different. This is especially true of the *classes* of northern and central Europe. They were in frontier regions, and had more contact with the legions and *auxilia*, probably encountering more military action. Except for the *classis Britiannica*, they operated largely on rivers, especially the Rhine and the Danube. Their distance from Rome and normally greater separation from the Emperor and his family is significant, as will become clear.

The other Mediterranean *classes*, the *Alexandrina* and *Syriaca*, perhaps had more in common with the Italian. Yet their provincial character, alongside their

⁹³ For general studies see Starr (1960²) 106-66; Kienast (1966) 82-123; Reddé (1986) on ports and uses see e.g. 236-43, 271-85, 288-306, 371-2, 403-5, 427-8, 453, 493-8, 507-8, 512-15, 560-1, 569. For specific studies see Saddington (1990), (1991) and (2001); Konen (2002); see Bounegru and Zahariade (1996) for Danubian and Black Sea fleets; Konen (2000) on the *classis Germanica*; Mason (2003) on the *classis Britannica*.

⁹⁴ *IGRRP* I 781 (= Sayar (1998) p. 226 no.44). See also Starr (1960²) 127; Reddé (1986) 498, 560-1.

⁹⁵ For the evidence, see Reddé (1986) 493, 513-15 alongside *AE* 2002 1746 (= *RMD* V 354).

⁹⁶ Above p. 19 n.90 for references.

differentiation from the Italian *classes* by the Romans themselves, through their lack of the praetorian epithet, suggest their distinctiveness.⁹⁷

I shall not neglect evidence concerning the provincial *classes* entirely, but shall use it when it offers enlightening comparative examples. There are enough similarities between the Italian and provincial *classes* (they were all *classes*, after all, with their servicemen describing themselves in the same manner, as *milites*) to validate this approach. When such evidence is deployed, it will be with appropriate caution over whether we can straightforwardly apply conclusions drawn from provincial to Italian *classes*.

Our sources comprise three main categories: documentary, literary and archaeological. The documentary category, comprising epigraphy and papyri, is the largest. Funerary monuments yield most of the epigraphy, though some religious dedications, honorary texts and especially military *diplomata* complete our picture. Most of the epitaphs are Latin, though a small number, especially pertaining to the provincial *classes* of the eastern Mediterranean, are Greek.

There exists no comprehensive collection of these epitaphs with texts and images, though all serious studies of the *classes* reference them.⁹⁸ That they are scattered, and often hard to access in museums, hampers the compiling of any such collection. Here I shall offer some remarks on their quantity, provenance, monument typologies and the sort of information they provide. Chapter One discusses dating.

⁹⁷ See below pp. 38-42.

⁹⁸ The appropriate volumes of *CIL* contain most of the material, but many inscriptions are found in smaller publications. Starr (1960²) 215-21 and Reddé (1986) 673-9, 707-13 collect references in their indices, though neither is complete. The catalogue of Spaul (2002) is neither comprehensive nor reliable. Giacomini (1990) assembled the evidence for Ravenna, providing references, names and pertinent details, but not texts.

There are around seven hundred epitaphs from the first two centuries AD dedicated to or by *classis* members. There is some subjectivity in the dating process, particularly for those from the end of our period. I have excluded material that is more probably than not of the third century, for instance epitaphs which begin with *D(is) M(anibus) S(acrum)* alongside other later features, including nomenclature which probably dates from the period after the *Constitutio Antoniniana* of AD 212.⁹⁹ Thus there may be disagreement over the inclusion of individual epitaphs. However, this applies to a small proportion of the total, not affecting broad trends identified.

Three sites have produced most of the epitaphs: Misenum (c. three hundred and forty inscriptions), Ravenna (c. ninety inscriptions) and Rome (c. one hundred and twenty inscriptions). Around one hundred and fifteen epitaphs come from the rest of Italy. Otherwise, they are scattered across the Mediterranean and beyond, though with relatively few coming from the western empire, save North Africa (eleven epitaphs from twenty seven inscriptions).

A closer look at the three main sites is worthwhile. Precise provenance is especially difficult to establish at Misenum. Beloch identified two main necropoleis.¹⁰⁰ One was located along the road following the west bank of lago Miseno, which then runs northwest to Cappella. The second was on the other side of the same basin, developing towards the north-east up the hill towards Bacoli. Borriello and D'Ambrosio identified several *columbaria* and other funerary material in these areas.¹⁰¹ Evidence for burial has been found elsewhere, such as on the Miliscola, near the road leading to Miseno, round the southern side of the outer

⁹⁹ For some details see Salway (1994).

¹⁰⁰ Beloch (1890²) 200; *cf.* Borriello and D'Ambrosio (1979) 32-3.

¹⁰¹ Borriello and D'Ambrosio (1979) 114-18; 159-64.

harbour.¹⁰² Unfortunately, little *classis* epigraphy is securely attested as coming from one location or another.

The situation at Ravenna is more positive, but still problematic. Major burial areas have been located right along the sandy bank running to the east of the city, which separated Ravenna from the sea.¹⁰³ Evidence for burial has been found extending to modern Classe, south east of the city. A record of provenance is much more common for epitaphs here than for Misenum. However, extensive reuse of stones in later construction means that a great number were displaced.¹⁰⁴ Therefore we retain but a snapshot of the original contexts in which these monuments were erected.

As for Rome, there may have been separate burial areas for members of the different Italian *classes*. Over twenty epitaphs of servicemen of the *classis Misenenensis* have been found in the area of the S. Sebastiano basilica on the *via Appia*.¹⁰⁵ Some were found together in the context of *columbaria*. Epitaphs belonging to members of the *classis Ravennas* have been found on the grounds of the Villa Pamphili, on the western side of the city across the Tiber, along the *via Aurelia*.¹⁰⁶ However, other locations complicate this picture. For example, monuments dedicated to members of both *classes* have come from the area of the S. Paolo church on the *via Ostiensis*.¹⁰⁷

Monument types varied with place. At Misenum, the majority were marble slabs, perhaps attached to the walls of *columbaria*. These slabs are normally

¹⁰² *Ibid.* 159.

¹⁰³ For the location of the main necropolis, originally a series of separate cemeteries which grew together to form one large funerary region, see Manzelli (2000) 220. *cf.* Mansuelli (1967) 9-22 with the map (Tav.I) and more recently Fasold *et al.* eds. (2004).

¹⁰⁴ Mansuelli (1967) 14-16.

¹⁰⁵ *CIL* VI 3093, 3096, 3097, 3101, 3104, 3107, 3110, 3113, 3114, 3123, 3126, 3128, 3131, 3129, 3137-9, 3146, 3910 (= 32767), 32761, 32763; *AE* 1946 144-6.

¹⁰⁶ *CIL* VI 3148, 3149, 3154-9, 3162, 32770.

¹⁰⁷ *CIL* VI 3125, 3130, 3141, 3161, 3164, 37251, 32770.

extremely plain, with little or no basic decoration.¹⁰⁸ Susini noted the problem of limited space in the region and probable high population density.¹⁰⁹ The use of simple wall-plaques may have been a symptom.

Similarly at Rome, despite the wide array of choice and different influences, basic marble plaques were used. Cost could have influenced such choices, alongside the relative status of *classis* servicemen in relation to other military forces in the city, particularly the praetorians. After the Julio-Claudian period, monuments belonging to that group displayed full human figures.¹¹⁰

Different were the marble stelae at Ravenna.¹¹¹ There was a general development from more elaborate stelae with architectural features and human portraits in the first century, towards much simpler, rectangular stelae without portraits appearing from later in the first to the third century AD.¹¹² In these, the epitaph takes up much of the main field of the stele. *Classis Ravennas* members followed this trend.¹¹³

I shall conclude with what the epitaphs can tell us, and some caveats. We have no idea what proportion of the total number of funerary monuments erected our sample represents. In addition, inscribing anything on stone is a learned habit.¹¹⁴ Conceivably, only a select group of *classis* servicemen adopted this habit. Therefore any information gleaned may not reflect standard practices or arrangements. But for

¹⁰⁸ The best sample of images is that of Tuck (2005). There are a few examples of more elaborate monuments, such as that associated with *CIL X 3434* (= *ILS 2853*), an epitaph for the *gubernator* L. Percennius Maximus, which was found with a marble statue of a man *ornata nauticis instrumentis*, wearing *caligae* and with a sword hanging at his right flank. Only a few traces of this statue remain: see Bolini (1968) 91; *cf.* Starr (1960²) 57.

¹⁰⁹ Susini (1967a) 377-8.

¹¹⁰ Durry (1938) 208-11; Coulston (2000) 94-5.

¹¹¹ For a thorough study see Mansuelli (1967).

¹¹² See Mansuelli (1967) 23-44 for stelae typology.

¹¹³ For examples of the earlier type see Append. 20 with Mansuelli (1967) tav. 13 fig.32 and Append. 29 with Bolini (1968) fig.25. For the later type of monument see e.g. *CIL XI 65* with Mansuelli (1967) tav. 17 fig.42 for the image.

¹¹⁴ On the epigraphic habit MacMullen (1982) is fundamental; *cf.* Meyer (1990); Woolf (1996).

the sake of the discussion I shall here assume that our epitaphs are broadly representative: they reflect a range of servicemen holding different ranks, of different ethnicities and at different stages in their careers, which one can reasonably argue looks like a random cross-section.

It is also critical that any information provided in the epitaphs will be determined by the particular epigraphic habits of those responsible for their creation. Relatedly, the information does not necessarily accurately reflect reality, a problem which we shall encounter several times in Chapter One. Because of this, I am wary of utilising epitaphs in the service of statistical analyses of life expectancy, typical ages of marriage or enlistment, and so forth.¹¹⁵

Having highlighted these limitations, the epitaphs of *classis* servicemen can tell us about their names, ranks, places of origin, the terms they used to describe themselves, whether they married and had children, in some cases how much money they spent on their burial. However, we cannot simply take such data as bare fact, but must examine how it was conveyed to learn something about those who provided it.

Epitaphs, especially in groups, can help to cautiously identify where *classis* servicemen were based, as we shall see at Centumcellae. Starr strongly criticised Ferrero, Fiebiger and Chapot for identifying ‘preposterous lists’ of ‘naval stations’ through inscriptions.¹¹⁶ I agree to an extent: servicemen could have been buried at particular locations for countless reasons. Where I differ from Starr and Reddé is in the assertion that we are looking for ‘naval stations’, as Chapter Three will make clear. A *classis* presence may be identifiable when we find inscriptions combined with evidence for coastal imperial property.

¹¹⁵ For cautious explorations of typical ages of enlistment and average service length, see e.g. Chapot (1896) 187-90; Starr (1960²) 78 with 100 n.44. For statistical analysis of marriage patterns see Phang (2001) 153ff. and 409.

¹¹⁶ Starr (1960²) 27 n. 21. Reddé (1986) 146, 165-317 is even more cautious.

Now for bronze military *diplomata*, of which we currently know over one thousand.¹¹⁷ The standard position asserts that from the Claudian period these were granted to non-legionary soldiers to confirm privileges (*civitas* and *conubium*) obtained after a period of service.¹¹⁸ By the second century, this period usually coincided with the point at which *honesta missio*, “honourable discharge”, was granted, though in the first century they were commonly given to serving soldiers.¹¹⁹ In content, the documents evolved to a more or less standard model over time.¹²⁰ *Diplomata* were also supplied to the *classes*: indeed, the earliest *diploma* known, from AD 52, was granted to a *classis Misenensis* serviceman.

Although Dušanić proposed that *diplomata* were only awarded on special occasions, perhaps for bravery on campaign, most scholars have disagreed, considering *diplomata* and their attached privileges as universally bestowed.¹²¹ That

¹¹⁷ In general see Eck (2003), (2010a) 94-5 and (2010b) esp. 33-7.

¹¹⁸ Not explicitly attested, but most scholars believe that we should attribute the regular institution of granting standard rewards to non-citizen soldiers who had served for a particular period to Claudius, partly because our first *diploma* comes from AD 52 (*CIL XVI 1*): see e.g. Sherwin-White (1973²) 247-9; Holder (1980) 48; Levick (1990) 137; Thomas (2004) 437-8; Eck (2010b) 33; cf. Beutler (2007), who argues on the basis of a handful of funerary inscriptions that although Claudius introduced *diplomata*, under Tiberius *civitas* may have been granted to those auxiliaries who remained in service beyond twenty five years. While possible, the evidence is too limited to convince.

¹¹⁹ For the development of *diplomata*, Alföldy (1968) remains fundamental; cf. Mann (1972); Pferdehirt (2002); Speidel and Lieb eds. (2007). For discussion of the *diplomata* of the Italian *classes* in particular, see Forni (1986); Pferdehirt (2002) 82-97; cf. Link (1989) 19-33.

¹²⁰ Alföldy (1968) and Mann (1972) explained any variation before the early second century AD as essentially down to cosmetic choices made by individuals responsible for drawing up and inscribing the documents. Disagreeing, Pferdehirt (2002) 4-27 has identified five separate groups of *auxilia diplomata* prior to AD 107. She proposed that, before the death of Vespasian, *auxilia* only received privileges if they were members of particular units, providing no explanation for the mechanisms supposedly at work. From Titus until Trajan she argued that citizenship and *conubium* were granted for bravery, but her detailed technical discussion fails to provide any good evidence. We have too few documents from this early period to support the narrow categorisation favoured by Pferdehirt.

¹²¹ Dušanić e.g. (1982) and (1986); see also Pferdehirt (2002) 15, 25-7. Beutler (2007) 11-12 argues that Claudian *diplomata* were only granted to those who had shown particular valour, had served for twenty five years and agreed to remain in service. The last point is undermined by *CIL XVI 1*, granted to *qui militaverunt in classe...et sunt dimissi honesta missione*, which Beutler rather weakly dismisses in a footnote (p. 11 n.62) as due to the *classes* being different. For the standard view see esp. Eck (2003) 58-9; see also Wolff (2007) 357. Roxan (1989) 129 suggested that, although *diplomata* were offered to all veterans, they required purchase, explaining the disproportionately high number granted to *equites*. But as Eck (2003) 71 observes, there is no evidence for this; cf. Link (1989) 11-12 and Holder (2007) 116-19, arguing that a soldier had to claim his *diploma*, but that no payment was involved. Link (1989) 19-33 argued that, after a brief Claudian experiment, *diplomata* were only usually granted to

we possess around one thousand in total, that they were produced in most years, certainly from the Flavian period, and that there is no sign on the vast majority that they were considered special rewards, argues against Dušanić.¹²²

We currently know of around seventy two *diplomata* pertaining to the *classes*. Around fifty of these explicitly belonged to members of the Italian *classes* or the two *legiones Adiutrices* transferred from the *classes*.¹²³ They can provide information on the names, ranks and origins of their holders, alongside other organisational details, such as the title of their unit, and their *praefectus*. As such, *diplomata* usefully complement the epitaphs, because they can give us fairly precise dates for changes in practices that could translate into alterations to epigraphic habits, and potentially provide an “official” view on service.

The find-spots of *diplomata* have been used to identify veteran retirement spots.¹²⁴ But there are complications. Margaret Roxan noted that many *diplomata* were discovered before the widespread use of scientific excavation techniques and that others have emerged from the illegal antiques trade, so their find-spots are only known second-hand, if at all.¹²⁵ Furthermore, it is frequently impossible to know how the *diplomata* ended up where they did. For instance, thirteen *diplomata* were known to Roxan from Banasa in Mauretania Tingitana. However, most were in fragments, and the possibility that these were part of the stock of a scrap merchant was suggested.¹²⁶

Italian *classis* veterans under Hadrian, though he did not know *RMD* III 142 (= *AE* 1989 315) with *AE* 1999 703 from AD 100, and I would disagree for the same general reasons already given.

¹²² There were grants for specific acts (from the *classes* see e.g. *CIL* XVI 60 (= *AE* 1927 3): *iis qui naviga[verunt...]* and below p. 98 n.413). Such documents imply a subset of *diplomata* distributed for special deeds, whereas the majority were presented upon completing a period of service.

¹²³ On the *legio Adiutrix diplomata* see esp. Forni (1986) 297-8.

¹²⁴ For studies see e.g. Raespaet-Charlier (1978); Roxan (1981) and (1989); Kellner (1986); Holder (2007) 110-12.

¹²⁵ Roxan (1989) 130.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.* 132-3.

As a further problem, it is not clear how representative our current documentation is. Although a fairly large number of *diplomata* are known, and more are constantly being published, they could represent a tiny fraction of the total. Eck calculated that around one hundred and fifty to three hundred thousand were produced between the Claudian period and mid-third century.¹²⁷ Whether the figures are correct matters less than the general impression created. Within the total, a possibly disproportionate number come from western frontier provinces, especially in the Danubian region. Of the two hundred and forty two *diplomata* considered by Roxan, just over half came from that part of the empire.¹²⁸ Yet, more documents have recently been found from outside those regions, challenging older suggestions that they were only granted to certain groups of *auxilia*, and indicating that it may be safe to cautiously generalise from them.

Papyrological evidence for the *classes* is often extremely scrappy, and the number of documents is not great, although they represent a variety of document types. Mostly from the second century, these include private letters, loan agreements, wills, contracts, tax registers and more. Yet they rarely do much more than mention relevant individuals, and are normally not concerned with the *classes* themselves. Chapter Two will show that the papyri are useful for studying recruitment and veteran settlement, at least allowing us to draw some conclusions on those topics insofar as they relate to the second century Fayoum, from where the majority of the relevant documents come. Although Finley argued that evidence from Egypt could tell us nothing about the rest of the empire because of the uniqueness of the province, I follow the view of Bowman that Egyptian material can have wider implications.¹²⁹ Or

¹²⁷ Eck (2003) 58.

¹²⁸ Roxan (1989) 136-78.

¹²⁹ Finley (1985) 15; cf. most recently Bowman (2011) 319. Note also Bagnall (2005) 187-8.

at least, I accept that it is hard to identify a typical Roman province, and therefore we can cautiously use Egypt to inform us about wider imperial history to the extent that we can extrapolate from any part of the Roman world.

Virtually no ancient literature gives us any useful detail on the *classes* as organisations. The exception is the *Epitoma Rei Militaris* of Vegetius, which devotes a few chapters of its final book to naval organisation and warfare. This late fourth or fifth century text is an epitome of various earlier works on Roman military matters.¹³⁰ It is considered not a history of the Roman army, but a political text arguing for a particular type of army, free of barbarians, which would help to solve the military problems of its period.¹³¹ As such, it combines organisational features, ranks, titles and terminology from different periods. Therefore, we must be extremely careful when using it as a source for the Italian *classes* of the first two centuries AD, about which it makes some questionable statements.¹³² We shall see several of these in the course of this work, but one could briefly note his claim that under each *praefectus* were *deni tribuni per cohortes singula constituti*.¹³³ There is no other evidence pertaining to our period for the division of the *classes* into cohorts, or of the presence of tribunes.¹³⁴

Otherwise, we are left with snapshots from the many authors of different genres who wrote in and about the first two centuries AD. We can gain information from, for instance, Tacitus, Suetonius, Pliny the Elder and Seneca in Latin, and

¹³⁰ The reign of Theodosius I is the most common choice, though Valentinian III is also popular among some scholars (see e.g. recent discussion by Charles (2007)). For consideration of dating and full bibliography see Milner (1996²) xiii-xliii.

¹³¹ Milner (1996²) xxviii.

¹³² For the problems with Vegetius on the *classes*, see e.g. Chapot (1896) 1-2, 44, 131; Starr (1960²) 24-5; Kienast (1966) 37-8; Gnoli (2012) 162-5. Reddé (1986) e.g. 206, 354 is rather more positive, but acknowledges that the compilatory character of the text presents challenges (p.333) and admits ‘la langue de Végèce n’est pas toujours précise’ (p. 542). Note the commentary by Baatz and Bockius (1997), concentrating on ships and shipbuilding.

¹³³ Veg. *Mil.* 4.32.1.

¹³⁴ Thus e.g. Starr (1941¹) 64 n.39; Kienast (1966) 37-8; Reddé (1986) 595-6.

Cassius Dio, Plutarch, Appian and Herodian in Greek. This is far from a comprehensive list. These writers were not much interested in the specifics of *classis* organisation, nor did they say much about *classes* outside combat situations. Rather, they provide incidental, though sometimes critical, details. Each source has its own particular problems relating to date, genre, aims and so forth, which will be considered when relevant.

Finally, archaeology. This thesis is not much concerned with technical details of ships and shipping, so the absence of warships from our archaeological record is not especially problematic. Unfortunately, the main ports of the Italian *classes* are less well known than would be ideal. The problems are different in each case and will be considered more fully where necessary. In brief, at Misenum and the Bay of Naples, the region has been densely populated since Antiquity, and it is has been difficult to carry out proper archaeological investigations. However, the many remains of the *sinus Baianus*, even if not securely identified, provide us with some useful indicators of the physical setting of the *classis*. As for Ravenna, the development of the city in Late Antiquity and the focus of investigations on that period render our knowledge the Republican and early imperial site limited. This must be set alongside major changes to the coastal landscape, especially through alluviation.

Archaeology will also be used to study the relationship of the Italian *classes* to imperial *villae (maritimae)*, and in some cases harbours associated with them. Different problems are encountered in each instance. A general difficulty emerges in the identification of imperial *villae* when there is far too little evidence to make such

claims.¹³⁵ A good example of this will be encountered in Chapter Four when I discuss possible villa sites around the Argentario peninsula. Ideally, I shall combine archaeology with inscriptions and literary evidence to more securely identify these sites.

Two major points emerge from this summary. Firstly, the evidence is frequently scattered, allusive and difficult. Sometimes, arguments will rest on what would ideally require more evidence. However, I hope that the sum total of the evidence of all kinds, dealt with separately across the thesis but ultimately tied together, will give weight to those cases where more direct data is desired.

Secondly, much of the documentary evidence comes from the second century AD, or at least from the last third of the first century AD onwards. A substantial amount of the literary evidence was produced by second and third century people writing about the first century, projecting their interpretations and traditions upon it. To an extent, the picture of the *classes* and empire that I shall present may appear something of an ideal system. Given the evidence, it is very challenging to tell how this ideal was affected by major events such as the eruption of Vesuvius or the Antonine Plague. It is even difficult to identify more gradual developments. Nonetheless, I shall attempt to provide some sense of chronological diversity or genuine continuity.

I shall end this Introduction by summarising the chapters to come. Chapter One concentrates on the documentary evidence, especially epitaphs and *diplomata*, for the men who served in the *classes*. It aims to make four major points: that the *classes* may have been considered conceptually close to the imperial house, that we can

¹³⁵ For a recent exemplar of this habit, see the over-enthusiastic catalogue in Maiuro (2012) 241-346.

identify a formalisation, not militarisation, of *classis* service in the first century AD, that seafaring peoples were not the particular focus of recruitment, the evidence for which imposes considerable limitations on traditional recruitment studies, and that the servicemen were regarded as *milites* expected to perform analogous duties to other *milites* in the Roman army. The argument will begin with a discussion of dating the epitaphs, before moving to the social and ethnic backgrounds of the servicemen. I shall end by discussing the epitaphs, literary evidence and *diplomata* which combine to suggest that the servicemen could be considered *milites*, but that there is some ambiguity over precisely how *classis* labour was divided. Important consequences for recruitment, how we should understand evidence for *classis* duties and the nature of the Roman *miles* will then be explored.

The second chapter centres on recruitment processes to further argue for the place of non-maritime manpower in *classis* recruitment, and the influence of low-level dynamics on imperial history. Concentrating on second century AD papyrological evidence for *classis* servicemen from the Arsinoite nome in Egypt, especially three letters written by recruits, I shall propose a recruitment system which was influenced by matters beyond the influence of Roman recruitment authorities, including environmental factors and the settlement patterns of veterans. Such systems, coupled with the use of recruits who were not the *gens de mer*, may have counteracted the maritime manpower shortage which Fernand Braudel proposed for the Mediterranean.

Chapter Three will move away from a traditional focus on the “naval bases” at Misenum and Ravenna, instead offering an interpretation of those sites based on their relationship with imperial property, and with imperial activity in regions of leisure, display, production and commerce. First I shall examine the “naval base” as an

ancient and modern typology, revealing its limited application to the main Italian *classis* ports. A Plinian letter and the epitaphs of *classis* servicemen will be used to consider the *classis* detachment at Trajanic Centumcellae, emphasising the pleasurable and political aspects of its nearby imperial estate. I shall then deploy a full range of epigraphic, literary and archaeological material to reconsider Misenum and Ravenna in turn. While devoting some attention to their natural advantages and settlement history, I shall concentrate on their respective relationships to imperial property and activity. Beginning with the property around Misenum and Ravenna, we shall see that there is some evidence for Caesarian property at both sites, perhaps influencing their selection as bases. I shall then expand the study to encompass the *sinus Baianus* and the north Adriatic, concentrating on Baiae, Puteoli, Altinum, Aquileia and coastal Histria. This analysis will suggest that the Italian *classes* had the potential to support a range of activities in complex regions of import to the imperial house, while the regions themselves were more alike than commonly assumed.

In Chapter Four, I shall examine a series of functions performed by the Italian *classis* manpower pools, arguing that the *classes* were integrated into several dynamic systems, which I shall categorise as imperial organics, supporting the functioning of the empire. I shall concentrate on manpower mobilisation and redeployment, imperial communications and the imperial coastal landscape of western Italy. With emphasis on the Bar Kokhba war and the civil wars of AD 68-70 and 193, I shall discuss the use of the *classes* as a manpower pool for the Roman army. *Diplomata* and literary evidence suggest that servicemen could be transferred from the Italian *classes* into land units in response to crises, and that replacements were speedily recruited. However, I shall also suggest that the crisis narrative has been overplayed. Secondly, the role of the *classes* in supporting imperial communications networks will be

considered from two angles: their transport of imperial dignitaries and their monitoring of communications passing through major hubs identified in Chapter Three. Finally, I shall consider the relationship between the Italian *classes* and the *annona* by placing them both in the context of imperial infrastructure projects on the Tyrrhenian coast across the first and second centuries AD. I shall argue that the *classes* were part of a coastal imperial landscape, which ultimately contributed to ensure that the city was well-supplied with grain and that it was clear that the Emperor, as benefactor, was responsible.

I. *Gens d'empire: the servicemen of the Italian classes*

1. Introduction

As the foundation for investigating the roles of the Italian *classes*, I shall begin by considering their members. This chapter contains several key arguments: first, that we can identify a conceptual closeness between the *classes* and the imperial house. Second, responding to debates over the militarisation of the *classes* in the first century AD, that they instead underwent a process of formalisation, comparable to contemporary developments in the *auxilia*. Third, that recruitment was not necessarily conducted from the *gens de mer*, with implications for the character of *classis* service, but also that the nature of the evidence imposes major limitations on traditional, detailed recruitment studies. Fourth, that *classis* servicemen were regarded as *milites* who performed *militia*, and that while some of their duties were maritime, they could also be entrusted with terrestrial tasks.

To argue these points, the chapter is divided into studies of the social and ethnic make-up of *classis* manpower, and the nature of service. But an initial section will provide foundations by considering the dating of *classis* epitaphs. I shall focus on two dating methods: the appearance of the epithet *praetoria* in the titles of the *classes*, and the development of the nomenclature of the servicemen. I shall suggest that we can identify two broad groups of epitaphs, pre- and post-Flavian.

I shall then discuss the backgrounds of the *classis* servicemen, both social and ethnic, based primarily on epitaphs and military *diplomata*. Concerning social status, I shall suggest that the *classes* comprised mainly free peregrines, but also imperial freedmen and Roman citizens. The nomenclature both of freedmen and some

peregrines will suggest ties to the imperial house. We shall also see that all servicemen adopted *tria nomina* from the Flavian period, with no evidence for changes to their legal status. I shall argue that this is suggestive of formalisation.

Scholars have based recruitment studies on information on the ethnic backgrounds of *classis* members, and to an extent I shall follow this. However, I shall also pay close attention to how their backgrounds were recorded in epitaphs and *diplomata*, and to changes over time. Alongside points about formalisation, I shall argue that there is little evidence for recruitment from peoples with seafaring skills. It will emerge that servicemen did not usually give precise geographical or ethnic origins, but arguably organised themselves into groups based on a Roman understanding of the world, and reinforced those identities within the context of the *classes* and their Italian surroundings. The difficulties posed for detailed studies of recruitment will be expounded.

Finally, I shall turn to how the men of the *classes* presented their service, and how it was considered by others. By studying epitaphs, literature and *diplomata* in turn, I shall propose that the servicemen were viewed as *milites*, much like, though not exactly the same as, those found in the legions and *auxilia*. Again, any changes in presentation over the first century AD will be explained through formalisation rather than militarisation. I shall also cautiously suggest that these *milites* formed one general group within the *classes*, as there is no evidence for distinct groups of rowers and marines with separate duties. I shall propose that these *classis milites* can best be understood as servicemen trained to row. The consequences of this interpretation for recruitment, the duties of the *classes* and the status and roles of Roman *milites* will be discussed. The Italian *classes* will emerge as a general manpower pool of *milites*

capable of performing *militia* on behalf of the Emperor, rather than as a military fleet with specifically maritime duties and members.

2. Dating the epitaphs

Epigraphic handbooks and studies of particular regions or groups provide general guidance for dating Latin epitaphs, based on external evidence and stylistic grounds, such as formulae or onomastics.¹³⁶ These methods are well enough known as to not require detailed elaboration, but as examples consider the use or abbreviation of *Dis Manibus*, which became more common in the later first and second century AD. Additionally, the omission of the *cognomen* from the *tria nomina* is normally considered the marker of an early date, while a later second century AD date is often suggested if the *praenomen* is omitted. These observations do not provide particularly accurate dating methods, and there was considerable inter- and intraregional variation. However, in combination they do provide broadly accepted ranges for dating.

Alongside these are features specific to the *classes*. A particular Italian *classis* is explicitly named in around 44% of relevant epitaphs. The appearance of the *praetoria* epithet inserted into the *classis* title aids dating. Its first precisely datable occurrence is in a *diploma* of AD 100 (*iis qui militant in classe prae/toria Ravennate*), though following Fiebiger scholars have argued that it was bestowed under the Flavians because there is no obvious context for a grant under Nerva or during the

¹³⁶ E.g. Hatt (1986²); Kraft (1951) 18-19; Clauss (1973b); Lassere (1973); Holder (1980) 144-66; Gordon (1983) 40-2; Keppie (1991) 25-9. Le Bohec (1989) 58-65, although primarily concerned with the *legio XIII Augusta*, provides a very helpful summary and bibliography.

first years of Trajan.¹³⁷ Without explicit evidence, Vespasian has been suggested as the conferrer of the title because the Italian *classes* supported him against Vitellius.¹³⁸ The grant is also often connected to the probably Vespasianic change in individual nomenclature habits.¹³⁹

I am broadly persuaded by the Flavian dating, though the assignation to Vespasian is hard to prove. Kienast preferred Domitian.¹⁴⁰ He suggested that the Emperor disliked the praetorian cohorts because Titus had been their prefect. Therefore, Domitian gave the appellation to the Italian *classes* as an insult to the praetorians. Yet this argument lacks any compelling evidence.

Reddé acknowledged this but also preferred a Domitianic date. He suggested that Domitian formally separated the provincial and Italian *classes* in the 90s, and elevated the latter through their special title.¹⁴¹ This, Reddé argued, was indicated by the change from servicemen of the provincial *classes* receiving their own *diplomata* to *classici* being included in auxiliary *diplomata* for soldiers of the same province.¹⁴² However, Reddé was not aware of a *diploma* of AD 119 granted to *[iis qui mili]taver(unt) in classe Syr[iaca]*, which shows that provincial *classis diplomata* did not disappear until the early second century AD.¹⁴³

¹³⁷ *RMD* III 142 (= *AE* 1989 315) with *AE* 1999 703; Fiebiger (1894) 298-303; see Reddé (1986) 511-22 for full discussion and bibliography.

¹³⁸ Fiebiger (1894) 298-303; Starr (1960²) 71, 185-6; *cf.* Chapot (1896) 50-1, who argues it denoted an administrative reform. For the *classes* and Vespasian see Tac. *Hist.* 3.12-13, 50, 56-8, 76-7.

¹³⁹ See below pp. 42-4.

¹⁴⁰ Kienast (1966) 71-5.

¹⁴¹ Reddé (1986) 516-22.

¹⁴² The earliest example dates to 28 February AD 98: *AE* 2000 1017 (= *RMD* IV 216), found in Elst in the Netherlands.

¹⁴³ *AE* 2002 1746 (= *RMD* V 354).

Two epitaphs may support a Flavian date, possibly even early. C. Nervilius Iustus erected a monument at Velia in Lucania to a *liberta* called Nervilia and his son, the praetorian C. Nervilius Iustus:¹⁴⁴

D(is) M(anibus)
Nerviliae Narbuliae lib(ertae) b(ene) m(erenti)
vix(it) a(nnos) IV et C(aio) Nervilio Iusto filio qui mi-
litavit in praetorio annis X vixit a(nnos) XXXII
C(aius) Nervilius Iustus veteranus deductus
Vellias militavit centurio in classe
praetoria Misenense fecit sibi et
suis
b(ene) m(erentibus).

Nervilius the elder was a veteran of the *classis praetoria Misenensis*, settled at Velia after discharge. The editors of *L'Année Épigraphique* and Reddé connected the deduction at Velia with that attested in *diplomata* at nearby Paestum in AD 71, the only known settlement of *classis* veterans in Italy.¹⁴⁵ This seems an attractive association, though only one other inscription may attest a *classis* burial at Velia.¹⁴⁶ Assuming the epitaph was set up a few years later, Mann presented this as our earliest known attestation of the *praetoria* epithet, which he suggested was granted during the censorship of Vespasian and Titus in AD 73-4.¹⁴⁷

Although this sketch is very tempting, it rests on the assumption that the deduction mentioned can be dated to around AD 71, and probably that the son died relatively soon after. While the first point is reasonably possible, the second can only

¹⁴⁴ *AE* 1978 257 (cf. *AE* 1998 399).

¹⁴⁵ A. Chastagnol, J. Gagé, M. Leglay and H-G. Pflaum in *AE* 1978 p. 71; Reddé (1986) 534 with n.341. For the *classis* deduction see *CIL* XVI 12 (= *AE* 1912 10), from Philippi; *CIL* XVI 13 (= *AE* 1925 68 = *IDRE* II 318), from Daldodeltzi in northwest Bulgaria; *CIL* XVI 15 (= III p. 1959 = X 867 = *ILS* 1990), from Pompeii; *CIL* XVI 16 (= *AE* 1921 48a = *ILGN* 12), from Aregno in northern Corsica; *AE* 1997 1273 (= *RMD* IV 204), from Slavonski Samac on the northern Bosnia-Croatia border. See Keppie (1984a) 98-103.

¹⁴⁶ *EE* VIII 282 + 847: [---]l[---] / mil(es) ex cla[sse---] / [---] / (centuria) Arr[---] and Vecchio (2006) 402-3, for further veterans at Velia.

¹⁴⁷ Mann (2002) 232-3

be a conjecture. Thus, this epitaph is not conclusive evidence for dating the grant of the praetorian epithet.

The second indication comes from an epitaph, probably originally from Rome, set up for a member of the *classis Germanica* by a *miles* of the *classis praetoria Misenensis*:¹⁴⁸

D(is) M(anibus)
Mucatral[is?]
Teres mil(es) cl(assis) G[erm(anicae)]
|(centuria) Rutili Mo[---]
milit(avit) an(nis) X[---]
vix(it) an(nis) L[---]
C(aius) Sulpic(ius) Ru[---]
mil(es) cl(assis) pr(aetoriae) Mi[sen(ensis)]
frat(er) et h(eres) p[osuit].

After AD 89, the *classis Germanica* gained the appellation *Pia Fidelis* for its support of Domitian in the revolt of Saturninus.¹⁴⁹ The editor Marengo felt that there was no room on the stone to follow *CL G[ERM]* with *PF*.¹⁵⁰ If correct, this indicates that the *classis Misenensis* had gained its praetorian appellation before AD 89, as noted by Marengo, who also emphasises that none of the stylistic elements of the epitaph rule out a late first century AD date.¹⁵¹

Perhaps the title was simply omitted, denying us our *terminus ante quem*. Yet of the eight other epitaphs mentioning the *classis Germanica*, only two lack the title. The first, from near Aoste around 40 miles south-east of Lyon, reads:¹⁵²

¹⁴⁸ *AE* 2005 255.

¹⁴⁹ For the title see *CIL* XIII 7681, 7723 with Starr (1960²) 146-7; Reddé (1986) 512.

¹⁵⁰ S. M. Marengo in Paci and Marengo eds. (2005), 124. Infrequently *G* alone can stand for *Germanica* (e.g. *CIL* XIII 7716, 8160), so *cl(assis) G(ermanicae) [P(iae) F(idelis)]* is possible.

¹⁵¹ S. M. Marengo in Paci and Marengo eds. (2005), 124-5.

¹⁵² *ILN* V 2.606 (= *CIL* XII 2412 = *ILS* 2909).

Claud(iae) Albinae
Tib(eri) Cl(audi) Albini
nauarc(hi) clas(sis)
Germ(anicae) filiae
Pompeius
Pr[---]i[---]
co(n)iug(i) optim(ae).

The names given and the absence of *Dis Manibus* point to a mid-first century AD date. Thus, the epitaph is earlier than the granting of the title. The second example, from the villa of Hadrian at Tivoli, is second century, and thus yields our single good example of (deliberate) omission.¹⁵³ Acknowledging the small size of the sample, a date of before AD 89 thus seems more likely for the monument to Mucatralis than that *P(ia) F(idelis)* was omitted. However, once more, this inscription is not as conclusive for praetorian dating as Marengo presents it.

Based on the above discussion, I am inclined to cautiously accept that praetorian appellation was granted to the Italian *classes* during the Flavian period, though it is very difficult to be more precise. Therefore, those inscriptions terming the Italian *classes* praetorian should be dated to the Flavian period at the earliest. This indicator is imperfect. It is not especially accurate, nor can we date with certainty to before this time inscriptions not including the epithet. Such titles could be excluded at the whim of the inscriber. Moreover, around half of our second century epitaphs do not name the *classis*, so this is only helpful for a subset.

A second *classis* epitaph dating aid is the nomenclature of servicemen. We can observe a change, arguably again in the Flavian period, from a range of name types to the almost universal utilisation of *tria nomina*.

¹⁵³ AE 2006 394: *D(is) [M(anibus)] / Titianus Victo(rinus) miles clas(s)is Germaniciani / natio(ne) Agrippine(n)si[s] / vix(it) annis XXVIII sti/pe(n)diorum VI Se/cundinus Peculi(aris) b(ene) m(erenti) fecit*.

With their accurate dating, *classis diplomata* are the best guide for this change. In all first century AD *diplomata*, servicemen had peregrine names (normally single peregrine name plus filiation). Our earliest *diploma*, from AD 52, names *Sparticus Diuzeni filius Dipscurtus*, an unusual name formula but his filiation clarifying his peregrine origins.¹⁵⁴ Sixteen other examples date to AD 71 or earlier, including *Dernaius Derdipili filius* appearing in a *diploma* from 26 February AD 70, and *Liccaius Birsi filius* and *Velagenus Covionis filius*, both named in *diplomata* of AD 71.¹⁵⁵ However, by the early second century Italian *classis* servicemen all but universally possessed Roman names in *diplomata*. These included *M(arcus) Baebius Athi filius Firmus*, discharged on 25 December AD 119, *D(ecimus) Numitorius Agisini filius Tarammonius*, mentioned in AD 134, and *C(aius) Iulius Seuthi filius Bithus*, a veteran from AD 160.¹⁵⁶ The first certain *tria nomina*, *L(ucius) Bennius Liccai filius Bueza*, appears in the *diploma* from AD 100 mentioned above.¹⁵⁷

A second century AD papyrus letter written by a *classis* recruit indicates that these names were taken upon enlistment. Having signed up, Apion stated that he had received a new name: ἔσ[τ]ι [δέ] μου ὄνομα Ἀντωνίς Μάξιμος.¹⁵⁸ Although this is only one example, there is no reason to regard it as unusual. By the end of the first century AD *classis* service usually lasted twenty six years or more.¹⁵⁹ Thus, the

¹⁵⁴ *CIL* XVI 1 (= III p. 844 = X 769 = *ILS* 1986). *Dipscurtus* could be an unparalleled *cognomen* (e.g. Tatscheva (1999) 870), or a unique ethnic identifier, as Nesselhauf in *CIL* XVI (1936), p. 1 and Kienast (1966) 24 supposed.

¹⁵⁵ *AE* 1997 1771 (= *RMD* IV 203); *AE* 1997 1273; *AE* 2002 1771 (= *RMD* IV 205). The others are *CIL* XVI 7-17; *AE* 2004 1282 (= 2007 1232); *AE* 2006 1833.

¹⁵⁶ *AE* 2005 1738; *CIL* XVI 79 (= III p. 878 = X 7855); *RMD* II 105 (= *AE* 1975 245). There are around eighteen other examples in our *diplomata*. A possible exception is *AE* 2007 1787, dated to AD 158, naming [---]iconis f. *Thrac(i)*. However, *Thrac(?)* could be a *cognomen*: the entire left half of the document is lost, and *Thrac* ends one line on the right, so what follows is uncertain. Even if this is a genuine exception, a few deviations from standard practice would be unsurprising.

¹⁵⁷ See above pp. 38-9.

¹⁵⁸ *BGU* II 423 ll.22-3; cf. below pp. 117-18. See esp. Salomies (1996) on name choice.

¹⁵⁹ Established by six first and five second century AD *diplomata* e.g. *CIL* XVI 12 (AD 71): *qui sena et vicena stipendia aut plura*, the last being *AE* 1977 793 (= *RMD* I 38) from AD 139. Second century documents increasingly omit *aut plura*, the earliest example being *AE* 2008 1756 (AD 119): *sex et*

recipient of the AD 100 *diploma* enlisted in about AD 74, presumably when he took his name and thus, as Pferdehirt noted, around the time *tria nomina* perhaps began to be adopted.¹⁶⁰

Therefore, if a *classis* epitaph documents a serviceman with the *tria nomina*, it will normally be Flavian or later. Other types of name should be from an earlier period, allowing for some exceptions. For instance, where the person mentioned is a Roman citizen, as opposed to a free peregrine, they would possess the *tria nomina* even before the Flavian period.

Utilising the above, we can identify two chronological groups of epitaphs for servicemen. The first, forty one monuments in total, dates from the start of the imperial period down to Flavian times. The Appendix collects these for convenience, but does not attempt to fully re-edit the inscriptions, and only provides major references.

The second group, and the majority of epitaphs, can be dated from the end of the first century AD down to the beginning of the third. The following, found outside the Porta Maggiore in Rome, is a typical example:¹⁶¹

D(is) M(anibus)
Q(uinti) Cati Firmini

viginti stipendiis emeritis dimissis honesta missione, alongside twenty others. The *diploma* of AD 52 (*CIL* XVI 1) was granted simply to those *sunt dimissi honesta missione*. For further discussion see Starr (1960²) 80-1, 88ff.; Reddé (1986) 533-4.

¹⁶⁰ Pferdehirt (2002) 169-70; cf. Reddé (1986) 525-7. Two inscriptions are problematic. *CIL* X 7592 (Cagliari, Sardinia): *M(arcus) Epidi/us Qua/dratus / miles / ex classe / Misenens(e) / |(centuria) Cn(aei) Valeri / Prisci / milit(avit) an(nos) III / vix(it) an(nos) XXVI / hic situs est*; *CIL* X 8329 (Mariana, Corsica): *L(ucius) Gellius Niger mil(es) / ex classe Misen(en)se / mil(itavit) an(nos) XIII vix(it) / ann(os) XL h(ic) s(itus) est*. These epitaphs are probably first century AD and, given our discussion of the *praetoria* epithet, should be pre-Flavian. If correct, these men could be Roman citizens by birth, as the monuments would predate the adoption of *tria nomina* by serving peregrines. However, Starr (1960²) 97 n.20, followed by Panciera (2006d) 1275, suggested that *pr(aetoria)* was simply omitted. Panciera (2006d) 1275 n.15 provides parallels. The title may have only recently been bestowed and perhaps the habit had not become universally adopted. The second stone in particular is quite crudely cut; a hasty inscribing could have caused the omission.

¹⁶¹ *CIL* VI 3105.

mil(itis) pr(aetoriae) cl(assis) Mes(enensis)(sic) III
Pace nat(ione) Sardus
v(ixit) a(nnis) XXXIIX mil(itavit)
a(nnis) XVII Q(uintus) Lutati-
us Secund(us) h(eres) b(ene) m(erenti) f(ecit).

Common elements include *Dis Manibus*, the *tria nomina* of the serviceman, his description as a *miles*, the titling of the *classis* as *praetoria*, the naming of his boat (the trireme Pax), a statement of his origin (a Sardinian), his age at death and length of service, and then the naming of the *heres* who erected the monument. Not every epitaph includes all features, but most contain a good selection.

3. Social origins

With dating methods proposed, we can consider the origins of the servicemen, beginning with social background. Based on epitaphs and *diplomata*, I shall argue in support of the general consensus that the *classes* comprised Roman citizens, freedmen and free peregrines from their creation. I shall present the adoption of the *tria nomina* by peregrine *classis* servicemen in the later first century AD as an example of formalisation, rather than due to changes in the legal status of servicemen, and compare such formalisation to developments in the *auxilia*. Furthermore, the presence of imperial freedmen and certain features of nomenclature will suggest a conceptual connection between the imperial household and the *classes*. I shall then turn to ethnic make-up and the ways in which servicemen expressed their origins. This discussion will inform work on recruitment in Chapter Two, but will also consider how identities within the Italian *classes* were constructed, and what this can reveal about what the Romans and others thought about their empire.

3.1 Citizens, *liberti* and peregrines

From *classis* epitaphs dating to the Flavian period or earlier, we can identify three status groups: imperial freedmen, free peregrines and Roman citizens. Status expressions define the first group. For instance, one epitaph, probably Augustan, commemorates *C(aius) Iulius Caesaris l(ibertus) Automatus*.¹⁶² The second group used peregrine name formulae. Examples include *Phallaeus Dioclis f(ilius)* from Ravenna and *Verzo Themis f(ilius)* from Brundisium.¹⁶³ The earliest precisely datable *classis* peregrine, Sparticus, appears in the *diploma* of AD 52, from which we can infer that such men served in the *classes* from the mid twenties at the latest, assuming a service period of twenty six years or more.¹⁶⁴ Roman citizens are relatively rare. They include *L(ucius) Trebius L(uci) f(ilius) Ruso* from Aquileia and *Appaeus A(uli) f(ilius) Agricola* from Sarsina.¹⁶⁵

Libertine status has been attached to a fourth group from the pre-Flavian era.¹⁶⁶ Here, the single personal name is followed by that of an Emperor in the genitive, and then by a rank, such as *Helios Caesaris trierarchus* and *Malchio Caesaris trierarchus*.¹⁶⁷ It has even been suggested that these men were slaves, and that slaves initially made up a considerable proportion of *classis* servicemen.¹⁶⁸ This problem is of considerable significance, because its resolution influences our understanding of the *classes* and their evolution.

¹⁶² Append. 1; see also Append. 2-5.

¹⁶³ Append. 20 and 28. See also Append. 14-32 and 33-6 for the mixed nomenclature of first century *classis* veterans.

¹⁶⁴ *CIL* XVI 1. Point noted by Wickert (1949-50) 108; Kienast (1966) 24-5; Panciera (2006c) 1290 n.53. However, in the early first century there is no evidence for fixed period before receipt of *honesta missio*: *classis milites* occasionally served for over thirty years: see e.g. Append. 41; see Starr (1960²) 80-1; Reddé (1986) 524 with n.319.

¹⁶⁵ Append. 39-40; see also Append 37-41.

¹⁶⁶ E.g. Fiebiger (1894) 386; Cichorius (1922) 257ff.; cf. Starr (1960²) 44.

¹⁶⁷ Append. 7-8. See also Append. 6 and 9.

¹⁶⁸ See Reddé (1986) 472-86 for detailed discussion and further bibliography.

Mommsen thought that these men were slaves with *servus* omitted from their nomenclature.¹⁶⁹ This informed his view that the *classes* were in their early stages a servile ‘Privateinrichtung’ of the *Princeps* to use ‘zum Besten des Reiches’.¹⁷⁰ Mommsen suggested that only with Claudius was military organization introduced to the *classes*. Their members were then treated as soldiers and recruited from peregrines, hence the appearance of peregrine names in *diplomata* from AD 52 onwards.

However, Starr argued that slaves never served in the *classes*, which he envisioned as public, military forces, and that free peregrines were present from the start.¹⁷¹ He suggested that there was such prejudice against slaves serving in military institutions that Augustus could never have established *classes* crewed by them.¹⁷² Therefore, examples such as Malchio could not have been slaves.¹⁷³

An unconvincing challenge to Starr came from Wickert, who revived the thesis of Mommsen.¹⁷⁴ Focusing on *Malchio Caesaris trierarchus*, he argued that *Caesaris* was to be taken with *Malchio*, rather than *trierarchus*, therefore designating him as a slave. To support this, he pointed especially to the epitaph of *Anthus Caesaris trierarchus Livianus*.¹⁷⁵ This was to be read as belonging to a slave of

¹⁶⁹ Mommsen (1881) esp. 463-4; cf. Mommsen (1884) 31-39 and *Röm. Staatsr.* II.2 862-3. Broadly followed by Chapot (1896) 173-81, suggesting militarisation under Tiberius or Claudius; Fiebiger in *RE* III (1899), s.v. *classis*, 2636 (cf. Fiebiger (1894) 384-6); Ferrero in *Diz. Epigr.* II.1 (1892), s.v. *classis*, 276 (cf. Ferrero (1878) 41); Hirschfeld (1905²) 225. For disagreement, see Cichorius (1922) 257-61.

¹⁷⁰ *Röm. Staatsr.* II.2 862.

¹⁷¹ Starr (1960²) 66-74.

¹⁷² Slaves were employed in Republican *classes* during emergencies, such as the Second Punic War e.g. Polyb. 10.17.11, 14; Livy 24.11.7-9; 26.47.3; 34.6.13. See Starr (1960²) 68-9; Thiel (1946) 77-9, 195-8; Casson (1966) 41-2; Libourel (1973). The Triumviral period also saw the use of slaves by e.g. Sextus Pompeius: App. *B Civ.* 2.103; 5.131 (though for the propagandistic presentation of Sextus as a slave or pirate commander see Hadas (1930) 70-1; Gowing (1992) 186-7 and (2002); Welch (2002) 42-3) and Octavian: Suet. *Aug.* 16.1; Cass. Dio 47.17.4; cf. 48.49.1; 49.1.5.

¹⁷³ Starr (1960²) 69.

¹⁷⁴ Wickert (1949-50) esp. 105-12; followed by Sander (1957) 347-8; cf. Starr (1960²) 229. See also Weaver (1963), (1972) 52-3.

¹⁷⁵ Append. 9.

Augustus who was *trierarchus* on the ship which escorted Livia, against the standard interpretation of Anthus being a former slave of Livia who then passed into the ownership of Augustus.¹⁷⁶

But Kienast contested this.¹⁷⁷ He noted that Anthus was interred at Forum Iulii, an unlikely place for a man at the constant service of Livia to be stationed. Rather, Anthus was simply a freedman of Livia enrolled in a *classis*. Our ignorance over why Anthus was buried at Forum Iulii weakens this argument.¹⁷⁸

In 1968, Panciera drew on the interpretation of the *agnomen* Livianus by Wickert to argue that neither he nor any other members of the group in question were slaves. He considered *Ti(berius) Iulius Aug(usti) l(ibertus) Hilarus nauarchus Tiberianus*.¹⁷⁹ A traditional reading of the *agnomen* would regard him as a former slave of Tiberius, not sold to another household, and then manumitted by the same owner. Therefore, as Panciera noted, the *agnomen* would appear redundant if a part of his nomenclature rather than connected specifically with *nauarchus*.¹⁸⁰ Instead, and admitting that the solution was not wholly satisfactory, Panciera followed the view of Wickert that such an *agnomen* could reveal which imperial family member a particular *nauarchus* or *trierarchus* was responsible for, while noting that there was no other evidence suggesting that Anthus was a slave, taking into account the arguments of Starr on their use in Roman fleets.¹⁸¹ His position represents the most developed case against the presence of slaves in the Italian *classes*, a position which I am inclined to follow.

¹⁷⁶ By e.g. Starr (1960²) 44; Weaver (1964) 126; Chantraine (1967) 322, 364-5. This follows the usual understanding of such *agnomina*: see Hülsen (1888); Weaver (1964) 124-6; Chantraine (1967) 293-388.

¹⁷⁷ Kienast (1966) 12-13.

¹⁷⁸ Note Reddé (1986) 480 for further criticism.

¹⁷⁹ Append. 3; see now the reprint in Panciera (2006c). Comparison already noted and used by Wickert (1949-50) 108 to support his own argument; cf. Kienast (1966) 12.

¹⁸⁰ Panciera (2006c) 1287.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.* 1288.

Pancierera argued that examples such as *Malchio Caesaris trierarchus* were actually freeborn peregrines, expressing their loyalty to their commander, Augustus.¹⁸² He noted that, during the civil maritime conflicts of the thirties BC, *classis* members, especially former slaves freed by Sextus Pompeius and Octavian, were loyal to particular commanders, loyalty which may have endured into the imperial period.¹⁸³ He drew attention to a marble slab from Velitrae with a bilingual inscription, probably dated to 36-27 BC, set up to the Caesarian *praefectus classis* Mindius Marcellus by *nauarchi* and *trierarchi* who fought on behalf of Octavian (*quei meilitant Caesari nauarchi / et trierarchi patrono // οἱ στρατευόμενοι Καίσαρι ναύαρχοι / καὶ τριήραρχοι*).¹⁸⁴ While not a precise parallel for the construction used in the imperial inscriptions, this seems to express similar ideas. I would add the appearance of partisan groupings in some civil war literature, such as the *Pompeiani* and *Vatiniani*, suggestive of loyalty to specific generals.¹⁸⁵

We can possibly reinforce this point, and show that a professed attachment to an Emperor in a *classis* inscription did not necessarily denote servile (or even libertine) status, by looking at several free servicemen who considered themselves *trierarchi Augusti*.¹⁸⁶

Perhaps the earliest appears on a second century AD marble statue base from Paestum to M. Pomponius Diogenes, the son of a *trierarchus*, M. Pomponius Libo.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸² *Ibid.* 1289.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.* 1289-90.

¹⁸⁴ *AE* 1925 93 (= *SupIt.* II.V.8 = *SEG* IV 102); cf. G. Mancini in *NSA* (1924), 511-13.

¹⁸⁵ E.g. *B Alex.* 9: *eo biduo legio XXXVII ex dediticiis Pompeianis militibus*; 45: *parabant se Vatiniani repente oppressi*; cf. e.g. *B Alex.* 59; *BHisp.* 13, 14, 16; *Caes. B Civ.* 1.15, 28; 2.17.

¹⁸⁶ Some have been noted: see Starr (1960²) 59 n.66; Kienast (1966) 13 n.20; Panciera (2006c) 1290 n.51, but here I provide an update.

¹⁸⁷ *AE* 1975 253: *M(arco) Pomponio M(arci) / Pomponi Libonis tri(er)archi fil(io) Maec(ia) Di(ogeni) duovir(o) q(uin)q(uennali) / coloni ex aere collato / statuam quam honoris / causa vivo ei summa / effecta optulerunt / T(itus) Flavius Marullus tri(er)archus Aug(usti) et L(ucius) Dic(itius?) Arte(midorus) heredes ponendam / curaverunt.*

The inscription mentions an heir, *T(itus) Flavius Marullus trierarchus Aug(usti)*.¹⁸⁸ He could have been a freedman of Vespasian or Titus. Indeed, Keppie has suggested that he was among the men deducted to Paestum in AD 71.¹⁸⁹ However, he may well have been a free peregrine who had adopted the *tria nomina*, perhaps influenced by a Flavian Emperor.

A controversial example is that of *M. Cocceius Stephanus, trierarchus Aug(usti) C(aesaris)*, as Mommsen restored the text, who set up an epitaph at Misenum for his wife, *Aelia Chryseis*.¹⁹⁰ Mommsen considered the *trierarchus* to have been a freedman of Nerva.¹⁹¹ Naturally, this is not necessary, and he could have been a free peregrine. However, Gervasius originally read not *Aug. C.* but *Augg(ustorum)*.¹⁹² Possibly influenced by his view that Cocceius was a *libertus* of Nerva, Mommsen dismissed this.¹⁹³ However, if *Augg(ustorum)* is correct, the inscription would be from the reign of Marcus Aurelius or later, and Cocceius would clearly not have been an imperial freedman.

A late second or third century AD epitaph commemorated *M. Plotius Paulus qui et Zosimus trierarchus Aug(usti)*.¹⁹⁴ A further later second or third century example is a *C(aius) Valerius Macrinus [trierarchus] Augg(ustorum)*, the restoration made on the basis of another epitaph of similar date mentioning a

¹⁸⁸ Expanded by Mello and Voza (1968) no.89 (*cf.* Mello (1974) 48-9) to *Aug(ustalis)*, but our other examples encourage *Aug(usti)*. The limited space given to the father in the nomenclature of his son could explain why he was not *trierarchus Augusti*.

¹⁸⁹ Keppie (1984a) 102; *cf.* Mello (1974) 48.

¹⁹⁰ *CIL* X 3356: *D(is) M(anibus) / Aeliae Chry/seidi Aeli / filiae cas/tissimae / feminae / M(arcus) Cocceius / Stephanus / trierarchus Aug(usti) C(aesaris) / coniuci / b(ene) m(erenti) f(ecit)*.

¹⁹¹ Followed by Kienast (1966) 13 n.20; Panciera (2006c) 1290 n.51; *contra* Starr (1960²) 50 n.66, who proposed *c(astae)*, going with *coniugi*, but this usage is late and unlikely.

¹⁹² *Mem. Accad. Herc.* 8 (1856), 175.

¹⁹³ *CIL* X (1883), p. 324.

¹⁹⁴ *CIL* VI 3621; Starr (1960²) 49 n.66 wondered whether he was a 'free trierarch' of Octavian, but the inscription is clearly much later.

trierarchus of the same name.¹⁹⁵ But, as Mommsen noted, he could have been [*vet(eranus)*] *Augg(ustorum)*, and I am inclined to be very cautious here.¹⁹⁶ Whether we accept one or both, neither men were of the imperial *familia*. An inscription from Bettioua in Algeria, ancient Portus Magnus, records the repair of an altar to Jupiter Optimus Maximus by *T(itus) Octavius Longus trierarch(us) Aug(usti)*.¹⁹⁷ This is undated, but one could reasonably place it in the second century AD.

These examples are later than the early group which has drawn so much debate, and therefore are not the products of identical circumstances. They are also a small set, which must limit our conclusions. However, they appear to reflect similar habits, and indicate that one could be a *trierarchus Augusti* without having to be a freedman or slave, adding some support to the identification by Panciera of the contested group as free peregrines.

Panciera himself raised the point that these men, if they were peregrines, did not follow the common practice of including filiations. Yet that does not absolutely deny them a freeborn peregrine identity. Four further early inscriptions could record free peregrines with single names, and provide parallels: Athenius, Linius, Aurelius(?) and Marcinus.¹⁹⁸ Moreover, the inscriptions of the *Caesaris/Augusti* type are similar to those of the freedmen, but it does not follow that they were freedmen themselves. Certainty is impossible; some of the men could be freedmen, others free peregrines. Crucially, they were not demonstrably slaves.

¹⁹⁵ *CIL* X 3354; restoration based on *CIL* X 3355. See above p. 49 n.186 for acceptance.

¹⁹⁶ *CIL* X (1883), p. 324.

¹⁹⁷ *AE* 2008 1704.

¹⁹⁸ Append. 10-13.

3.2 Free peregrines with *tria nomina*

Diplomata suggest that by the Flavian period freeborn peregrines dominated the Italian *classes*.¹⁹⁹ This is supported by Tacitus. In describing the defection of the *classis Ravennas* from Vitellius in AD 69, he stated that its men favoured Vespasian because he controlled their home provinces, Dalmatia and Pannonia: *quod magna pars Dalmatae Pannonique erant, quae provinciae Vespasiano tenebantur, partibus eius adgregaverat*.²⁰⁰ Whether or not Tacitus accurately reported their motivations, epigraphy supports his assertion on the make-up of the *classis*.²⁰¹

As mentioned above, by the Flavian period these free peregrines had all adopted *tria nomina* upon enlistment.²⁰² Debate exists over whether this reflected an immediate change in legal status. I shall not cover this in detail because there is little to add to previous work. Mommsen and his followers believed that servicemen were granted Latin status on enlistment, probably from the Hadrianic era, based on the absence of a *tribus* from their nomenclature.²⁰³

However, I follow the consensus developed by Starr: there was no such status change, and peregrine servicemen only gained Roman citizenship after completing a period of service, as stipulated in *diplomata*.²⁰⁴ Starr pointed out that, besides *tria nomina*, there is no evidence for a status alteration, and that there are many examples of people without Latin or Roman legal status possessing *tria nomina*. Moreover,

¹⁹⁹ See below pp. 66-8.

²⁰⁰ Tac. *Hist.* 3.12. This must be set within the context of the characterisation of Roman soldiers as behaving like foreign invaders in the *Historiae* (e.g. 1.45; 2.12; 3.72). See Ash (2009) esp. 94-5.

²⁰¹ See below pp. 60-1.

²⁰² See above pp. 42-4.

²⁰³ Mommsen (1881) 467-71. In the *diplomata* record of the time, *tria nomina* only appeared in AD 129 (*CIL* XVI 74 (= III p. 875 = V 4091)). See more recently e.g. Grosso (1965) 550-60; Le Bohec (1994) 101; Parma (2002) 186.

²⁰⁴ Starr (1960²) 71-3; see also Kienast (1966) 26-9; Reddé (1986) 525-7 (though *cf.* Reddé (2000) 179); Salomies (1996) 168-9.

Gardner has argued that the *lex Irnitana*, a Flavian municipal law for the Latin *municipium* of Irni in Spain, indicates that the *ius Latii* simply allowed citizens of Latin *municipia* who had served as magistrates (and later decurions), along with certain members of their families, to obtain Roman citizenship *per honorem*.²⁰⁵ It would serve little purpose to grant this status to *classis* servicemen when they were entitled to receive Roman *civitas* after twenty six years.

Alternatively, Pferdehirt has argued that *classis* servicemen received specifically Junian Latin status, normally held by slaves improperly manumitted who either effectively had no citizenship or sometimes that of their homeland.²⁰⁶ But again, this status simply offered routes towards Roman citizenship, as catalogued by the jurist Gaius, rendering the status redundant for men who obtained citizenship through *classis* service.²⁰⁷

The adoption of *tria nomina* should not therefore be explained through legal developments, but by a formalisation of *classis* service, or at least of some of the epigraphic habits used by their members.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁵ Gardner (2001), confirming Millar (1977) 401-6, 485-6, 630-5; cf. Humbert (1981). For the *lex Irnitana* generally see AE 1984 454 (= 2001 66 = CIL II 4.1201); González and Crawford (1986); Galsterer (1988).

²⁰⁶ Pferdehirt (2002) 167-73. On Junian status see Sherwin-White (1973²) 328-34; Millar (1977) 486-7; Treggiari (1996) 894-5; Mouritsen (2011) 85-6 with n.84 for dating of the *lex Iunia*, probably Augustan.

²⁰⁷ Gai. *Inst.* 1.17-35.

²⁰⁸ Unconvincingly, Mann (2002) (followed by e.g. Roxan and Holder (2004) 274; Holder in *RMD V* (2006), p. 787; cf. Eck, MacDonald and Pangerl (2002) 201) argued that Roman citizenship was granted upon enlistment because from AD 100 servicemen possessed *praenomina* in *diplomata*. The *praenomen*, he argued, was the marker of a Roman citizen in official documentation. He drew on examples from auxiliary *diplomata*, from which it can be reasonably concluded that some auxiliaries using *tria nomina* were granted citizenship during service (e.g. *M(arcus) Ulpius Adcobrovati f(ilius) Novanticus* in *CIL XVI* 160). All such individuals use the *praenomen*, whereas those with peregrine status never do. There are problems with this argument regarding the *classes*. Perhaps the greatest difficulty is whether *tria nomina*, even with a *praenomen*, indicate citizen status. Non-citizens did falsely use Roman names, as indicated by Claudius attempting to forbid the practice (Suet. *Claud.* 25.3). Mócsy (1986) argued that we can never use *tria nomina* in *diplomata* as certain evidence for Roman citizenship. Later views (e.g. Dušanić (1996); Saddington (2000)) have been more positive, suggesting that certain auxiliaries were citizens using genuine *tria nomina*. But it does not follow that all *tria nomina* are genuine. Furthermore, *classis* members were granted citizenship in their *diplomata*, wholly redundant if there was a universal grant of citizenship upon enlistment.

We shall return repeatedly to this formalisation, its precise nature obscure. However, contemporary developments in the *auxilia* provide suggestive parallels. The standard modern position holds that the essentials of the *auxilia* were established by Augustus, for instance their division into infantry *cohortes* and mounted *alae* of particular sizes, and with identifying titulature.²⁰⁹ However, much still distinguished many units from the “professional regiments” of later first and second century *diplomata*.²¹⁰ Thus, scholars have proposed processes of formalisation and regularisation operating across the first century AD, particularly under Claudius and Vespasian, though the fragmentary evidence resists neat conclusions.²¹¹

Changes to unit titles are one example. The latest attested regiment named after its current commander is the *cohors A[e] [...] Habeti*, recorded in a papyrus of AD 27.²¹² M. P. Speidel has argued that such regiments possessed permanent names, but that in particular circumstances the name of the commander better served to identify them.²¹³ Perhaps to reduce confusion, such practices ended during the Tiberian period.

Formalisation can also be seen in the Claudian attempt to create a standard ‘career path’ for *equites* commanding *auxilia*, the so-called *tres militiae*, whereby an *eques* would serve as *praefectus cohortis*, then *tribunus legionis* and finally *praefectus alae*.²¹⁴ Previously, a mixture of *equites*, tribal chiefs, centurions and

²⁰⁹ E.g. Cheesman (1914) 14-18; Kraft (1951) 38-42; Holder (1980) 140-1; Saddington (1982) 79-82, 196; Keppie (1996) 380; Haynes (2013) 44.

²¹⁰ Saddington (1982) 2 identifies a ‘professional regiment’ as one sharing the characteristics of those known from *diplomata* e.g. with particular forms of titulature, a Roman citizen commander, the receipt of *civitas* and *conubium* after a fixed period of service.

²¹¹ E.g. Cheesman (1914) 90-4, giving more credit than most to Augustus; Holder (1980) 75-7, 141-3; Saddington (1982) 195; Keppie (1996) 391-3; Gilliver (2007) 193; Haynes (2013) 51.

²¹² *SB* XVI 12609 (= *ChLA* XLX 1340).

²¹³ Speidel (1982); cf. Birley (1978).

²¹⁴ For attribution to Claudius see Suet. *Claud.* 25.1 with Cheesman (1914) 90-5; Holder (1980) 75-8. For equestrian commands see e.g. *CIL* IX 3610; XIV 2960, 3458 and Domaszewski (1967²) 122-31.

senators had commanded *auxilia*, with no fixed hierarchy.²¹⁵ Grants of *civitas* and *conubium* after a fixed period of service can also be attributed to Claudius.²¹⁶ We shall see below that certain information, such as the number of years a *miles* had served, or perhaps his origins, was more frequently supplied in *auxilia* epitaphs later in the first century, perhaps reflecting regularisation.

I suggest that similar developments could have occurred in the Italian *classes* and could be reflected in their epigraphy, though we cannot easily characterise the nature of any changes, and the data set for the pre-Flavian period is a small one. The very titles of the *classes* may be one product of this formalisation, as they evolved throughout our period.²¹⁷ For convenience, I refer to them as the *classis Misensis* and *Ravennas* throughout this work. Yet the earliest dated reference to either *classis* by its accepted titlature is on a *diploma* of unknown provenance granted to *benefic/iari(i) qui militant in classe Raven/nate* in AD 70.²¹⁸ *Diplomata* of the following year name this fleet and the *classis Misensis*.²¹⁹ Before that, the latter is named in the AD 52 *diploma* as *classis quae est Miseni*.²²⁰ Nothing directly explains why these names emerged, though presumably the length of association of the *classes* with particular bases encouraged their naming from them. Nor did the evolution stop: funerary or honorary inscriptions from the second century can record the *classis praetoria Misematium* or *Ravennatium*, though this never appears on *diplomata*.²²¹

The topic of formalisation has not previously received much notice, possibly because there has not been a systematic treatment of the epitaphs. There has been a

²¹⁵ Cheesman (1914) 90-2; Holder (1980) 75, 141; Haynes (2013) 42.

²¹⁶ See above p. 27.

²¹⁷ As Starr (1941¹) 26 n.9 observed.

²¹⁸ *AE* 1997 1771 ll.2-4.

²¹⁹ E.g. *CIL* XVI 12.

²²⁰ *CIL* XVI 1.

²²¹ See Fiebiger in *RE* III (1899), s.v. *classis*, 2636 for names of the *classes*.

related debate over whether the *classes* underwent militarisation in the first century AD, which we shall discuss in greater detail below, but formalisation may offer a preferable framework for understanding visible developments.²²²

3.3 The Italian *classes* and the imperial house

Evidence has emerged for particular ties between the *classes* and the Emperor. This relationship has already been commented on, by Kienast especially, who supposed a bond between the *classis Misensis* and the Emperor, while Starr understood it as a feature of the very early imperial period.²²³ One should especially note the *liberti Augusti* and those possible peregrines identifying themselves as *trierarchi* or *nauarchi Augusti*, alongside the handful of later *trierarchi Augusti* examined above. The titling of the *classes* as *praetoriae* towards the end of the first century AD can be recalled in this connection.²²⁴ This does not demonstrate that the *classes* were a ‘Privateinrichtung’ of the Caesars, any more than the praetorian cohorts or *Vigiles*, but could imply a significant relationship between the *classes* and the Emperors.

To sum up on social status: I have argued that free peregrines, (imperial) freedmen and Roman citizens formed the *classis* manpower pool. *Diplomata* and limited literary testimony indicate that from the second half of the first century AD, the large majority of servicemen were free peregrines. Although they probably adopted *tria nomina* upon enlistment, their legal status only changed at discharge, becoming Roman citizens. The adoption of *tria nomina* may reflect processes of formalisation within the *classes*, comparable to those observed in the evolution of the

²²² Below pp. 76-80.

²²³ Starr (1960²) 67; Kienast (1966) esp. 48-81 and below p. 146.

²²⁴ Above pp. 38-42.

auxilia, and could be regarded as a response to their service in Italy. We have also identified hints of a close conceptual relationship between the *classes* and the imperial house, which persisted into the second century.

4. Ethnic origins

We shall now consider ethnic origins, and their expression in epitaphs and *diplomata*. This section aims firstly to adduce further evidence for the formalisation of *classis* service in the first century AD, suggested by the increasing provision of origin statements in epitaphs. Secondly, to provide preliminary evidence suggesting that the Italian *classes* did not recruit purely from the *gens de mer*, people who lived by and off the sea.²²⁵ Thirdly, to demonstrate the limitations the evidence imposes on recruitment studies.

First, I shall briefly consider practices found in the funerary epigraphy of other types of *milites*. This is not a comprehensive study but provides useful context.²²⁶ In the Augustan and Julio-Claudian periods, citizen soldiers would name specific towns as their origin, for example: *Q(uintus) Bruttius / Q(uinti) f(ilius) Sergia / Crescens / domo Tucci / mil(es) leg(ionis) IIII Mac(edonicae)*...²²⁷ Precisely how common the practice was, especially across the empire, is very difficult to determine. For instance, origins are mentioned in eleven of the thirty five pre-Flavian epitaphs belonging to *milites* of the *legio XIII Augusta* collected by Le Bohec.²²⁸ Of the forty

²²⁵ For definitions of *gens de mer*, see Cabantous (1979) 12-23.

²²⁶ For different types of army origin statements, see Mommsen (1884) 23-6; cf. Forni (1953) 57-8.

²²⁷ *CIL* XIII 6856: cf. *CIL* III 9939 (= *AE* 1890 51); *CIL* XIII 6854.

²²⁸ Le Bohec (1989) 265-8.

four praetorian epitaphs from Rome which Clauss dated to before the Flavian period, thirty four (77%) record origins.²²⁹

Auxiliary epitaphs are rare in the pre-Flavian period, and attestations of origin were not common, perhaps because many units were organised along ethnic lines, their titles revealing their origins.²³⁰ However, because they were peregrines based in Italy, a useful example to compare *classis* servicemen to are the *custodes corporis*, the German bodyguard of the Emperors until their abolition under the Flavians.²³¹ Although the total sample is small, Claudian and especially Neronian epitaphs frequently supply the origin of the *custodes*, for instance *Postumus / Ti(beri) Claudi / Caesar(is) Aug(usti) / corpor(is) cust(os)...nat(ione) Ubius* and *Fannius / Neron(is) Claudi / Caesaris Aug(usti) / corpor(is) custos...nation(e) Ubius*.²³²

Origin statements were more common in epitaphs of the later first and second centuries, though for the *auxilia* the proportions apparently remained fairly low, at around 10% in a recent survey.²³³ This includes all types of inscriptions, and one could conjecture that the figure for epitaphs may have been somewhat greater.

At any rate, proportions in Italy appear higher, relevant for the potential influence on origin expression practices among the *classes*. For instance, the *equites singulares* mentioned their origins in at least 43% of surviving epitaphs from this period, and given that many of the inscriptions are fragmentary, the true number

²²⁹ Clauss (1973b) 92-5.

²³⁰ For tribal units see Saddington (1982) 170-1; cf. Cheesman (1914) 46.

²³¹ Bellen (1981).

²³² *CIL* VI 8809 (= *ILS* 1726); *AE* 1952 145. Of twenty two epitaphs collected by Bellen (1981) 105-13, seventeen (five Claudian, ten Neronian) mention origins. Two probably pre-Claudian epitaphs (*AE* 1923 73; *CIL* VI 4437) do not. Three epitaphs (*CIL* VI 8812, 37754, 37754a) are too damaged to be certain.

²³³ Gallet and Le Bohec (2007) 283. They do not explain what their overall sample is based on, only that the 10% amounts to just over seven hundred documents.

could have been greater.²³⁴ As a further example from Italy, around 56% of two hundred and sixteen contemporary praetorian epitaphs from Rome mention origins.²³⁵

Again, citizen soldiers typically named the specific town or city from which they came.²³⁶ *Auxilia* often gave an ethnic or regional adjective, rather than a specific political community, as with *Trito Batoni / mil(es) coh(ortis) VII / Breuc(orum) c(ivium) R(omanorum) eq(uitatae) / dom(o) Pann(onius)* or *T(itus) Aurelius Claudianus / eq(uiti) sing(ulari) Aug(usti)...nat(ione) Surus*.²³⁷ While in the Danubian provinces *domus* is found before the adjective, in Germany and Italy *natio* or *civis* were more usual.²³⁸

M. P. Speidel has produced probably the fullest study on origin expressions in *auxilia diplomata*.²³⁹ Having examined ninety two *diplomata* from AD 54-178/90, he proposed two general ‘rules’: that if the soldier served away from home, his origin was recorded as his province, but if his unit was local, he gave his tribe or city.²⁴⁰ While broadly sensible conclusions, there are many exceptions, especially to the first ‘rule’. We would not anticipate such a contrast in *classis diplomata*, because virtually all *milites* served away from home.

Now for the *classes*, beginning with past scholarship. Mommsen concentrated on how the origins of servicemen were presented in epigraphy.²⁴¹ He suggested that the adjectives used, on which more below, did not necessarily correspond to any administrative region or political community.²⁴² He believed that the slaves, who he

²³⁴ Based on two hundred and seventy epitaphs collected by Speidel (1994a) 109-234.

²³⁵ Based on Clauss (1973b) 92-5.

²³⁶ E.g. *CIL* XIII 5206: *C(aius) Allius C(ai) filius) / Pom(ptina) Oriens / domo Dert(ona)... Domus* was not always required e.g. *CIL* VI 2441.

²³⁷ *AE* 2010 1620; *CIL* VI 3197 (= Speidel (1994a) no.115).

²³⁸ Mommsen (1884) 28-9.

²³⁹ Speidel (1986); cf. Mirković (2007) 335-7; Talbert (2013).

²⁴⁰ Though see below p. 67.

²⁴¹ Mommsen (1884) esp.31-39.

²⁴² See below pp. 64ff.

thought comprised the *classes* until Claudius, gave their origins in imitation of free soldiers.²⁴³ As slaves, they did not have legal homelands, but felt some ties to their birthplace. Therefore, they adopted categories based on ‘volkstümliche Zusammengehörigkeit’, grouping themselves with people of similar languages and customs.²⁴⁴ According to Mommsen, when Claudius militarised the *classes*, these habits remained.²⁴⁵ Given our rejection of the proposed servile nature of the early *classes*, these arguments cannot be fully accepted.²⁴⁶

After Mommsen, scholars have focused simply on where servicemen came from.²⁴⁷ For example, Reddé examined the proportions of different ethnicities in the *classis Misensis*, comparing it with the *classis Ravennas*.²⁴⁸ According to his data, Egyptians and Bessi predominated in the *classis Misensis*, while Dalmatians and Pannonians were most common in the *classis Ravennas*.

This is broadly supported by my own data set, for which I collected all epitaphs from Misenum and Ravenna recording origins, and all others naming the *classis* of the deceased. This amounts to half of the corpus, which imposes limits on our conclusions. Nonetheless, from two hundred and eighteen epitaphs of the *classis Misensis*, forty (18%) commemorated *Bessi*, thirty six (17%) *Aegypti* and eighteen (8%) *Alexandrini*. There were also eighteen Cilicians and Sardinians each. The number of inscriptions for the *classis Ravennas* was far smaller at sixty two; we

²⁴³ See above p. 47.

²⁴⁴ Mommsen (1884) 34.

²⁴⁵ Followed by Chapot (1896) 181-7.

²⁴⁶ See above pp. 47ff.

²⁴⁷ E.g. Chapot (1896) 186-7; Starr (1960²) 74-7.

²⁴⁸ See Reddé (2000) 187-8; cf. Reddé (1986) 531-3. Note Susini (1961) 37ff. on the *classis Ravennas*. Specific ethnic groups have received attention e.g. for Bessi see Kolendo (1988-9); Topalilov (2013); for Sardinians see Sotgiu (1961); for Pannonians and Dalmatians see Mócsy (1968); Domić-Kunić (1996); Dzino (2010).

should be cautious over how much can be inferred from this sample. Nevertheless, seventeen (22%) commemorated Dalmatians, while five (8%) were for Pannonians.

This approach fails to consider the nature of the expressions used in epitaphs and *diplomata*, and does not take into account how “real” the origins given were. Thus, I shall return to the nature of origin statements. First, I shall demonstrate that strategies for conveying this information in *classis* epitaphs and *diplomata* changed over time. While statements were rare in pre-Flavian epitaphs, the formula of *natio* plus ethnic adjective becomes common later. In contrast, *diplomata* always provided this information, though its presentation changed, with a developing interest in geographical origins. Despite the increasing divergence between the origin statements in *diplomata* and epitaphs, I shall propose that there could have been some relationship between the introduction of the former and the sort of information recorded in the latter. These developments can be considered part of our proposed formalisation of *classis* service. I shall conclude by analysing the types of ethnic adjectives employed in epitaphs to delineate how they may limit recruitment studies.

4.1 Origins before the Flavians

Here, I shall largely pass over the three examples of origin statements in the epitaphs of the pre-Flavian period, partly for reasons of space, but more because there is little of wider significance to say. Thus we have Velageno from the unidentified *vicus* Clablum, C. Mucius Claudius from Cemenelum and Ditus Pa(...?) from a place

called Savona.²⁴⁹ In all three cases a specific community is recorded, conforming to the habits of contemporary citizen *milites*.

The general omission of origin statements in this group of epitaphs contrasts with their appearance on seventeen near-contemporary (AD 52-71) *classis diplomata*. This group includes seven documents granted to men from the *legiones Adiutrices* discharged in AD 68 and 70.

Typically a single word was used. Before AD 71 this was usually an ethnic adjective: *Bessus*, *Sardus*, *Desidias*, *Surus* and *Dacus*.²⁵⁰ One serviceman was described in AD 70 as *natione Bessus*, a common construction in epitaphs as we shall see below.²⁵¹ However, *natio* is difficult to explain here, only otherwise appearing on a couple of third century *diplomata*.²⁵² Apparently exceptional is a *diploma* from AD 68 for a member of the *legio I Adiutrix*, who was described as *Phrygius Laudic(ea)* on the external side of the tablet, but only *Phrygius* on the interior.²⁵³ If the external reading is correct, the precise city from which the recipient came was provided.

The documents of AD 71 show greater variation. Four cases resemble the above, though one serviceman described broadly as *Pannonius* contrasts with other

²⁴⁹ Append. 22, 38, 41.

²⁵⁰ *Bessus*: *CIL* XVI 1; *Sardus*: *CIL* XVI 9 (= III p. 1958 = X 7891); *Desidias*: *CIL* XVI 11 (= III p. 849 = X 1402 = *ILS* 1989); *Surus*: *RMD* IV p. 615 (= *AE* 1994 387 = *CIL* X 771 = XVI 8 = Magalhaes (2006) 97-9 no.15); *Dacus*: *AE* 1997 1771; *AE* 2002 1733 (= *RMD* V 323); *AE* 2006 1833. *Dacus* appears to refer to peoples living south of the Danube in Moesia mentioned by Dio (51.22.6-7), rather than recruits from the later province of Dacia: see Roxan (1996) 254; Eck, MacDonald and Pangerl (2002) 197-8.

²⁵¹ *CIL* XVI 10 (= *AE* 1932 27).

²⁵² *AE* 1979 626 (= *RMD* II 131) from AD 214: *n(atione) Isaurus*; *CIL* XVI 152 from AD 247: *n(atione) Ital(icus)*.

²⁵³ *CIL* XVI 7 (= III p. 847 = X 770 = *ILS* 1988 = Magalhaes (2006) no.14). Line 14 contains the *origo*, recorded by Nesselhauf in *CIL* XVI (1936), p. 6 simply as *Phrygio <L>audic(ea)*. But the photograph in Magalhaes (2006) 185 fig. 13b shows that the text runs *Phrygia (vac.) udic*. Magalhaes (2006) 96 rendered the text *Phryg(io), L (vac.) audic(ea)(sic)*. While there may be an interpunct between *G* and *I*, I am not wholly confident in the standard restoration.

more specific ethnics: *Sappaeus*, *Eraviscus* and *Maezeius*.²⁵⁴ However, the anomalous *diploma* is otherwise problematic, several scholars suggesting it was awarded to a provincial *classis* serviceman.²⁵⁵ In another example, the origin of the recipient was given as *Marsunnia* or Marsonia, a settlement in Pannonia Inferior on the site of modern Slavonski Brod.²⁵⁶ The identification of a place cannot be explained, though it foreshadows later practices. One serviceman was *Gallinaria Sarniensis*, an unidentified pair of toponyms or ethnics.²⁵⁷ Our final recipient was *Surus Garasenus*. *Surus* appears to be a general ethnic, while *Garasenus* identifies his home city as Gerasa.²⁵⁸

In sum, a single ethnic adjective was the most common means of expressing origins in Italian *classis diplomata* up to AD 71. Occasionally a home settlement was identified, though none of the examples can be explained with any confidence. We could simply be dealing with inconsistency in *diplomata* contents, well-attested for this period.²⁵⁹

The appearance of this information on *diplomata* could reflect the organisational concern in its being recorded. Forni argued that *diplomata*, alongside *laterculi*, represent good guides to information kept in official military rolls, held by individual units and created for each *miles* on enlistment.²⁶⁰ However, this interest did not yet usually translate to the servicemen themselves relaying the information on their epitaphs. This trend can perhaps be explained with reference to the rare

²⁵⁴ *Pannonius*: *CIL* XVI 17 (= III p. 851); *Sappaeus* (a Thracian tribe): *CIL* XVI 12; *Eraviscus* (Celtic tribe from Pannonia Inferior): *AE* 2002 1771; *Maezeius* (a tribe settled in Dalmatia): *CIL* XVI 14 (= III p. 850 = *ILS* 1991).

²⁵⁵ See Nesselhauf in *CIL* XVI (1936), p. 16; Starr (1960²) 185, 203 n.65; *contra* Mommsen in *CIL* III (1873), p. 851; Pferdehirt (2002) 113; *cf.* Forni (1986) 294 n.4 for further references.

²⁵⁶ *AE* 1997 1273. On Marsonia see Fluss in *RE* XIV (1930) s.v. *Marsonia*, 1981.

²⁵⁷ *CIL* XVI 16; *cf.* Michel (2008) for interpretation.

²⁵⁸ *CIL* XVI 15.

²⁵⁹ See above p. 27 nn.119-20.

²⁶⁰ Forni (1979); *cf.* Gilliam (1957); Davies (1969);

provision of origins in early first century *auxilia* epitaphs, though oddly contrasts with practices found among the *custodes corporis*, in particular of the Neronian period.²⁶¹ However, and although the sample is tiny, that two pre-Claudian epitaphs mentioning *custodes* do not give origins may indicate a habit only emerging from the mid-first century AD in non-citizen military epigraphy.²⁶²

Already, one can see that there is no clear evidence for an exclusive concern with recruitment from maritime regions, or among people known particularly for seafaring skills. The data set is small and should not be given too much weight, but evidence for the later period will corroborate this observation.

4.2 Flavian and post-Flavian origins

In contrast with earlier epitaphs, around 47% of those from Misenum and Rome and 63% from Ravenna in this later period explicitly reference origins. This is most commonly stated with an adjective qualified by *natio*, for instance *L. Carisius Blandus...nazione Bessus*, *C. Iulius Apollinaris...nazione Aegyptius*, *M. Marius Dexter...nazione Graecus* and *L. Superinius Severus...nazione Pannonius*.²⁶³ One should note how broad-brush these ethnics are, in contrast with the specific tribal identifications made in earlier *diplomata*, and the settlements cited in pre-Flavian epitaphs.²⁶⁴ Because of its frequency, we shall focus on this origin formula, though there were alternatives. For example, the adjective alone is found.²⁶⁵ Very

²⁶¹ See above p. 58.

²⁶² See above p. 58 n.232.

²⁶³ *CIL* X 3555, 3583, 3603; *CIL* XI 97.

²⁶⁴ Mommsen (1881) 33 strongly distinguishes these from provincial designations, an approach with which I agree, though *cf.* below p. 67.

²⁶⁵ E.g. *CIL* X 3365 (= *ILS* 2851): *Formianus*; *CIL* XI 90: *Del(matus)*. *cf.* e.g. *CIL* X 3553 (= Tuck (2005) no.54): *Bithynus*; 3599: *Med(iolanensis?)*; 3622: *Nicaensis*; 3666: *Delmatus*; 7535:

occasionally the deceased also provided their home community, identified as a *domus* or *civitas*.²⁶⁶

Natio was the usual noun to attach to an ethnic adjective in the auxiliary epitaphs of Italy.²⁶⁷ This probably determined its usage by *classis* servicemen. Indeed, the apparently increasing proportion of *auxilia* epitaphs containing origin statements in this period, even if from a very low base, may have encouraged the overall trend visible in the Italian *classes*. In any case, we might consider this development another symptom of the formalisation of *classis* service.

However, the particular *natio* and adjective combinations used in the *classes* are unusual, as an illustrative sample demonstrates. Only around 30% (twenty five out of seventy eight examples found) of those who call themselves *Bessi* (*natione* or otherwise) were not members of the *classes*. The majority were soldiers, nine (at most) of those being *equites singulares Augusti*.²⁶⁸ Beyond *classis* epitaphs, there appears to be only one example of *natione Aegyptus(sic)*, found at Rome on the epitaph of a gladiator.²⁶⁹ There are only seven examples at most of *Alexandrinus* used outside the *classes*.²⁷⁰ As for *natione Pannonicus/-ius*, this is uncommon outside

Alexandr(inus); 8374: *Aegyptus*; *CIL* XI 34: *Seleucus*; *CIL* XI 91 and *CIL* VI 3111: *Agra[dien]/sis*; *CIL* XIV 240: *Bessus*; *ILS* 2867: *Aegyptius*.

²⁶⁶ *CIL* X 3375: *Pannon(ius)*, *domo Flavia Sirmi*; *CIL* XI 52: *nat(ione) Bithyn(us)*, *civit(ate) Plusiada*; note also *AE* 1972 80: *nat(ione) Cilix Coryc(aeus)*.

²⁶⁷ See above p. 59.

²⁶⁸ Speidel (1994a) nos. 83 (= *CIL* VI 3177), 134 (= *CIL* VI 3205), 345 (= *CIL* VI 3303), 209 (= *CIL* VI 37257), 216, 243, 253, 545-6. Only nos. 83, 134, 345 and 216 are certain examples with no or little restoration.

²⁶⁹ *AE* 1988 24.

²⁷⁰ *CIL* V 3465 (= *ILS* 5117); *CIL* VI 10194 (= *ILS* 5088 = *AE* 1947 208); *CIL* VIII 21051; *CIL* XIII 8343 (= *ILS* 9344); *AE* 1974 249 (= Tuck (2005) no.66); *AE* 1962 48; *AE* 2006 346. Alexandrian citizenship provided legal and social privileges unavailable to Egyptian *laoi* (Bowman and Rathbone (1992); cf. Delia (1991)). Therefore, Mommsen (1884) 35 (see also Starr (1960²) 77) believed that whether a serviceman said he was *natione Alexandrinus* or *Aegyptius* revealed genuine status differences: the *Aegypti* were natives, while *Alexandrini* were Greeks. But this is unproven. If one considers *CIL* XIII 8322 (= *ILS* 2827 = *IKöln* 394), we find that *Horus Paebeci f(ilius)* was *Alexandrinus*. Although nomenclature can be deceptive, this man was surely not a Greek. Noy (2000) 247 was suspicious of whether the *Alexandrini* were actually Alexandrians, or whether they simply claimed they were to conceal Egyptian status. In epitaphs it would not have mattered particularly,

Rome and largely found on military epitaphs, especially those of the *equites singulares Augusti*.²⁷¹

This is normally quite reasonably understood as reflecting realities of recruitment. On this basis, there is again little evidence for recruitment from *gens de mer*. While there were some recruits from areas with strong seafaring associations, such as Cilicia and arguably Dalmatia, other peoples such as the Bessi and Pannonians are less straightforwardly regarded as maritime.²⁷² We shall say more below on difficulties in interpreting these ethnic adjectives.

In the three Italian *classis diplomata* known from AD 72 to AD 129, a single ethnic term was used to identify the origin of the recipient: *Delmatus* (AD 100) and *Bessus* (both AD 119).²⁷³ This may represent a divergence from the more specific ethnics seen in *diplomata* of AD 71 and is comparable to the generalising ethnics of contemporary epitaphs, alongside the anomalous *Pannonius* from AD 71.²⁷⁴ In contrast, two *diplomata* from AD 129 identify their recipients both as Corsicans and specify a native people.²⁷⁵

From AD 134, origins were almost always given in two parts.²⁷⁶ The first identified either which city or tribe the recipient came from. N. Lollius Neon came from Laertes in Pamphylia (AD 139), and Sex. Memmius Mannes from Oenoanda in

given that there were no legal ramifications. Note *CIL* XI 6735 (= *AE* 1892 136) from Ravenna, lines 3-4, unconvincingly restored by Bormann (*CIL* XI (1926), p. 1229) as [*n(atione)*] *Aeg[yp]t(ius)* / *ci]vit(at)is Al[ex](andriae)*.

²⁷¹ E.g. Speidel (1994a) no.624 (= *AE* 1968 31); Speidel (1994a) no.322 (= *CIL* VI 3184). For a civilian see *CIL* XIII 7247 from Mainz: *Capito / Arri l(ibertus) / argentarius / natione Pan/nonius...*; similarly Dzino (2010) 107 on Dalmatians.

²⁷² A point noted long ago by Ferrero (1878) 45 but *cf.* below p. 103.

²⁷³ *RMD* III 142; *AE* 2005 1738; *AE* 2008 1757.

²⁷⁴ See above pp. 62-3.

²⁷⁵ *AE* 2005 691: *Corsus Cobas(ius)*; *CIL* XVI 74: *Corsus Vinac(enus)*. The *Cobasii* are nowhere mentioned, but Mommsen in *CIL* III (1873) p. 875 identified the Vinaceni with the Οὐνακτινοὶ mentioned by Ptolemy (*Geog.* 3.2.7).

²⁷⁶ Note *AE* 2007 1790, a Commodan *diploma* for an unknown *classis* where the recipient was perhaps simply *Pann[onius]*.

Lycia (AD 140).²⁷⁷ M. Sollius Gracilis was a member of the Pannonian Scordisci (AD 139), while C. Valerius Dasius was *Scirt(onus) ex Dalm(atia)* (AD 152).²⁷⁸ Drawing on the available evidence, a broadly east-west split may determine whether the city or specific tribe was given.

The second part comprised *ex* plus a region. Some can be identified with Roman provinces, though also allow a non-administrative interpretation, including Cilicia (AD 158), Dalmatia (AD 152) and Thracia (AD 160).²⁷⁹ Others do not conform to a strictly provincial analysis, such as Phrygia (AD 145), Pamphylia by itself (AD 139) and the strange case of Bessia (AD 142).²⁸⁰ Similarly, Pannonia did not exist as a united whole in this period (AD 139, 145).²⁸¹ Therefore, I suggest that provinces did not form the basis for identifying origins in these *diplomata*.²⁸² M. P. Speidel thought otherwise regarding similar regional tags in *auxilia diplomata*, but one surely cannot interpret Bessia, among several of the other examples, as provinces?²⁸³ The provision of regions distinguishes these *diplomata* from the epitaphs, and from most earlier *diplomata*.

Therefore, one can detect an evolution, if without uniformity, from predominantly using ethnic adjectives to greater interest in geographical regions. This could reflect changing conceptions of the empire at Rome, though questions remain

²⁷⁷ *AE* 1977 793; *CIL* XVI 177 (= *AE* 1953 190); for other certain examples *cf.* *AE* 1995 1824 (= *RMD* IV 264); *AE* 2004 1921 (= *RMD* V 392); *AE* 2008 1111 with *AEA* 2010 25 in *Tyche* 26 (2011), 268-9; *AE* 1985 994 (= 1986 526 = *RMD* III 171); *AE* 1975 245 (= *RMD* II 105); *AE* 1995 1822 (= *RMD* IV 277); *AE* 2006 1854 (= 2002 1760 with *RMD* V 427), 1855.

²⁷⁸ *AE* 2007 1786; *CIL* XVI 100 (= III p. 1987 = *AE* 1892 76); *cf.* *CIL* XVI 79 (= III p. 878 = X 7855); *AE* 2008 1111 with *AEA* 2010 25 in *Tyche* 26 (2011), 268-9.

²⁷⁹ *Cilicia*: *AE* 1985 994; possibly *AE* 1977 798 (= *RMD* I 44) but the attribution to a member of a *classis* is conjectural; *Dalmatia*: *CIL* XVI 100; *Thracia*: *AE* 1975 245; *AE* 1995 1822; *AE* 2006 1854, 1855.

²⁸⁰ *Phrygia*: *AE* 2008 1111 with *AEA* 2010 25 in *Tyche* 26 (2011), 268-9, though the external text names a different recipient, who was *Boios ex Pannon(ia)*; *Pamphylia*: *AE* 1977 793; *Bessia*: *AE* 1995 1824; *AE* 2004 1921. See below pp. 70-2 for *Bessia*.

²⁸¹ *AE* 2007 1786 and above note.

²⁸² Note below p. 72 n.310.

²⁸³ Speidel (1986) 468 with n.5; *cf.* Talbert (2013) 167 with n.14.

about the representativeness of the *diplomata* sample.²⁸⁴ The character of these regions is extremely difficult to delineate, and whether they bear much relationship to the ethnic adjectives of the epitaphs is equally unclear. Despite offering some promising insights into recruitment, *diplomata* may raise more questions than they answer.

I proposed above that the epigraphic habits of other *milites* may explain the more frequent recording of origins by *classis* servicemen from the later first century AD. One wonders if the probable introduction of military *diplomata* under Claudius had a delayed influence on the information inscribed on the tombstones of all non-citizen *milites*.²⁸⁵

That is not to say that this information was not previously recorded by military authorities; rather, it received new significance for those enrolled.²⁸⁶ Domaszewski suggested that official records on *milites* influenced the content of their tombstones.²⁸⁷ M. P. Speidel acknowledged that such records had some impact, but argued that the auxiliary *milites* themselves had more influence on *diplomata* contents, with those documents reflecting practices underlying funerary epigraphy habits.²⁸⁸ This is based on the two ‘rules’ mentioned above, indicating that personal choice influenced *diplomata* origin statements.²⁸⁹ We cannot know if such practices were found in the Italian *classes* because all the peregrine *milites* served away from

²⁸⁴ For development of geographical conceptions of empire see the classic Nicolet (1991). Talbert (2004) has argued that provinces were clearly understood as geographical entities existing in relationship to each other; cf. Talbert (2010).

²⁸⁵ See above p. 27.

²⁸⁶ See above pp. 63-4.

²⁸⁷ Domaszewski (1885) 21 with n.4, drawing on Tac. *Ann.* 1.44: *citatus ab imperatore nomen, ordinem, patriam, numerum stipendiorum, quae strenue in proeliis fecisset, et cui erant, dona militaria edebat.*

²⁸⁸ Speidel (1986) 475.

²⁸⁹ See above p. 59.

home. The problem is extremely difficult to untangle, with a complex relationship between official and personal concerns possibly determining habits.

In any case, influence either way only went so far. We have observed differences in origin statements between *diplomata* from the mid-Hadrianic period and contemporary epitaphs. This could be explained by the different purposes of the media. Those in charge of the Italian *classes* were apparently concerned to identify precisely which community and geographical region each man came from. However, it was enough for the servicemen in Italy to provide a broad *natio* in personal epitaphs.

4.3 *Nationes* and geography

Unfortunately, at least some of the *nationes* used could hinder detailed studies of recruitment patterns. By considering *Pannonius* and *Bessus*, I shall suggest that neither can be convincingly connected with particular geographical or administrative regions, and that their use may reflect Roman perceptions of their empire, rather than the “real” identities of the deceased servicemen. The following could apply to the majority of adjectives used, though perhaps not all: for example, those servicemen who claimed identities derived from cities, such as *Alexandrinus* or *Nicaensis*, could be considered a separate category.²⁹⁰

Concerning identity, scholarship has increasingly focused on its pluralities within the Roman world, and their relationship to the development of the empire.²⁹¹ Given that simply being Roman had many different meanings, the identities of others

²⁹⁰ For Nicaea see *CIL* X 3406 (= *ILS* 2886); 3416 (= *ILS* 2896), 3419 (= *ILS* 2868), 3622.

²⁹¹ E.g. Woolf (1998) and (2012) 218-30; Miles ed. (1999); Goldhill ed. (2001); Mattingly (2010); Whitmarsh (2010); Gruen ed. (2011).

within the empire represent a great challenge in their examination.²⁹² At least in Roman contexts, indigenous peoples would often describe themselves using Roman formulae created for them, based on Roman conceptions of their empire and the place of those people within it. For instance, Mitchell has convincingly argued that the identity of the Pontici was “created” by the formation of the Roman province of Pontus by Pompey.²⁹³

Regarding the *classes*, consider *natione Pannonius/-icus*. The Romans applied the term *Pannonii* to several Illyrian tribes spread over a substantial area on both sides of the river Save extending from Noricum into Dalmatia.²⁹⁴ The Roman-ness of the adjective is highlighted by Appian: Παίονες μὲν ὑπὸ τῶν Ἑλλήνων λεγόμενοι, καὶ ῥωμαῖστὶ Παννόνιοι.²⁹⁵ Strabo identified six main tribes as Pannonian: the Andizeti, Breuci, Daesitiatae, Ditiones, Mazaei and Peirustae.²⁹⁶ When a *miles* called himself *natione Pannonius* rather than mentioning his tribe, he appears to have adopted a Roman analysis of his ethnic group.

To complicate matters, in the imperial period only the first two Strabonian tribes dwelt in Pannonian provinces. The Ditiones, for instance, were to be found in Dalmatia.²⁹⁷ It is therefore difficult to tell whether a *miles Pannonius* was from the provincial territories of Pannonia Superior or Inferior, or whether he belonged to a Pannonian tribe settled elsewhere.

The Bessi are even more problematic. From Mommsen onwards, it has often been asserted that when found in *classis* epitaphs, *Bessus* describes servicemen of

²⁹² For Roman identity and self-representation, see Dench (2005).

²⁹³ Mitchell (2002).

²⁹⁴ The earliest use of *Pannonii* is in Polyb. *frag.* 64; cf. Str. 7.5.2-3; App. *Ill.* 14, 22; Cass. Dio 49.36-7; Flor. 2.24. On the inhabitants of the provinces, see Plin. *NH* 3.147-8; Ptol. *Geog.* 2.14-15. See also Mócsy in *RE* Suppl. IX (1962), s.v. *Pannonia*, 519-21 and (1974) 13-14.

²⁹⁵ App. *Ill.* 14.

²⁹⁶ Str. 7.5.3.

²⁹⁷ Plin. *NH* 3.142; cf. Ptol. *Geog.* 2.16.5.

Thracian origin, rather than the specific tribe of Bessi.²⁹⁸ This would explain the absence in *classis* epitaphs of *natione Thrax/Trax/Traex*, despite *diplomata* attesting Thracian recruitment.²⁹⁹

The Bessi were located by different ancient writers in different parts of what became the *provincia Thracia*.³⁰⁰ Herodotus placed them in the Rhodope Mountains region.³⁰¹ Strabo (Βέσσοι δέ οἵπερ τὸ πλεόν τοῦ ὄρους νέμονται τοῦ Αἴμου... συνάπτοντες τῇ τε Ῥοδόπῃ) and others have them further north, around Haemus, though penetrating the Rhodope.³⁰² A recent synthesis argues that their tribal lands comprised the Upper Hebrus region and the western Haemus Mountains, extending to the Rhodope.³⁰³ These lands were the basis for the *Bessike* strategy described by Ptolemy, one of the pre-Roman administrative divisions of Thrace which persisted after its annexation in AD 46 down to the Trajanic period.³⁰⁴

There is little evidence for *classis* Bessi being recruited only from this administrative region.³⁰⁵ We have seen that two servicemen discharged in AD 142 came from *Nicopolis ex Bessia*, thought by the publishers of the *diplomata* to be Nicopolis ad Nestum, on the upper Nestus river in western Thrace.³⁰⁶ However, the relationship of this *Bessia* to the area of the former strategy remains unclear, and just because some men came from *Bessia*, it does not follow that all Bessi did.

²⁹⁸ Mommsen (1881) 33-4; Chapot (1896) 186-7; Starr (1960²) 77 with 99 n.36; Kolendo (1988-9); *cf.* Speidel (1986) 468 n.5.

²⁹⁹ See above p. 67.

³⁰⁰ For an overview see Oberhummer in *RE* III (1899), *s.v.* *Bessi*, 329-331; Tacheva (1997).

³⁰¹ Hdt. 7.111; *cf.* Cass. Dio 51.25.

³⁰² Str. 7.5.12; Amm. Marc. 27.4.11; Eutr. 6.10. See also Polyb. 23.8.4; Caes. *B Civ.* 3.4; Livy 39.53; Plin. *NH* 4.40; Suet. *Aug.* 3; Ptol. *Geog.* 3.11.6; Cass. Dio 47.25.

³⁰³ Zahariade (2009) 20; *cf.* Detschew (1957) 57-9; Wiesner (1963) 19-21; Tacheva (1997) 200-5.

³⁰⁴ On the strategy see Ptol. *Geog.* 3.11.6; Tacheva (1997) 205-6; Zahariade (2009) 31-2; *cf.* Topalilov (2013) 259-60. For strategies in general see Jones (1971²) 10-15; Zahariade (2009) 29-33.

³⁰⁵ Tatscheva (1999) 870-2 collects the epigraphic evidence for Roman army Bessi. The majority are *classis* servicemen, but there are twenty two auxiliaries, thirteen *equites singulares*, two legionaries and four praetorians.

³⁰⁶ See above p. 67 n. 279. Eck and Roxan (1995) 90; Roxan and Holder (2004) 274. Nothing strongly argues against Nicopolis ad Istrum.

Indeed, there is direct evidence for Bessi recruited from outside their proposed homeland within Thracian territories, as epitaphs for Bessan *equites singulares* who originated from Apri in the south east of the province and Scupi in Moesia Superior demonstrate.³⁰⁷ Furthermore, Bessi were to be found in the Dobrudja region of Moesia Inferior.³⁰⁸

It is therefore very difficult to establish a precise region from which Bessi were recruited, and whether *natione Bessus* meant anything other than “Thracian” in a very wide sense. Kolendo has argued that the Dobrudja Bessi, residing in marshlands near the Danube estuary and familiar with boat travel, were the original Thracian group recruited into the *classes*.³⁰⁹ He proposed that when recruitment extended across all Thrace, recruits simply adopted the *Bessus* tag. This presumes that the Romans keenly desired recruits familiar with water travel, which we have already questioned. Perhaps the first regional *classis* recruits instead came predominantly from the pre-provincial strategy of *Bessike*. One could then envisage a similar process to that described by Kolendo, with future recruits from wider Thrace copying their precursors.

Whatever the solution to its origins, the use of *Bessus* in *classis* epitaphs suggests that servicemen were not especially concerned with revealing their precise tribe or geographical origins. Instead, they were part of a broad organisational category, adopted in Italy primarily by groups of non-citizen *militēs*.³¹⁰ Like those

³⁰⁷ CIL VI 3177: *D(is) M(anibus) / P(ublio) Ael(io) Basso...eq(uiti) sing(ulari) Aug(usti)...nat(ione) Bessus Claudia Apris...*; CIL VI 3205: *D(is) M(anibus) / T(ito) Aur(elio) Gaio b(eneficiario) eq(uitum) sing(ularium)...Fl(avia) Scupis nat(ione) Bessus*.

³⁰⁸ Tacheva (1997) 206-10; Zahariade (2009) 35-7. Ovid mentions the Bessi and Getae around Tomis (*Tr.* 3.10.5; 4.1.67) while inscriptions from *vicus Quintionis* and Ulmetum on the Black Sea coast record *cives Romani et Bessi consistentes*: *IScM* I.324, 327-8, 330-1, 340-1 (AD 139-77); V.62-3 (AD 140-72).

³⁰⁹ Kolendo (1988-9).

³¹⁰ See Mommsen (1881) 34 for a proposal that the world was divided according to an ‘ethnologisches Schema’ from which the *nationes* were selected.

who were *natione Pannonicus* or say *Graecus*, they claimed membership of a group created by the Romans and not necessarily tied to a clearly defined geographical area. This places limits on detailed recruitment studies, or examinations of changes in recruitment patterns over time, because in many instances it would render impossible explorations of whether servicemen were recruited from a particular city, rural region or even province. Perhaps we should not be too pessimistic: the examples considered may be regarded as extreme: the general origins of a *natione Aegyptius* are not too difficult to recover. But problems of specificity remain: where in Egypt?

It would be overly-simplistic to argue that the various ethnic-organisational groups had no input into the construction of their self-identity. A worthwhile comparandum are the Batavi, partly because they formed an important part of the *custodes corporis*, with whom we have already compared the *classes*.³¹¹ Tacitus reports that the Batavi were originally an offshoot of the Chatti who migrated (*Chattorum quondam populus et seditione domestica in eas sedes transgressus*) to live in unpopulated land (*extrema Gallicae orae vacua cultoribus*) in the Rhine/Meuse delta, probably between 51 and 15 BC.³¹²

However, Roymans has argued that there is no archaeological evidence for the region being abandoned, and suggests that the Batavi were formed from a small group of Chatti who had offered their military service to the Romans, and the remnants of tribes who had once belonged to the Eburonean group which previously dominated the area.³¹³ Several other tribes, including the Cananefates, were subordinate to the

³¹¹ As Bellen (1981) 36 noted, ten out of fifteen references to the origins of *custodes* in the Claudian and Neronian periods are to those who were *natione Batavus*.

³¹² Tac. *Germ.* 29; *Hist.* 4.12; for the date see Roymans (2004) 24.

³¹³ Roymans (2004) 26-8, 55-8.

Batavi as part of the pre-Flavian *civitas Batavorum*.³¹⁴ These people were probably considered Batavi by the Romans, and may have seen themselves in that way.³¹⁵

Van Driel-Murray has argued that the Batavi were a ‘martial race’ whose external definition as such by the Romans helped to forge an identity which had no basis in their history, but was encouraged by mass recruitment into the Roman military forces.³¹⁶ This recruitment was seemingly based on a treaty with the Romans, partly explaining their presence in the bodyguard of the Julio-Claudian Emperors.³¹⁷ Roymans adduces a range of literary and material evidence which suggests that the Batavi not only passively received this identity but actively reinforced and developed it.³¹⁸ For example, he cites the mid-first century AD gravestone of Imerix, a *Batavus*, found in Dalmatia, decorated with the image of a cavalryman.³¹⁹

Similarly, one could imagine that *classis* servicemen, when stating that they were *Bessi*, *Pannonii* and so forth, did not simply passively accept Roman-formed identities, but actively developed them within the context of the *classes*, while surrounded by people from different ethnic backgrounds. There is no evidence for what this meant in practice. We can however state that these different groups, alongside Italian locals, were the main audience for the epitaphs set up in Italy. This audience would probably not have heard of the particular tribe or settlement from which a serviceman came.³²⁰ Yet they may have recognised the broad ethnic groups found in the epitaphs.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.* 205-9.

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*

³¹⁶ Van Driel-Murray (2003); cf. Bellen (1981) 34-57.

³¹⁷ Tac. *Germ.* 29: *nam nec tributis contemnuntur nec publicanis atterit; exempti oneribus et collationibus et tantum in usum proeliorum sepositi, velut tela atque arma bellis reservantur*; for the origins of this service or treaty cf. Bellen (1981) 15, 39; Speidel (1994b) 12-13; Roymans (2004) 55-7.

³¹⁸ Roymans (2004) 221-34.

³¹⁹ *AE* 1971 299.

³²⁰ Speidel (1986) 474 uses not dissimilar arguments to explain his two categories of origin statements in *auxilia diplomata*.

I shall not here discuss what the servicemen may have been trying to say with these adjectives, if revealing their geographical origins is accepted as not a prime concern. However, one could recall a passage in the *Digest*, where Ulpian discusses the relevance of the *natio* of a slave to their buyer, because certain *nationes* were associated with certain characteristics.³²¹ This seems to have influenced how the Batavi were regarded, and perhaps could contribute to a deeper understanding of the character of the *classis* groupings.

In the above, I have argued that evolution in the frequency and nature of origin provision in *classis* epitaphs may be evidence for the formalisation of *classis* service in the first century AD. While origins were initially rarely expressed, the later first and second centuries saw the presentation of this information in around half of the surviving inscriptions, normally through *natio* plus ethnic adjective. This development can reasonably be explained through the influence of the epigraphic habits of *militēs* in Italy. I tentatively suggest that the interest in recording origins in military *diplomata* may have encouraged this. The manner in which origins were recorded in *classis diplomata* varied considerably over time, and the many variations resist complete explanation. However, we can observe a broad trend whereby geographical origins became increasingly important, perhaps because of changing views of the Roman empire.

If we take the epitaphs and *diplomata* at face value, there is little good evidence for attempts to recruit exclusively from maritime peoples. We shall return to this problem in Chapter Two, but this may indicate that the *classes* were expected to perform a mixture of terrestrial and maritime tasks. By considering the nature of *classis* service, the following section will reinforce this point.

³²¹ *Dig.* 21.1.31.21.

The above must take into account that the ethnic adjectives employed in epitaphs may reflect a Roman view of the world, their use encouraged by recruitment from particular peoples who then employed Roman organisational divisions to develop a particular self-image. The comparative example of the Batavi may support this contestation. The nature of this self-image is very difficult to recover. However, at least for the *Pannonii* and *Bessi*, the precise identification of geographical origins does not appear to have been a particular concern.

Although perhaps allowing a hazy sense of their regional origins, the above must hinder attempts to identify precisely where servicemen came from. The problem is greatest for considering localised recruitment, relatedly seeing whether there were changes over time, or investigating the significance of urban or rural recruitment. *Diplomata* can be of some help, but the apparently schematic division between naming cities in the east and tribes in the west for much of the second century AD undermines their reliability. Only where we have other evidence for enlistment from a particular place, as we shall see for the Fayoum, can more extensive investigations into recruitment processes be undertaken.

5. The nature of service

I shall now examine the composition of the lower ranks of the Italian *classes* and the terminology used to describe them, to work towards an understanding of the sort of tasks they were expected to perform.³²² Scholars agree that *classis* servicemen presented themselves and were regarded as *milites*, at least from the Claudian period.

³²² For officers see Ferrero (1878) 32-9; Fiebiger (1894) 346-416; Chapot (1896) 109-70; Starr (1960²) 30-45; Wickert (1949-50) 113-20; Sander (1957); Reddé (1986) 534-45, (1995). This section concentrates purely on the basic *milites*, and does not consider the wide range of individuals with particular functions in the *classes* e.g. *architecti*, *gubernatores*, *medici*, *custodes armorum*.

However, there are debates over the real division of labour. Ferrero and his followers argued that there were separate groups of rowers, sailors and marines.³²³ Thus, the situation remained much as it had in Hellenistic and Republican war fleets.³²⁴

In contrast, De la Berge and more fully Starr argued that there was only one main group of *classis* members who had combat training alongside their nautical skills.³²⁵ Starr acknowledged that there may have been a small group of deck soldiers with extra training, but these would have been formally indistinguishable from the other ‘sailors’.³²⁶ Similarly, at least regarding the second century AD, Reddé could not detect any difference between ‘épibates’ and ‘matelots’, asserting that even if there was a weak formal distinction, both groups received military training and were equipped for land combat.³²⁷ He referred to this general group either as ‘matelots’ or ‘soldats’.³²⁸

There is also debate over changes to the *classes* in the first century AD. We saw that Mommsen argued that the *classes* were militarised by Claudius.³²⁹ This could suggest that the tasks envisioned for the *classes* were quite different at the start of the empire from later periods. However, the evidence for this transformation is weak, and the hypothesis should probably be rejected.

More recently, Oorthuijs has argued that the Augustan *classes* retained the essential form of Hellenistic war fleets, but that Claudius created a marine corps,

³²³ Ferrero (1878) 40-1; Chapot (1896) 171-2; Wickert (1949-50) 121-3; Kienast (1966) 23-4; Oorthuijs (2006).

³²⁴ For this arrangement in Greek fleets see Casson (1971) 304-9. For marines in the Republican period see e.g. Caes. *B Civ.* 1.57; 3.24; Vell. Pat. 2.84.

³²⁵ De la Berge (1886) 101, 162; Starr (1960²) 55-61. Followed by Webster (1985³) 166; Saddington (2009).

³²⁶ Starr (1960²) 58.

³²⁷ Reddé (1986) 522-4; cf. Reddé (2000) 185-7. See also Le Bohec (1994) 164.

³²⁸ ‘Soldats’ also used by Chapot (1896) 171; cf. e.g.: Speidel (1986) 467: ‘soldiers of the fleet’; Phang (2001) 464: ‘fleet soldier’.

³²⁹ Mommsen (1881) 463-4; see above p. 47.

divided into *centuriae*.³³⁰ I shall concentrate on a few emblematic flaws to argue against his position.

As we shall note repeatedly, no epigraphy supports the hypothesis of a Claudian marine corps. Oorthuijs suggests that the extremely obscure post of *suboptio* could have been created to assist the management of a *centuria* of marines divided over several ships, but nothing backs this assertion.³³¹ A further major problem arises because of a second century AD epitaph from Misenum for a *gubernator*, recording that he belonged to a *centuria*.³³² Oorthuijs summarily dismisses this evidence, but it clearly shows that not only men outside a putative naval hierarchy considered themselves part of *centuriae*.³³³

Beyond epigraphy, Oorthuijs claims that Vegetius clearly distinguished between different groups on ship, and, in describing the arms which a crewman should carry, refers specifically to *milites*, not *remiges*.³³⁴ These *milites* should then be understood as marines. But we shall see that Vegetius is quite obscure when discussing different groups in the *classes*, and should be set in a wider context of literary vagueness about the division of labour in the imperial *classes*.³³⁵ Moreover, as the Introduction notes, although claiming to accurately present the earlier imperial *classes*, Vegetius was writing a political text, heavily influenced by contemporary circumstances and containing some major errors or misunderstandings.³³⁶ Thus, even

³³⁰ Oorthuijs (2006) 171-80.

³³¹ *Ibid.* 177-80 (note also Sander (1957) 356). There are only seven documentary references to *suboptiones*, none revealing their duties: *CIL* X 3496, 3497 (= Tuck (2005) no.25); *CIL* XI 67, 349 (= *ILS* 2860), 3531 (= *ILS* 2859); *AE* 1985 401; *ChLA* III 200 (= *P. Lond.* II 229 = *CPL* 120 = *FIRA* III 132 = *AE* 1896 21); cf. Chapot (1896) 163; Starr (1960²) 60; Reddé (1986) 538.

³³² *CIL* X 3385: *D(is) M(anibus) / M(arci) Antoni Apoll[?]) / gubernato[r]is / centur(ia) Ar[ri(?)]---*. For the ship as a *centuria*, see below pp. 85-6.

³³³ Oorthuijs (2006) 177 n.4.

³³⁴ *Veg. Mil.* 4.44: *ut catafracti vel loricati, galeati etiam et ocreis muniti sint milites*. Oorthuijs (2006) 177.

³³⁵ See below p. 95.

³³⁶ See above p. 30.

if Oorthuijs is right to identify the heavily-armed *milites* as marines, they did not necessarily exist in our period.³³⁷ Given this very poor evidence for a marine corps in our period, one cannot demonstrate the creation of one by Claudius.

There is therefore little evidence for fundamental alterations to *classis* manpower in the first century AD. At the other extreme, Starr argued that the *classes* were fully militarised from their creation, with no sense of change over time.³³⁸ Yet, Reddé identified a slow evolution, which he termed ‘militarisation’, whereby the *classes* were progressively integrated with the Roman army.³³⁹ He has expressed some uncertainty over the character of the *classes* during the first century AD, noting documentary references to *remiges*, the appearance of rowers and marines in a passage of Tacitus discussed below, and the presence of a *trierarchus* and *centurio classicus* at the death of Agrippina the Younger.³⁴⁰ He considers the latter as possible evidence for split naval and military command hierarchies in the first century, though admits it is far from decisive. He does not engage closely with pre-Flavian epigraphy, which seems to me very important for this problem.

In an attempt to shed further light on these two issues, I shall re-examine the epitaphs, literature and *diplomata* in turn. Agreeing with the *communis opinio*, I shall suggest that the *classis* servicemen presented themselves and were regarded as *milites*. Cautiously siding with Starr and Reddé, especially because of situations demonstrating that *classis milites* as a group could switch between sea and land tasks, I shall argue that these men may have been organised as one group, trained in and

³³⁷ Oorthuijs (2006) 177 sees the marines of Vegetius in second century AD tombstones portraying *classis* servicemen, but see below p. 95 n.404.

³³⁸ Starr (1960²) *passim* but e.g. 66-74.

³³⁹ Reddé (1986) 524-6. Though it is unclear how this evolution fits with his statement on p. 503 that the Augustan *classes* were an integral part of the army.

³⁴⁰ Reddé (2000) 185-7. For the murder of Agrippina, see Tac. *Ann.* 14.8. For *remiges* and the passage of Tacitus, see below pp. 91-2.

entrusted with the general functions of other Roman *milites* but who could *also* row. That is not to argue that all Roman *milites* were identical: we shall see that legionaries could be considered of a higher status. Instead, my emphasis is on rejecting occasional scholarly distinctions between high status land troops and low status mariners.

Regarding our second problem, I shall suggest that while there is evidence, especially in epitaphs but also possibly in *diplomata*, for changes across the first century AD which could be regarded as symptoms of militarisation, we should interpret these as the formalisation of *classis* service, or perhaps simply of the epigraphic practices of their members.

The overall argument will lead to some conclusions on the implications for *classis* recruitment, for how we should regard the duties undertaken by *classis* servicemen, and for the status and functions of the Roman imperial *miles*, and the nature of Roman *militia*.

As is evident, a range of modern terms has been used for the members of the Italian *classes*. Regarding whether servicemen should be considered ‘sailors’ or ‘soldiers’, I shall suggest that the former is a wholly unsatisfactory term because it can apply only to a small technical subset of *classis* members. However, ‘soldier’ is a rather restrictive category, which does not fully take into account the broad character of the Roman imperial *miles*, as we shall see. Thus, when translating *miles* in a *classis* context, I have employed the neutral “serviceman”.

The coming arguments partly rest on *milites* being able to master rowing relatively easily, with time remaining for other training. Rowing and ships therefore merit consideration. Epitaphs indicate that the majority of Italian *classis* vessels were liburnians and triremes, though each *classis* also possessed several quadriremes and

quinquiremes, and the *classis Misenensis* a hexereme.³⁴¹ Following Morrison, it is generally thought that liburnians were powered by two banks of oars on each side of the ship, with one rower per oar.³⁴² Triremes are argued to have had three banks of oars. Above that, ships were named after the number of rowers on each side of the ship. So a quadrireme could be a two banked ship with two rowers per oar.

The arrangements proposed for the polyremes are based on the modern hypothesis concerning the trireme layout. This rests on relatively limited literary, documentary and iconographical evidence.³⁴³ However, it has been tested through the construction of the trireme *Olympias*, trialled in the late 1980s and early 1990s.³⁴⁴ Although the ship achieved lower speeds than projected and the bottom bank of rowers operated inefficiently, it has generally been considered a vindication of the hypothesis.³⁴⁵

The *Olympias* trials have shown that the rowers required good training.³⁴⁶ Ancient evidence repeatedly shows a concern with crew training.³⁴⁷ For instance, Thucydides has Pericles put the maritime superiority of the Athenians to the Spartans

³⁴¹ For evidence and discussion see Reddé (1986) 102-117, 665-9; Morrison (1996) 170-4.

³⁴² Morrison (1941); Casson (1991²) 84-5, 130, 190; Morrison (1996); Morrison, Coates and Rankov (2000²); Murray (2012) 6-8. For discussion of earlier hypotheses see Morrison, Coates and Rankov (2000²) 8-24.

³⁴³ For the evidence generally see above note, esp. Murray (1996) and Morrison, Coates and Rankov (2000²). For collected ship iconography see Morrison (1996) 177-254; for evidence on polyremes see Murray (2012) 251-82. Of particular importance for the argument are the Lenormant relief of c. 400 BC (Athens, Acropolis Museum 1339; cf. Morrison (1996) 185-7; Morrison, Coates and Rankov (2000²) 138-40, 280-3) and a krater of similar date by the Talos painter (Ruvo, Museo Jatta, 1501; cf. Morrison (1996) 187-8; Morrison, Coates and Rankov (2000²) 146-8). The interpretation of the former has been criticised by Tilley (2004) 36-8, and while one must agree that the composition of the relief makes certainty impossible, the lack of credible alternative interpretations for the slanted lines explained as oars encourages siding with Morrison *et al.*

³⁴⁴ For the most recent trials in 1992 and 1994, alongside earlier bibliography, see Rankov ed. (2012).

³⁴⁵ E.g. Casson (1991²) 84-5; Burlet (2012); Gifford (2012); McGrail (2012). Sensible modifications have been proposed by T. Shaw and J. F. Coates in Rankov ed. (2012), 62-92; cf. Sleswyk (2012). Persistent criticism has come from Tilley (2004) esp. 23-32, (2007) and (2012). But his arguments for a single bank of three rowers in something like the *alla sensile* system are without evidential foundation and have received little acceptance: see e.g. the review of Tilley (2004) by W. Murray in *IJNA* 35.1 (2006), 156-7 and Papalas (2012).

³⁴⁶ E.g. Morrison (1996) 324, 336; Lipke (2012) 17; cf. Casson (1991¹) 84.

³⁴⁷ Casson (1991¹) 88; Morrison (1996) 353; Morrison, Coates and Rankov (2000²) 115-16.

down to their greater experience and practice.³⁴⁸ The account of Polybius of the Battle of the Egadi Islands in 241 BC contrasts the excellent training of the Roman oarsmen (τῶν δὲ πληρωμάτων εὐχερῶς ἀναφερόντων τὸν κλύδωνα ταῖς εὐεξίαις...; τὰ τε πληρώματα συγκεκριμένα διαφέρουσιν αὐτοῖς τὴν χρεῖαν παρείχεται) with the inexperience of the Carthaginians (τὰ δὲ πληρώματα τελῶς ἦν ἀνάσκητα καὶ πρὸς καιρὸν ἐμβεβλημένα).³⁴⁹ The training of the crews of Octavian in 36 BC before his Sicilian expedition is given considerable coverage.³⁵⁰

This could indicate that *classis milites* had to devote considerable time to rowing training, and that perhaps skilled oarsmen were desired recruits. However, the *Olympias* trials have shown that only a brief period of intensive training for inexperienced rowers, perhaps two or three days, is sufficient for basic needs.³⁵¹ Secondly, our evidence for the importance of training concerns vessels operating in politically divided waters which demanded skill in sea battles. Italian *classis* members never needed to perform particularly elegant battle manoeuvres. We can therefore reasonably argue that, although servicemen would have been well-trained, the standards required may not have been as high as in earlier fleets. Rowing practice need not have deprived them of time for sufficient training in other tasks useful to the Roman *miles*. Nor were talented oarsmen necessarily in great demand, because the desired skills could be learnt in relatively little time. We have already seen that *gens de mer* were not the focus of recruitment.

³⁴⁸ Thuc. 1.142.6-9.

³⁴⁹ Polyb. 1.60.9, 61.3-4.

³⁵⁰ Vell. Pat. 2.79.2; Suet. *Aug.* 16.1; Cass. Dio 48.51.5.

³⁵¹ Lipke (2012) 17.

Classis ship-types prompt a final observation. Triremes and liburnians were fast and not especially spacious.³⁵² Important functions of the *classes* included the transportation of imperial dignitaries, and being able to speedily redeploy.³⁵³ There was no sense in lumbering them with armed marines unless expecting naval combat. This provides circumstantial evidence for the hypothesis that there was only one main group of servicemen in the Italian *classes*.

5.1 Servicemen as *milites* in epitaphs

This section will consider *classis* funerary epigraphy. First I shall review the evidence for the Flavian period and later, which indicates that, if they described themselves as anything, *classis* servicemen used *miles*, and produced epitaphs which shared the characteristics of Roman military funerary epigraphy. As for pre-Flavian documentation, I shall argue that although its military character is less prevalent, changes across the first century should be understood as the product of formalisation, not the militarisation of the *classes* and their transformation from quite different institutions. I shall then consider reasons for the almost total absence in the epitaphs of sailors, rowers or separate marines. Finally, I shall examine some Greek evidence supporting the overall argument.

Both pre- and post-Flavian epitaphs are united in the lack of variation in describing the low-ranking men *expected* to appear in Mediterranean war fleets: rowers, sailors and marines. There are no rowers (*remiges*). There is one example of a

³⁵² See Casson (1991²) e.g. 87, 92 for the limited space on triremes; cf. Morrison, Coates and Rankov (2000²) 226-30.

³⁵³ See Chapter Four.

sailor (*nauta*) from the first century AD.³⁵⁴ Often no rank is mentioned, probably commemorating “ordinary” rankers. Where such men are defined, they are usually termed *milites*.

At Rome in the later first and second centuries, approximately eighty four deceased *classis* servicemen (71% of the total, including officers) were called *milites*. The proportions of normal servicemen elsewhere are lower, and so are the corresponding proportions of explicit *milites*. Ninety men from Misenum (26%) were described as *milites*. No rank was recorded in fifty five cases (16%) while there are thirty seven examples (11%) of *manipularis*, perhaps a local synonym for *miles*.³⁵⁵ That just over 50% of the total were normal servicemen cannot reflect reality: the expense of erecting stone funerary monuments was perhaps prohibitive, thus the artificially high proportion of officers represented.

At Ravenna, there were only four *milites* named in the surviving epitaphs, though in thirty six instances (45%) no rank was given.³⁵⁶ The total proportion of normal servicemen at Ravenna is therefore roughly similar to that at Misenum. Why so many fewer men called themselves *milites* is uncertain. There is no reason to suppose that the composition of the *classis Ravennas* was any different from that at Misenum and therefore no reason to think that only one *classis* possessed *milites*. Different epigraphic habits, or chance-survival, are likelier explanations. The higher proportions of normal servicemen at Rome may reflect, among other things, greater access to cheaper marble or higher survival rates.

³⁵⁴ Append. 36.

³⁵⁵ Starr (1960²) 59, followed by Reddé (1986) 522-3 and (2000) 180. Wickert (1949-50) 121 and Kienast (1966) 23 n.61 suggested that *manipularis* was a term of specification, perhaps used of deck soldiers. But they cannot explain why the term was limited to the *classis Misenensis*.

³⁵⁶ *CIL* XI 32, 103, 6740; Mansuelli (1967) no.148.

Therefore, while the proportion of *classis* servicemen who termed themselves *milites* was not always overwhelming, if calling themselves anything they normally used that word. The “military” nature of *classis* service, even when the deceased were not labelled *milites*, can be seen in records of service length and the use of *militare*. This verb features in approximately 50% of *classis* inscriptions from Misenum, Ravenna and Rome. *Stipendiorum* was a rare alternative.³⁵⁷ The use of *militavit* by *milites* in general was common in the later first and second century, in particular in Italy, whereas *stipendiorum* was popular in the provinces. By way of demonstration, at Rome, *militavit* appears in inscriptions eight hundred and thirty six times. There are only eighty instances of *stipendiorum*. There are three hundred and sixty two examples of *stipendiorum* in German epigraphy, but only seventeen of *militavit*. To give some further details, service length was recorded in around 66% of the reasonably complete two hundred and thirteen praetorian epitaphs from Rome of the second century.³⁵⁸ Of the two hundred and seventy epitaphs of the *equites singulares*, it is mentioned in virtually all reasonably intact inscriptions.³⁵⁹ Thus, as with forms of origin statements, *classis* servicemen adopted the military epigraphic habits of Italy.

We should briefly mention the designation of ships with numerals on *classis* epitaphs, especially in the second century. Thus in an epitaph from Misenum the trireme Mars was designated by *III (D(is) M(anibus) Cn(aei) Silani Pii / III Mart(e)...)*, while the same numerals were used of the Victoria at Ravenna (*D(is) M(anibus) / L(ucius) Fulvi(us) Sever(us) / scrib(a) III Vict(oria)*).³⁶⁰ Alternatively, the deceased identified their *centuria* with the name of its *centurio*, sometimes employing the 7 symbol used in army epitaphs for a *centuria*. Examples include *M(arcus)*

³⁵⁷ Eight examples at Misenum, two at Ravenna, three at Rome.

³⁵⁸ Based on Clauss (1973b) 92-5.

³⁵⁹ Speidel (1994a) 109-234.

³⁶⁰ *CIL* X 3627; *CIL* XI 59.

Epidi/us Qua/dratus / miles / ex classe / Misenensi / |(centuria) Cn(aei) Valeri / Prisci and *T(iti) Atti Nepotis qui Zecaep(?) / miles clas(sis) pr(aetoriae) Misen(ensis) |(centuria) Iulii Quinti...*³⁶¹ A blurring of the two occurs, whereby the ship itself could be described as a *centuria* (e.g. *L(ucius) Antonius Leo q(ui) / et Neon Zoili f(ilius)... c(enturia) III Asclepio...*), though this tends to be a later second or third century habit, and there can be some ambiguity.³⁶² In any case, it could further demonstrate the military character of *classis* funerary epigraphy.

The above describes the situation in later first and second century AD epitaphs. However, earlier funerary epigraphy possesses a somewhat different character. It is perhaps significant that our sole attested *nauta* was probably Julio-Claudian. The following will consider the nature of any differences, and whether they can be ascribed to major changes in the Italian *classes* in the first century AD, or perhaps the militarisation mentioned by Reddé.³⁶³

Of the forty one pre-Flavian funerary monuments, sixteen were erected by or for men not of officer class or with a specialised function. On these sixteen, three peregrines and one Roman citizen were described as *milites*; the others gave no rank.³⁶⁴ The infrequency of the word *could* suggest that the *classes*, or at least the epigraphic habits of their members, had less of a military character in this period.

It is worth briefly discussing L. Trebius, who described himself as *classicus miles*.³⁶⁵ This phrase appears only here in funerary epigraphy and is otherwise

³⁶¹ *CIL* X 7592; *CIL* X 3386.

³⁶² *CIL* X 3377 (= *ILS* 2839); cf. *CIL* III 7327; *CIL* X 8119; *ILS* 2838. Problems arise because, as Starr (1960²) 64 n.31 noted, the symbol used for *centuria* could sometimes stand for *centurio* e.g. how should one interpret *CIL* X 3382: *D(is) M(anibus) / M(arcus) Meus Atime/tianus | (centurio/a?) III Vene/re...?*

³⁶³ See above p. 79.

³⁶⁴ Append.16, 18, 30, 39.

³⁶⁵ Append. 39; cf. *AE* 1972 199 (from Aquileia, possibly early, see below p. 171): *M(arcus) Mevius / Praxiai f(ilius) Telephus | (centurio) classicus*; *CIL* VIII 21042 (from Charchell, perhaps second century AD): *Magius Maxim(us) / |(centurio) c]lassicus...*

confined to Livy, whose usage suggests that *classicus* was purely descriptive.³⁶⁶ It was the equivalent of *miles auxiliarius*.³⁶⁷ Because of this, the use of *classicus* would be superfluous for calling oneself a *miles*, explaining its infrequent use, but nevertheless hinting at how even in the early first century AD *classis* servicemen could regard themselves as similar to other *milites*.³⁶⁸

Moreover, length of service is given in eight of these epitaphs, so in approximately the same proportion (50%) as noted for later funerary monuments. *Militavit* was used five times, wholly expected in the context of Italian military epigraphy.³⁶⁹ Difficult to explain are two servicemen who recorded their period of service with *stipendiorum*.³⁷⁰ Different because of his explicit reference to discharge is the epitaph of L. Trebius Ruso.³⁷¹

While taking into account the very small sample of early epitaphs, that service length was recorded in the same proportions as it would be later encourages us not to overstate differences in the character of the *classes* over time. A further observation can be made by comparing these habits with those of the *custodes corporis*. The only *custodes* to use *militare* on their epitaphs were a pair whose service dates to the

³⁶⁶ E.g. Livy 21.61.2: *haud procul Tarracone classicos milites navalesque socios vagos palantesque per agros... ad naves compellit* (referring to an attack made by Hasdrubal in 218 BC). After the capture of Carthago Nova in 210 BC, a dispute broke out between *legionarii milites* and *classici milites*, each supporting rivals for a mural crown (26.48.12). Thus a *miles* could either be *legionarius* or *classicus*, suggesting that when referring to the Republican period the latter was a descriptive term for citizens who fought on ships.

³⁶⁷ Note the early imperial epitaph *CIL III 4753: Ambidrabo filio / equiti auxiliario / a(nnorum) XX h(ic) s(itus) est; cf. Saddington (1982) 56. For literary examples see Cic. Fam. 10.32.5; Livy 40.40.12; Gell. NA. 7.17.3.*

³⁶⁸ *Classici* appears in imperial literature, used generically for *classis* members e.g. Tac. *Hist.* 3.50: *ad has copias e classicis Ravennatibus, legionariam militiam poscentibus, optimus quisque adsciti; cf. Tac. Hist. 2.17; Vell. Pat. 2.121.1. Note also classarius e.g. Tac. Ann. 14.8: Obarito centurione classario; cf. Suet. Otho 8.2; Vesp. 8.3.*

³⁶⁹ Append. 14, 16, 23, 28, 41.

³⁷⁰ Append. 12, 18.

³⁷¹ Append. 39.

Neronian period.³⁷² Our *classis* epitaphs are very difficult to date more precisely than our broad pre- and post-Flavian groups.³⁷³ However, like the *custodes*, one wonders whether service length was given only in epitaphs from the Neronian or perhaps Claudian periods.³⁷⁴ If correct, this habit could have developed alongside the increasing importance of service length from the mid-first century in determining when one could receive *civitas* and *conubium*. This last point can perhaps explain the greater military character of later epitaphs, and we could again potentially credit such developments to formalisation.

Thus normal *classis* servicemen, if calling themselves anything, used the term *milites* and by the later first century AD produced epitaphs much like those of the legions and *auxilia*. These two points do not, however, demonstrate that there was only one actual category of servicemen in the *classes*. Inscriptions can be deceptive: real status could be concealed on purpose or because standard models of expression were used, especially by those unfamiliar with the epigraphic habit. If we compared the imperial *classes* to other Mediterranean fleets we would expect to find rowers, sailors and possibly marines.

So where are these men? The almost total absence of genuine *nautae* (sailors with technical skills) is explicable: very few probably served in the imperial *classes*, because oared warships relied primarily on their rowers, not sails, for power.³⁷⁵ There is second or early third century AD evidence for specialists concerned with sailing technicalities: from Misenum we know of two *velarii*, who perhaps saw to the furling

³⁷² CIL VI 8806 (= ILS 1727): *Nobilis / miles Impera(toris) / Neronis Aug(usti) / corp(or)is cust(os)... milit(avit) an(nos) II ...*; 8808: *Phoebus / Neronis Claud(i) / Caesaris Aug(usti) / corp(or)is cust(os)... mil(itavit) an(nos) VIII*.

³⁷³ See above pp. 38-44.

³⁷⁴ In contrast with the praetorians, where service length was mentioned in 88% of the forty reasonably complete first century epitaphs collected by Clauss (1973b) 92-5.

³⁷⁵ Already noted by Wickert (1949-50) 123.

and unfurling of sails.³⁷⁶ But this restricted group is not comparable to the “normal” servicemen. For this reason in particular, the application by Starr of the term ‘sailor’ to members of the imperial *classes* is wholly inappropriate.

The absence of *remiges* can be explained variously. Possibly, rowers were of such a low status or paid so badly that they could not afford stone funerary monuments.³⁷⁷ However, this hypothesis lacks evidence. Alternatively, *remiges* were ashamed of their rank because of the apparently negative way in which Romans viewed maritime service.³⁷⁸ Therefore they misleadingly claimed the higher status of *milites*. This argument appears to rest on prejudices to service at sea found in modern Western discourse, and is undermined by references to ships and *classes* in epitaphs, unsuitable for men wanting to conceal maritime service.³⁷⁹

The simplest interpretation is that *classis* servicemen called themselves *milites* because that is what they were. Scholars have only suggested that the *classis milites* were otherwise because they have approached them as being sailors or rowers, and contrasted them with marines. No one, to my knowledge, has ever questioned the use of *miles* to describe an auxiliary. If we accept that the *classes* were, like the *cohortes* and *alae*, intrinsically linked to what we call the Roman army, we should not be surprised at the use of *miles* by *classis* servicemen. This conclusion may also support the position of Starr and Reddé that there was only one group of servicemen in the *classes*.³⁸⁰ At this stage however, one cannot pronounce with certainty on the point.

³⁷⁶ *CIL* X 3499 (= *ILS* 2878); *CIL* X 3500 (= *ILS* 2879); cf. Reddé (1986) 537 for further specialists.

³⁷⁷ Saddington (2009) 126. On pay see below p. 125 n.501.

³⁷⁸ Robiou (1872) 154, but this view can persist in recent scholarship: e.g. Le Bohec (1996) 319. Even when scholars attribute military characteristics to the *classes*, they are inclined to write snidely about *remiges* calling themselves *milites* e.g. Starr (1960²) 58: they ‘jealously claimed their lawful title of soldiers.’

³⁷⁹ Attitudes discussed by e.g. Rediker (1993) 10-14, 166, 226-7; Taylor (1993) 43.

³⁸⁰ Ulpian (*Dig.* 37.13.1) may upset the appellation: *item nauarchos et trierarchos classium iure militari posse testari nulla dubitatio est. in classibus omnes remiges et nautae milites sunt. item vigiles milites sunt et iure militari eos testari posse nulla dubitatio est.* Scholars (e.g. Wickert (1949-50) 122; cf. Starr

Greek documentary evidence supports the overall argument. There are a few examples of deceased *classis* servicemen termed as στρατιῶται, associating them with the *milites* conventionally considered soldiers.³⁸¹ Not confined to funerary monuments, this usage appears in Egyptian private documents such as a second century *ostrakon* from Mons Claudianus detailing a debt to a member of the Alexandrian *classis*, and a late first or early second century papyrus recording a hayloft sale.³⁸² Therefore, we could reasonably consider the adoption of the terminology not purely as a second century funerary epigraphic habit designed to obscure the nature of *classis* service, but a wider phenomenon revealing how their members were conceptualised.

5.2 *Classis* service in literature

In contrast to epigraphy, literary sources can indicate that *classis* lower ranks included *remiges* (rowers), *nautae* (sailors) and *milites* (soldiers/marines), or some term referring to a combat group. Such examples are very rare, perhaps because ancient authors had so few opportunities to describe *classes* in combat in our period. However, we must be cautious in generalising from individual passages because writers could focus on unrepresentative circumstances, and use terminology without precision. To demonstrate the latter, I shall examine descriptions of the encounter

(1960²) 57) have viewed this as showing that the *classes* contained true *remiges* and *nautae*, but that these were generally *considered* as *milites*. More correctly, de la Berge (1886) 162 (note also Sander (1957) 353) simply used the passage to show that servicemen were able to make military wills, which is all that it says. The rules that applied to *milites* more widely applied to *remiges*, despite their official generic title (see below pp. 99-101).

³⁸¹ E.g. *IG* II² 8358a (Athens): Μαίωρ Φιλίππι στρατει/ώτης ληκτὸς κλάσ/σης Συριακῆς...; *AE* 1929 149 (= *SEG* 37 782; cf. Le Bohec (1996)) (Misenum): [Δις] Μανιβους / [Κλαυ]δίου Δημη/[τρίου στ]ρατ(ιώτου) στόλου / [πραιτω]ρίου Μισην/[ένσις]. For direct transcriptions of *miles* into Greek see *CPL* 193 1.5 (= *AE* 1922 135 = *FIRA* III 134).

³⁸² *Mons Claudianus* III 541; *BGU* II 455 1.8; cf. *BGU* III 741 (= *FIRA* III 119 = *M.Chr.* 244) II.6-7.

between Galba and former *classis* servicemen outside Rome in AD 68, and the presentation of the *classes* by Vegetius. I shall then offer examples supporting the hypothesis of one group of servicemen because of the demonstrable capacity of *classis* servicemen to carry out tasks both on land and water.

Rarely are all three groups mentioned together in imperial literature, as when Tacitus describes betrayal in the *classis Germanica* in AD 69 during the uprising of Civilis: *eadem etiam <in> navibus perfidia: pars remigum e Batavis tamquam imperitia officia nautarum propugnatorumque impediabant.*³⁸³ Saddington pointed to this passage as evidence for marines, and Reddé has considered it as possibly suggesting that the *classes* of the first century AD had separate naval and military sections, though noted that the description is quite vague.³⁸⁴

Crucially, we cannot assume that this passage is representative. We are confronted with a provincial *classis*, embedded in different circumstances from its Italian counterparts. The fluvial frontiers of the empire were more unstable than its centre. Although purely conjectural, special groups of soldiers travelling with *classis* vessels may therefore have been more common on the Rhine and Danube.

The *propugnatores* mentioned by Tacitus could be explained thus: as a special contingent, perhaps legionaries or auxiliaries, embarked in response to the particular difficulties of the uprising.³⁸⁵ As another instance, Dio describes Trajan embarking legionaries and archers during his Parthian campaign.³⁸⁶ Therefore, the

³⁸³ Tac. *Hist.* 4.16, perhaps the only good example. There are some cases e.g. Tac. *Ann.* 2.23 where *milites* and *nautae* are mentioned, but here Tacitus describes the *classis* constructed by Germanicus to transport his legions, not permanent *classis* servicemen; cf. Tac. *Hist.* 2.35, 43; Plut. *Otho* 10; Philo *De spec. leg.* 1.121 (highly rhetorical).

³⁸⁴ Saddington (1991) 398 (cf. Saddington (2009) 129); Reddé (2000) 186.

³⁸⁵ This applies to several of the references in n.383; cf. Saddington (2009) 132.

³⁸⁶ Cass. Dio 68.26.1: ἀλλ' ἦν γὰρ πολλὴ τῷ Τραϊανῷ καὶ τῶν νεῶν καὶ τῶν στρατιωτῶν περιουσία, αἱ μὲν ἐξεύγνυντο πολλῷ τάχει, αἱ δὲ πρὸ ἐκείνων ἀνεκώχευον ὀπίτας τε καὶ τοξότας φέρουσαι...

passage does not offer conclusive evidence for standard manpower divisions in the Italian *classes*.

More frequently, only one group is mentioned. Pliny described Gaius Caligula travelling from Astura to Antium accompanied by a *classis*.³⁸⁷ The crew of his quinquereme were described as *remiges* (*cum e tota classe quinqueremis sola non proficeret...quod se revocaret quadringentorumque remigum obsequio contra se intercederet*).

As a second example, Tacitus recounted how Vitellian forces massacred *milites trium Liburnicarum*.³⁸⁸ Elsewhere in the same text, L. Vitellius threatened to destroy Tarracina, after members of the *classis Misenensis*, which had revolted from his brother, along with some gladiators, had captured it and did not dare to leave. These are termed *remiges*: *clausis illic gladiatoribus remigibusque, qui non egredi moenia neque periculum in aperto audebant*.³⁸⁹ It is impossible to know if our sources were being specific, but the discussion to come would suggest otherwise.

Many more examples of this imprecision will reappear throughout the thesis. A good case-study for the difficulties of using literature for investigating *classis* division of labour is the entrance of Galba into Rome in AD 68 when he was greeted at the Mulvian Bridge by a crowd of *classis Misenensis* members, which he duly attacked. They had been gathered in Rome by Nero to be transformed into the *legio I Adiutrix*, but this had not been legally finalised at his death, hence demands made to Galba for an *aquila* and *signa*.³⁹⁰ Suetonius described them as *classiarii, quos Nero*

³⁸⁷ Plin. *NH* 32.4; cf. below p. 270.

³⁸⁸ Tac. *Hist.* 3.14.

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.* 3.76.

³⁹⁰ *Diplomata* (*CIL* XVI 7-9) show that Galba eventually consented, allowing us to reconcile those accounts which connect Nero to the legion with Dio (55.24.2), who claims that Galba formed it; cf. below pp. 219-23. This identification of these men is generally followed e.g. Mommsen in *CIL* III (1873), p. 2014; Ritterling in *RE* XII (1925), s.v. *legio I Adiutrix*, 1381-2; Parker (1928) 100; Starr

*ex remigibus iustos milites fecerat.*³⁹¹ It is hard to pick out what distinguished a *classarius* from a *remex*.³⁹² Plutarch calls them a crowd of rowers: ἐνετύγγανεν ἀκοσμία καὶ θορύβῳ τῶν ἐρετῶν τὴν ὁδὸν προκατεχόντων καὶ περικεχυμένων πανταχόθεν.³⁹³ Cassius Dio ignored their maritime associations: ὡς δ' ἐπλησίασε τῇ πόλει, ἀπήντησαν αὐτῷ οἱ δορυφόροι τοῦ Νέρωνος...³⁹⁴ Tacitus refers to the subsequent attack on these men by Galba thus: *trucidatis tot milibus inermium militum.*³⁹⁵ Thus, the same group was termed *classarii*, *remiges*, ἐρέται, δορυφόροι and *milites*.

Before continuing, we must consider the Suetonian notion that the servicemen had been transformed from *remiges* to *iusti milites*. This could imply that *classis* members were not really regarded as *milites* at all, but to obtain that status had to become legionaries, or at the very least serve on land. However, I shall argue that this phrase does not distinguish between *milites* and “not-*milites*”, but only shows that legionaries were regarded as a “truer” or superior sort of *miles*.

(1960²) 180; Chilver (1979) 51-3 (cautiously); Reddé (1986) 509-10; Hellegouarc'h (1987) 107; Damon (2003) 109. However, several commentators (e.g. Spooner (1891) 111; Jünemann (1894) 5-20; Heraeus (1904) 14; Heubner (1963) 33; Shotter (1993) 120-1) have suggested that these men were a separate group from those formed into the *legio I Adiutrix*, desiring the same benefits as their fellow servicemen. They argue that Suetonius and Plutarch provide confused accounts, while Tacitus distinguishes this group from the *legio*. For instance, Tacitus (*Hist.* 1.6) does not initially strongly connect the *trucidati milites* with the legion *quam e classe Nero conscripserat*, though cf. *Hist.* 1.31, where the slaughtered men are described as *commilitones* of members of the *legio classica*. Later (*Hist.* 1.87), Otho released the survivors of the Mulvian massacre, who Galba had kept under guard, forming them into *numeri legionis* (*quod reliquos caesorum ad pontem Mulvium et saevitia Galbae in custodia habitos in numeros legionis composuerat*). This group may appear later (*Hist.* 2.11) among the soldiers travelling with Otho, distinguished from the *legio I Adiutrix* as an *ingens numerus classicorum* (for the connection see Spooner (1891) 204; Heraeus (1904) 122, 141; Syme (1958) 681; Chilver (1979) 53). However, from the confusing Tacitean account it is entirely unclear whether we should link the fate of the servicemen released by Otho to the *ingens numerus*, and nothing refutes the suggestion that they were enrolled with the *legio I* (Damon (2003) 282; Ash (2007) 108). Tacitus certainly raises problems, but his account does not prove that the servicemen who met Galba were not a subset of Nero's legion.

³⁹¹ Suet. *Galba* 12.2.

³⁹² For *classarius* and *classicus*, see above pp. 86-7.

³⁹³ Plut. *Galb.* 15.3-4.

³⁹⁴ Cass. Dio 64.3.1.

³⁹⁵ Tac. *Hist.* 1.6.

Commentators have had little to say on the phrase.³⁹⁶ Suetonius himself does not use it elsewhere. However, the biographer states that Vitellius, in response to the Flavian threat, held a levy in Rome, promising to volunteers not only *missio post victoriam* but also *veteranorum iustaeque militiae commoda*.³⁹⁷ *Iusta militia* has been interpreted as regular service for a set number of years, and here the service terms were probably those of legionaries because citizens in Rome were levied.³⁹⁸ But it does not follow that *iusta militia* always had to be performed by legionaries, nor that auxiliary or *classis* service was not *militia*.

One example of *iustus miles* outside Suetonius is useful to examine. Livy described how in 214 BC, the proconsul Ti. Gracchus commanded legions largely comprised of volunteer slaves.³⁹⁹ Having endured quietly for two years to earn their *libertas*, they began to wonder whether they would ever serve in freedom (*en unquam liberi militaturi essent*). In response, Gracchus wrote to the senate requesting they be rewarded, noting *bona fortique opera eorum*, and that they lacked nothing towards the *exemplum iusti militis* except *libertas*. Thus, a *iustus miles* should ideally be in a legion, and fight well as a free Roman citizen. The sense is the truest kind of soldier, who possessed particular characteristics, some demonstrable through service. While the slaves had not yet attained that status, it does not follow that they were not already considered *milites*.

While acknowledging that this is a different author writing about a different set of historical circumstances, I suggest that we should take the Suetonian use of *iustus miles* in a similar manner. Thus, Suetonius probably does not deny that the

³⁹⁶ Mooney (1930) does not comment on it directly but at Suet. *Vit.* 15.1 (p. 359) he suggested that *iusti milites* means 'regular soldiers'.

³⁹⁷ Suet. *Vit.* 15.1.

³⁹⁸ Rolfe (1914) [1979] 271; Mooney (1930) 359; Shotter (1993) 185.

³⁹⁹ Livy 24.14.3-4.

servicemen were *milites* before, or that they did not perform *militia* because they had worked at sea, but that they had now attained the most desirable kind of *miles* status as legionaries.

To return to our main argument, the analysis of the encounter between the *classis* servicemen and Galba outside Rome demonstrates that ancient authors did not always employ precise terminology. That discussion considered different authors writing in different genres (broadly, history and biography) so variation is understandable, and precision not demanded. More striking is inconsistency within one text. The *Epitoma Rei Militaris* of Vegetius contains our fullest treatment of the members of the imperial *classes*. Its problems noted in the Introduction, this tract is an excellent demonstration of inconsistency and terminological blurring.⁴⁰⁰

For instance, Vegetius *could* picture *remiges* and *milites* as different groups: *nauarchos...qui excepti ceteris nautarum officiis gubernatoribus atque remegibus et militibus exercendis...*⁴⁰¹ However, he suggested that the opportune moment for an ambush at sea was when hostile *sailors* were weary from rowing (*si longo remigio fatigati sunt hostium nautae...*).⁴⁰² Strictly, these *nautae* should be called *remiges*. Breaking down the crews, Vegetius stated that the *nauarchi* needed *diligentia, peritia* was desired amongst *gubernatores*, while *remiges* required *virtus*.⁴⁰³ Sailors and fighting men are absent from this analysis.⁴⁰⁴

⁴⁰⁰ See above p. 30.

⁴⁰¹ Veg. *Mil.* 4.32.2; cf. 4.37.6, 46.4.

⁴⁰² *Ibid.* 4.45.2.

⁴⁰³ *Ibid.* 4.43.2.

⁴⁰⁴ Vegetius (*Mil.* 4.44) recommended that servicemen be heavily armed for dangerous naval warfare. Scholars have used this passage, albeit with some caution and alongside iconography, to show that at least some servicemen, probably military marines, were so equipped (e.g. Bollini (1968) 87; Reddé (1986) 523; cf. Chapot (1896) 198; Starr (1960²) 58). However, given his general inaccuracy, we must be cautious with Vegetius' statements on the equipment of *milites* on warships. Vegetius was writing at a time when sea battles were expected and such arms required. For the iconographical evidence on the equipment of servicemen see Bollini (1968) 86-96; cf. Mansuelli (1967). For the Athenian evidence see von Moock (1998) esp. nos. 241, 249, 486, 568. See now also Topalilov (2002). These indicate that

The above suggests that literature of different genres represents inconsistently and often inaccurately the division of labour in the imperial *classes*. Our conclusions must be limited because of the fairly small number relevant of examples. However, acknowledging this point, it seems reasonable to conclude that when an author writes of a *remex* or *classarius*, they could mean the same thing. Hence, the *remiges* and *milites* of our Plinian and Tacitean examples could well be the same people.⁴⁰⁵ Consequently, we cannot easily treat these passages as evidence for separate groups of marines, rowers or sailors.

As a supplementary but vital point, literature could support the hypothesis of only one main group of *classis* servicemen, or at least suggest that all of the servicemen received broadly similar training, no matter their usual roles, by showing how easily they could be employed in non-maritime, “military” scenarios.⁴⁰⁶ The following, alongside other examples, does not provide proof, but cannot be easily dismissed. According to Tacitus, servicemen suppressed a nascent revolt near Brundisium in AD 24. Three biremes were in the area, and a *quaestor* employed their crews (*is disposita classiariorum copia coeptantem cum maxime coniurationem disiecit*).⁴⁰⁷ As we shall see later, these ships were operating in normal circumstances, so these *classiarii* were probably not legionaries or auxiliaries embarked for a special purpose, but regular servicemen.⁴⁰⁸

classis servicemen could be portrayed in a similar fashion to other *milites* on a small number of funerary monuments (see e.g. Durry (1938) 208-11; Coulston (2000) 94-5). This idealised, standardised imagery suggests only that servicemen were conceptually like other *milites*; it does not provide certain evidence for equipment or for *classis* marines.

⁴⁰⁵ Above p. 92.

⁴⁰⁶ See Chapter Four for further examples.

⁴⁰⁷ Tac. *Ann.* 4.27; cf. below pp. 241-5.

⁴⁰⁸ See above p. 83 on ship size.

Moreover, we have seen that men were drafted from the *classis Misenensis* into what became the *legio I Adiutrix* by Nero.⁴⁰⁹ Similarly, members of the *classis Ravennas* formed the *legio II Adiutrix* in AD 69.⁴¹⁰ That a large group of men could be transferred from the *classes* to terrestrial combat service, and that that single group could be variously called *remiges*, *classiarii* and so on, suggests that all *classis* servicemen had broadly the same skills as trained *milites* from the legions and *auxilia*, even if legionaries were considered a better form of *milites*. We shall return to these and other instances of Italian *classis* servicemen performing tasks on land in Chapter Four.⁴¹¹

5.3 *Diplomata, milites and remiges*

Finally, we come to *classis diplomata*. First, I shall argue that the use of *militare* in these documents suggests that *classis* service was officially viewed as much like that in the legions or *auxilia*. I shall then discuss the variation in terminology used to describe servicemen, especially in the first century AD, arguing that this does not clearly show that there was a distinction between rowers and marines in the Italian *classes*. Indeed, the evidence could again allow only one main group. In the first century at least, this group appears to have been termed *remiges*, but by comparing this usage with some Egyptian public documents, I shall propose that these *remiges* should be considered as the equivalent of *pedites* and *equites*, and as a type of *miles*.

⁴⁰⁹ See above pp. 92-3.

⁴¹⁰ See below pp. 221-3.

⁴¹¹ See also above pp. 18-19 for land duties and the provincial *classes*.

From the earliest *diploma* of AD 52, the use of *militare* indicates that the activities of the servicemen were regarded as similar to those of other *milites*.⁴¹² This is true for all *classis diplomata* bar one.⁴¹³ The generic terms used for the men who *militaverunt* are important. In the first century, *diplomata* were most commonly granted to *veterani qui militaverunt*.⁴¹⁴ The individual to whom the document was given was typically classified as *gregalis*.⁴¹⁵ In one provincial *classis diploma*, the recipient came *ex remigibus*.⁴¹⁶

Sometimes, *remiges*, *trierarchi* and *nauarchi* were used generically to describe all the members of the *classis* to whom privileges were given. This could be used to distinguish these servicemen from full veterans (ie. those who had served for twenty six years or more and received *honesta missio*). Thus a *diploma* of AD 71 for members of the *classis Ravennas*, discharged early for bravery in war, was granted to the *nauarchi*, *trierarchi* and *remiges*.⁴¹⁷ As a comparandum, an AD 73 *diploma* for the provincial *classis* in Moesia was granted to those *trierarchi* and *remiges* still in service who had completed twenty six years, and to *veterani* with *honesta missio*.⁴¹⁸ Harder to explain is the *diploma* of AD 52, granted to the *trierarchi* and *remiges* of the *classis Misenensis*, who had obtained *honesta missio*.⁴¹⁹ Perhaps these men were

⁴¹² *CIL XVI 1: trierarchis et remigibus qui mili/taverunt in classe quae est Miseni...* See below pp. 104-7 on *militia*.

⁴¹³ Exceptional is *CIL XVI 60 (= AE 1927 3)* of AD 114, awarded to *ii qui naviga[verunt in qua]/driere Ope et [---]/ classe praetor[ia Misen(en)si]* (exterior ll.6-7). This was arguably given to men who sailed with Trajan on his Parthian expedition (McClees (1926) 420; Starr (1960²) 81, 187; Pferdehirt (2002) 88). *Navigare* does not necessarily reveal anything about the category of men rewarded. It was used for precision, describing what the men did to obtain privileges.

⁴¹⁴ *CIL XVI 12-16*, possibly 17, 24 (= *AE 1927 96*); *AE 1997 1273*. Also note the *diplomata* granted to men drafted into the *legiones Adiutrices* (*CIL XVI 7-11*; *AE 2002 1733*; *AE 2006 1833*). Unusual is *AE 1997 1771*, for *beneficiarii qui militant in classe Ravennate...* These men remained in service upon receipt of benefits.

⁴¹⁵ For three *centuriones* see *CIL XVI 12*; *AE 1997 1273*; *AE 2002 1771*. For a *tesserarius* see *AE 2004 1282*.

⁴¹⁶ *CIL XVI 24*.

⁴¹⁷ *AE 2002 1771*; cf. *AE 2004 1282*, though this is restored.

⁴¹⁸ *AE 2006 1861*.

⁴¹⁹ *CIL XVI 1*.

actually discharged early, though nothing is said on the matter. Instead, the variation found in early *diplomata* could explain why *veterani* was not used. No matter the terms employed, their service was always characterised with the verb *militare*.

Milites are never mentioned in these *diplomata*, but we should ask whether *veterani* could have been used instead of *milites*, or whether *gregalis* refers to a *miles*, in both cases meaning specifically marines. In the *diploma* from AD 52, granted to *trierarchi et remiges qui militaverunt...*, the recipient was a *gregalis*. So a *remex* could be a *gregalis*. The provincial *classis diploma* which speaks of *ex remigibus* indicates that *remiges* were found amongst *veterani*. Therefore, in the first century AD a discharged *classis* serviceman could variously be designated a *veteranus*, *remex* or *gregalis*, but nothing suggests a group of marines lurking amongst this diversity.

Second century *diplomata* of the Italian *classes* achieved a greater level of standardisation. The generic *ii qui militaverunt* was commonly used of the recipients, again underlining that they performed *militia*.⁴²⁰ As for the term used for the particular recipient, ranking servicemen were always termed *gregales*.⁴²¹

Though absolute certainty is impossible, the combined material for the first and second centuries provides no convincing evidence for multiple groups of servicemen in the Italian *classes*, and could indicate that there was only one main group. Curiously, in the first century this group, possibly if rewarded while in service, appears to have been termed *remiges*. As noted earlier, Reddé considered this among his small dossier of evidence for a non-militarised naval element in the *classes* in the first century AD, and could challenge the argument that the servicemen were

⁴²⁰ E.g. *AE* 2005 1738 (December 25 AD 119); *AE* 2005 691 (February 18 AD 129). There are eighteen certain further examples. Three *diplomata* were granted to *ii qui militant*, men still serving (*RMD* III 142 (AD 100); *CIL* XVI 72 (= X 7854); *RMM* 21 (both AD 127)).

⁴²¹ A *centurio*: *AE* 2005 1737; *gubernatores*: *AE* 2001 2156, 2007 1787.

considered *milites*.⁴²² But we could compare this to the usage of *pedites* and *equites*, undoubtedly *milites*, in auxiliary *diplomata*.⁴²³

This point can be reinforced by considering some public documents from Egypt which refer to *classis* members generically as rowers. In a reply to a petition concerning the rights of discharged soldiers in AD 63, the prefect of Egypt stated: οἱ μὲν γὰρ ὑμῶν εἴσιν ἐκ λεγιῶνων [οὐετρα]νοί οἱ δὲ ἐξ εἰλω[v, ο]ί δὲ ἐκ σπειρῶν, οἱ δὲ ἐκ τοῦ ἐρετικοῦ, [ὥστε μ]ὴ εἶναι τὸ αὐτὸ πάντων δείκαιον.⁴²⁴ We are presented with official categories: legionaries, “*alae*-men,” “cohort-men” and “rower-men.” Although there were differences of status between these groups, the “soldierly” functions of the first three were similar. They were considered as Roman army *milites*. “Rower-men” should be no different, despite the claim of Sander that the use of *remiges* shows that these men were not really *milites*.⁴²⁵

As to why *classis* servicemen did not describe themselves as *remiges* in epitaphs if that was the official shorthand for them, at least in the first century AD, it is worth pointing out that men in the legions and cohorts did not describe themselves as “legion-men” or “cohort-men” in funerary epigraphy, but as *milites* from *x* legion or *y* cohort. Similarly, *classis* servicemen did not call themselves by their division title, “rower-men”, but *milites* from *x classis*. Consider again individual Greek *classis* servicemen, who called themselves στρατιῶται, when the official shorthand was

⁴²² See above p. 79.

⁴²³ Comparison suggested but not developed by Kienast (1966) 24.

⁴²⁴ *P. Fouad*. I.21 ll.12-14 (= *FIRA* III 171a; cf. Daris (1964) no.101a); cf. *SB* V 8247 (= *FIRA* III 171b; cf. Daris (1964) 101b), the record of a previous interaction between the prefect and soldiers, where the prefect stated (ll.18-20): ἄλλη ἢ ἀγωγη ἢ τῶν λεγεωναρίων, ἄλλο ἢ τῶν χορταρίων, ἄλο ἢ τῶν κοπηλατῶν. See also *Gnomon* 55 (*BGU* V 1210) with below pp. 131-5: οἱ ἐκ [τοῦ] ἐρετικοῦ.

⁴²⁵ Sander (1957) 353.

ῥητικοί, or “rower-men”.⁴²⁶ This appears a parallel for the suggested explanations for differences between Latin epitaphs and *diplomata*.

But why was *remiges* chosen for the *classis* servicemen? Most probably, it was the obvious term to describe trained servicemen who could row, especially as it referred to that part of a crew in the Republican period, when genuine marines were deployed.⁴²⁷ As *pedites* were *milites* who moved by foot, and *equites* by horse, *remiges* travelled by oar.

Overall, *diplomata* suggest that lower ranking members of the *classes* were viewed as one group performing work similar to other *milites*, with their manner of identification changing according to variation in *diplomata* contents, or with early discharge. Whether this perception reflects reality, and separate groups of rowers and marines with different skills regularly served alongside each other is hard to determine. However, there is no good evidence in the *diplomata* for these separate groups, and I am cautiously inclined to favour the one group hypothesis. Whatever the truth, in the first century at least, and when still in service, this group appears to have been designated *remiges* or ῥητικοί. I have proposed that we should consider these terms as comparable to *pedites* and *equites*, or Greek equivalents, and that the official terminology specifies a type of *miles*, rather than a separate class of workman, or that the *classes* were regarded differently in this period than in the second century.

In summary, the combined documentary and literary evidence indicates that the main body of *classis* servicemen were regarded as *milites* of a particular type. Based on the evolution of *classis* epitaphs, one could posit that this was not always so, and that

⁴²⁶ See above p. 90.

⁴²⁷ See above p. 77 n.324.

servicemen were not initially regarded as performing *militia*. However, I have argued that the greater “military” character of later epitaphs should be understood as the product of formalisation, not militarisation. Distinguishing between different types of servicemen, and understanding precisely how they were regarded, is made very challenging by the terminological inconsistency of our limited literary evidence. However, there are a few suggestions that *classis* servicemen were regarded as *milites*, and I hope to have demonstrated that the concept of *iusti milites* is unproblematic. Finally, *diplomata* suggest that *classis* service was considered like that performed by other Roman *milites*, in the use of *militare*, and in the proposed relationship between the use of *remiges*, *pedites* and *equites* (or *cohortes* and *alae*).

It is perhaps impossible to decisively resolve the debate over the real division of labour in the *classes* because of the obstacles in distinguishing presentation or perception from reality. However, I am inclined to tentatively support Starr and Reddé, with the proviso that the members of the *classis* should be considered not as sailors/matelots, but as servicemen who could row in addition to their skills as *milites*. I have suggested that specialist *nautae* were probably few in number, while there is virtually no good evidence for distinct groups of rowers and marines permanently employed in the Italian *classes*. Conversely, some literary evidence attests the wholesale redeployment of *classis* servicemen to land tasks, implying their versatility. Moreover, circumstantial evidence, such as the nature of *classis* ships, and the relative ease with which servicemen could be trained to row, supports this case, though does not prove it.

5.4 *Milites and militia*

Three major consequences arise from the discussion. The first returns us to the lack of clear connection between origins and maritime experience. Scholars have often thought that maritime skill was sought in *classis* recruits. For example, de la Berge and Chapot, both claiming that maritime regions and islands provided most *classis* recruits, argued that Illyrians were recruited because of the talents demonstrated by their piratical habits.⁴²⁸ Starr interpreted recruitment from the eastern Mediterranean by suggesting that its inhabitants had desirable sailing skills.⁴²⁹ Such arguments have extended to explaining away inland recruitment. As we have seen, Kolendo argued that *classis* Bessi took their name from a tribe living around the Black Sea Danube estuary because he regarded recruitment from inland tribes as problematic.⁴³⁰

However, if *classis milites* were not primarily sailors, but servicemen expected to perform similar tasks to other *milites*, only with extra training for rowing, the supposed need for maritime skill becomes less important and recruitment from terrestrial regions less striking. Moreover, the *Olympias* trials suggest that new recruits could be trained relatively quickly in rowing essentials.⁴³¹ We may restate the point that *classis milites* need not have been *gens de mer*.

Secondly, it has often been assumed that, regarding evidence for servicemen performing tasks not traditionally associated with navies, these were subsidiary operations, given to a war fleet without wars to fight.⁴³² However, our assessment of

⁴²⁸ De la Berge (1886) 67-8, 158 and Chapot (1896) 42-8, 182; *cf.* Ferrero (1878) 45.

⁴²⁹ Starr (1960²) 76-7, though he noted that seamanship was not always a 'prerequisite'; Webster (1985³) 166; Keppie (1996) 383-4 (though note Keppie (1984b) 187, suggesting that no sailing experience was necessary).

⁴³⁰ Kolendo (1988-9); *cf.* Starr (1960²) 77.

⁴³¹ See above p. 82.

⁴³² E.g. Courtois (1939) 25-6, 28-9; Starr (1960²) 168, 179; Reddé (1986) 656.

the servicemen as *milites* demands a reconsideration of such tasks: perhaps they should be considered more typical of what the *classis* servicemen did.

This can be supported by final reflections on the status and functions of the Roman imperial *miles*. I have argued that *classis* servicemen were conceptualised as a type of *miles*. Of course, references to *iusti milites* demonstrate that not all *milites* were exactly the same. However, this conclusion does encourage us to reject distinctions between a naval class of people who were not *milites*, and land servicemen who were. We are simply dealing with various groups performing *militia*.

That *militia* included not only land tasks but also apparently rowing indicates its breadth. This has caused confusion in the past, as Chapot suggested when discussing the ‘l’opposition de sens flagrante entre *remigibus* et *militaverunt*’.⁴³³ Such an opposition seems to have informed Reddé when he discussed the use of *remiges* in first century documentation as implying *classes* less militarised than those of the second century.⁴³⁴

The flexibility of *militia* is suggested in a recent discussion by M. A. Speidel.⁴³⁵ Arguing that *militia* could have the sense of ‘service’ even in the first century AD, he notes, for instance, that Propertius and Horace referred to *militia Veneris*, and Cicero talked about *militia urbana*.⁴³⁶ While these rhetorical examples surely present love or politics as sharing the challenges of military activity, a point Speidel does not make clear, they are suggestive of a malleability of meaning.

For another example suggesting the wider applicability of the term *militia*, we can briefly consider the *Vigiles*, whom Starr described as ‘closely akin’ to the

⁴³³ Chapot (1896) 171.

⁴³⁴ See above p. 79.

⁴³⁵ Speidel (2006).

⁴³⁶ Prop. 4.1.137; Hor. *Carm.* 4.1.16; Cic. *Mur.* 19; Speidel (2006) 266.

classes.⁴³⁷ Originally recruited from freedmen by Augustus in AD 6, they were primarily tasked with fighting fires.⁴³⁸ Reynolds thought that this duty, traditionally performed by public and private servile *familiae*, was considered ‘servile’, hence the employment of *liberti* by Augustus.⁴³⁹

However, it is too simplistic to consider fire-fighting as purely servile. Claudius deployed *cohortes urbanae* for the task in Ostia and Puteoli.⁴⁴⁰ Furthermore, despite libertine origins, the *Vigiles* possessed several characteristics making them comparable to *milites* of the legions and *auxilia*. Strabo explicitly notes their early “military” character, calling them a στρατιωτικὸν ἐκ τῶν ἀπελευθεριωτῶν.⁴⁴¹ Their arrangement into seven *cohortes* (*itaque septem cohortes oportunis locis constituit*) implies such characteristics, though this language may not have been used in the Augustan period.⁴⁴²

However, probably by the reign of Tiberius the *Vigiles* had adopted many of the trappings of military units, including each cohort being placed under a tribune and with military centurions attached.⁴⁴³ They referred to themselves as *milites* in their epitaphs, as demonstrated by the select examples of C. Iulius Sossianus, L. Musius October and Q. Iulius Galatus, *milites* of the second, fourth and sixth cohorts

⁴³⁷ Starr (1960²) 58; cf. Reynolds (1926) 23.

⁴³⁸ Str. 5.3.7; Suet. *Aug.* 30.1; Cass. Dio 55.26; *Dig.* 1.15.1-3; cf. Reynolds (1926) 22-5; Sablayrolles (1996) 26-37.

⁴³⁹ Reynolds (1926) 23; *familiae*: *Dig.* 1.15.1.

⁴⁴⁰ Suet. *Claud.* 25.2: *Puteolis et Ostiae singulas cohortes ad arcendos incendiorum casus collocavit*; cf. Meiggs (1973²) 75.

⁴⁴¹ Str. 5.3.7. Increasingly citizens were recruited: see Cass. Dio 55.26.5 and Sablayrolles (1996) 49-50.

⁴⁴² *Dig.* 1.15.3.pr. There is no particular reason to doubt Paul in claiming that the seven cohorts should be attributed to Augustus. However, Panciera (1978) argued (cf. Sablayrolles (1996) 32-3), on the basis of *CIL* VI 282 (= *ILS* 5615), that the *Vigiles* could have originally been called the *invigulantes pro vicinia*. If correct, we might posit further evolution, and question whether they were divided into seven *cohortes* initially.

⁴⁴³ Sablayrolles (1996) 37-8; for a Tiberian tribune see *CIL* XIV 3947; for a possible centurion see *CIL* XI 6224 with Sablayrolles (1996) 579; cf. *Dig.* 1.15.3.

respectively.⁴⁴⁴ And yet, Tacitus did not include them amongst the soldiers stationed in Rome under Tiberius.⁴⁴⁵

In response to such evidence, Reynolds and Sablayrolles have characterised the *Vigiles* as being increasingly integrated alongside the other armed forces in Rome, while preserving a lower status, which seems sensible.⁴⁴⁶ The *Vigiles* appear to have been a group of mixed status and functions, organised like a “military” force and probably considered as *milites*, but whose origins and duties placed them somewhere between the military and servile categories.

The *classes* may not be a precise parallel, but the point that *militia* could include things potentially regarded as low status, including to modern eyes, makes the concept of a *classis miles* more comprehensible. It encourages us to view the Italian *classes* not as isolated institutions devoted to the sea, but as part of the manpower pool available to the Emperors for performing a wide range of tasks.

Moreover, this prompts some thoughts on the *classes* as military institutions. In the study mentioned above, Speidel has argued against the use of ‘militarisation’ to understand developments in Roman administration from the later second to the fourth centuries AD, whereby ‘civil’ officials came to be known as *milites*, and adopted features of military organisation.⁴⁴⁷ He points to the lack of separation between civil and military tasks even during the Republic, and notes the possibly wider sense of *militia* in the first and second centuries.

Similarly, perhaps the debate over the militarisation of the *classes*, and the views of Starr and Reddé that the *classes* were public, military institutions, neglect

⁴⁴⁴ *CIL* VI 2964, 2780 (= *ILS* 2087), 2987 (= *ILS* 2169).

⁴⁴⁵ *Tac. Ann.* 4.5.

⁴⁴⁶ Reynolds (1926) 65; Sablayrolles (1996) 26-51.

⁴⁴⁷ Speidel (2006); for militarisation see e.g. Hirschfeld (1905²) 464-5; Jones (1949) 46; Rostovtzeff (1957²) 448ff.; MacMullen (1963) 49-76; Phang (2008) 216-17.

the complex character of Roman *militia* and *milites*. While I accept that *classis* servicemen were *milites*, it does not follow that they were ‘soldiers’, or militarised, in a modern sense. This raises further significant questions about the perception of Roman imperial *milites*, even legionaries and *auxilia*, and perhaps about the use of “military” terminology to organise servile *familiae*.

6. Conclusion

Four major arguments have emerged. Firstly, that there existed a conceptual closeness of the Italian *classes* to the imperial house. We should regard the praetorian epithet probably bestowed towards the end of the first century AD in this context. Furthermore, imperial freedmen made up at least a notable proportion of the servicemen, especially in the first century AD. This appears to have reflected and perhaps set a precedent for the *classes* possessing an imperial character. This point is reinforced by those servicemen who described themselves as *x Caesaris* or *Augusti*, both in our earliest epitaphs and some later monuments. This point provides useful background for our discussion of the main bases of the *classes* in Chapter Three, and for some of the tasks they carried out on behalf of Emperors, which we shall consider in Chapter Four.

Secondly, I have argued that documentary evidence indicates that the Italian *classes* underwent formalisation in the first century AD. Arguably comparable to similar developments in the *auxilia*, this formalisation may be detected in the near universal taking of the *tria nomina* by peregrine servicemen upon enlistment, the adoption in around half of the epitaphs examined of a common means of origin expression with *natio* and an ethnic adjective, and use of terminology of *militia* in

classis epitaphs. The precise nature of this formalisation is very hard to elucidate, though its reflection in epitaphs could be linked to increased interest in the information found on *diplomata*, perhaps introduced under Claudius. While much remains uncertain, I prefer to understand the above developments as formalisation rather than the militarisation of previously servile institutions, for which there is little decent evidence.

Thirdly, an examination of the epitaphs and *diplomata* has suggested that there was little connection between *classis* recruitment and the *gens de mer*, with implications for the sorts of tasks *classis* servicemen were expected to carry out. I have also argued that the formulaic nature of origin statements in both media imposes serious restrictions on detailed recruitment studies. I have suggested, in particular regarding the *Bessi* and *Pannonii*, that servicemen may have been less interested in revealing their “real” origins, than in responding to Roman conceptions of the empire, and defining themselves in the specific context of *classis* service in Italy. I have adduced the Batavi as a possible parallel, though we have too little evidence concerning the formation of the *classis* “ethnic communities” to understand how they developed, or what servicemen may have been trying to say by claiming membership of them.

Finally, concerning the nature of *classis* service, I have argued that the servicemen regarded themselves and were regarded as *milites*, akin to the legionaries and *auxilia* and probably expected to perform similar tasks, including on land. While the point cannot be proven, I have suggested that the general presentation of the *classis* servicemen as one group of *milites*, especially in epitaphs and *diplomata*, may reflect reality. Fundamentally, we should regard the *classes* as one organisational category of the manpower pool available to the Emperor, on whose behalf the

servicemen could perform *militia*. That the servicemen could travel around in warships, and were trained to row, should not seduce us into recognising typical Mediterranean war fleets.

II. Recruitment and the Fayoum

1. Introduction

I have underlined how the epigraphy may limit detailed recruitment studies. However, we can be confident that a good number of *classis* servicemen came from Egypt, and we are furthermore fortunate in possessing several papyri which allow consideration of recruitment processes from that province.⁴⁴⁸

Having briefly examined recruitment processes in the Roman army, and past *classis* scholarship, I shall concentrate on papyri from the Arsinoite nome, in the first instance analysing three second century AD letters written by two recruits to the *classis Misenensis*, Apion and Apollinarius. A range of additional documents attesting *classis* veterans and other *militēs* in the Fayoum will be included in the study. I shall offer three main hypotheses on recruitment processes, hard to conclusively prove, but nonetheless worth exploring: first, that we are dealing with a system in which voluntary recruitment was a significant element. Secondly, that recruitment from Egypt took place, or at least peaked, at certain times of the year, affected by the sailing season. I shall also note the potential relationship between enlistment and commercial or other connections between Alexandria and Puteoli. Finally, that the presence of soldiers and veterans in recruitment regions could be critical in encouraging enlistment. This will suggest an inter-generational model of recruitment, relying partly on the free movement of veterans back to their place of origin.

⁴⁴⁸ See above p. 65 n.270 on Egyptians or Alexandrians in the *classis Misenensis*.

Our perspective must be informed by a passage of the *Gnomon of the Idios Logos*, suggesting that Roman authorities tried to control recruitment in some areas, and that Egyptians wanting to perform *militia* were restricted to the Italian *classes*. However, overall I shall suggest that by considering factors beyond the control of the Roman authorities, rather than concentrating simply on where *milites* came from, or the official, administrative interactions between recruits and recruitment authorities, we may be able to gain a deeper understanding of how and why people became *milites*.

This study will reiterate the contention that *classis* manpower was not exclusively drawn from maritime peoples. It will also have some implications for the Braudelian theory that the Mediterranean suffered from a shortage of maritime manpower in contrast with the North Sea and Atlantic.

The Fayoum papyri make the area a particularly attractive case-study for recruitment. However, the conclusions reached may not be applicable to other parts of the empire, certainly not at all times. On the one hand, recruitment from the Danubian provinces to the *classis Ravennas* may have relied heavily on regional economic interdependencies, with recruits following routes running from the Danubian region to the north Adriatic, especially to Aquileia.⁴⁴⁹ This could provide a parallel for the system which I shall propose here, but there is little evidence allowing the examination of specific case-studies.⁴⁵⁰

By way of contrast, in the second century AD there were several instances of emergency recruitment, especially in Thrace, where conscription was perhaps

⁴⁴⁹ Below pp. 191-3.

⁴⁵⁰ See the Introduction p. 28 for the problems of using Danubian *diplomata* to suggest that veterans typically went home after discharge.

demanded.⁴⁵¹ The precise processes that facilitated recruitment from say Cilicia, potentially an important region for *classis* enlistment, are unknown.⁴⁵² As a final example, local recruitment from the civilian and veteran populations near Misenum and Ravenna was perhaps significant, though the evidence is extremely limited. Only one second century epitaph explicitly identifies a native of the former as a *classis* serviceman: ...*M(arci) Marii / Pudentis / (centurionis) / nat(ione) Misenensis...*⁴⁵³

2. Processes of recruitment in the legions and *auxilia*

There are numerous studies of imperial Roman army recruitment dealing with a wide range of topics, including the origins of *milites*, the development of local or regional recruitment across the imperial period, the typical ages of recruits, and the administrative steps taken when a soldier enlisted.⁴⁵⁴ Here I shall concentrate specifically on the debate over the prevalence of conscription. A letter from Trajan to Pliny identifies three types of recruit: *voluntarii* (volunteers), *lecti* (conscript) and *vicarii* (substitutes).⁴⁵⁵ Scholars have typically argued that the first were in the

⁴⁵¹ Below e.g. pp. 223-9.

⁴⁵² For Cilicians in the *classes* see *CIL* VI 3113, 3123, 3129; X 3372, 3377 (= *ILS* 2839), 3402, 3424, 3443 (= *ILS* 2899), 3454 (= *ILS* 2861), 3558, 3604-5, possibly 3619, 3623, 3651, 3662, 3668; XI 110; XIV 3627 *AE* 1972 80.

⁴⁵³ *CIL* X 3368; cf. Starr (1960²) 69-70 and (1942) 316-17 for the use of *verna* by *classis* servicemen as an alternative for *in castris* (*CIL* X 3646, 3654; *CIL* XI 59, 65, possibly 3736, from Lorium, where the fourth line is presented as [---]ir Misenas, for which Bormann commenting at *CIL* XI 3736 noted that Garrucci suggested v]er(na) Misenas; cf. Starr (1942) 316 n.10).

⁴⁵⁴ See esp. Mommsen (1884), though with several of his conclusions now rejected; Forni (1953); Gilliam (1957); Davies (1969); Watson (1969) 31-53; Brunt (1974); Mann (1983); Le Bohec (1994) 68-102; Wesch-Klein (2007) 435-9. These consider the Roman army generally or the legions in particular. For the *auxilia* see Cheesman (1914) 57-101; Kraft (1951); Holder (1980) 109-39; Saddington (1982) 140-1; Le Bohec (1994) 93-9; Gallet and Le Bohec (2007); Haynes (2013) 93-142.

⁴⁵⁵ Plin. *Ep.* 10.30.

majority, with conscripts recruited to meet shortfalls, though Brunt and more recently Haynes have placed greater emphasis on conscription.⁴⁵⁶

Arrius Menander, the Severan jurist, appears to provide direct evidence for the significance of voluntary recruitment when, in contrasting contemporary punishments for avoiding the *dilectus* with harsher Republican practices, he says: *plerumque voluntario milite numeri supplentur*.⁴⁵⁷ However, as Brunt correctly noted, we cannot crudely extrapolate from this to understand recruitment across the first two centuries of the empire.⁴⁵⁸

Yet there are hints at the earlier contribution of volunteers to the armies. In AD 23 there was discussion over the possibility of Tiberius visiting the provinces:⁴⁵⁹

multitudinem veteranorum praetexebat imperator et dilectibus supplendos exercitus: nam voluntarium militem deesse, ac si suppeditet, non eadem virtute ac modestia agere, quia plerumque inopes ac vagi sponte militiam sumant.

This may suggest that volunteers were the preferred recruitment group, and were expected to make up the majority of the forces, though also demonstrates that they were not always sufficient, and that conscription was still needed.⁴⁶⁰ Similar ideas emerge in a letter of Fronto to M. Aurelius, where he states: *sicut in bello ubi opus sit legionem conscribere, non tantum voluntarios legimus sed etiam latentes militari aetate conquirimus*.⁴⁶¹ Brunt used this to show that even at this date the Romans did

⁴⁵⁶ *Röm. Staatsr.* II 849-50 (cf. Mommsen (1884)); Forni (1953) *passim* but e.g. 23, 29-30; Gilliam (1957) 207-8; Watson (1969) 31; Holder (1980) 123-4; Mann (1983) 49-50; Le Bohec (1994) 71; Gilliver (2007) 186; Phang (2007) 287-9; Wesch-Klein (2007) 436-7; cf. Brunt (1974); Haynes (2013) 99-100.

⁴⁵⁷ *Dig.* 49.16.4.10.

⁴⁵⁸ Brunt (1974) 91-2, 108-12; cf. Forni (1953) 29 with n.2; Watson (1969) 166 n.70.

⁴⁵⁹ *Tac. Ann.* 4.4; cf. *Vell. Pat.* 2.130.2.

⁴⁶⁰ Brunt (1974) 96 emphasises the *dilectus*; Phang (2008) 77, suggesting that Tacitus was interested in the 'negative impact of voluntary recruitment'; cf. Furneaux (1896²) 495; Forni (1953) 29 n.2.

⁴⁶¹ Fronto *de Eloquentia* 1.2 (Naber p. 140 = Haines II p. 54).

not only rely on volunteers.⁴⁶² Nonetheless, I suggest that volunteers are presumed to make up the majority, with others supplementing the force.

Further evidence includes Claudius Terentianus, mentioned below, who tried to enlist in the legions in Egypt but was apparently turned away.⁴⁶³ His story implies a voluntary system. Even when a *dilectus* was employed, those recruited could be volunteers. In describing the response of Vitellius to the Flavian threat, Suetonius states: *dilectum quoque ea condicione in urbe egit, ut voluntariis non modo missionem post victoriam, sed etiam veteranorum iustaeque militiae commoda polliceretur.*⁴⁶⁴

Naturally, levies did involve conscription, especially in emergencies. Regarding the reaction to the Pannonian uprising of AD 6-9 Velleius reports: *habiti itaque dilectus, revocati undique et omnes veterani, viri feminaeque ex censu libertinum coactae dare militem.*⁴⁶⁵ Brunt is perhaps right to suggest that the *dilectus* normally involved some conscription.⁴⁶⁶ Complaints about the *dilectus* from provincials certainly suggest this.⁴⁶⁷ But these examples do not necessarily reveal usual practice, nor does any good evidence suggest that conscripts were a majority in our period. Therefore, I broadly follow the standard position, acknowledging the significance of conscription in particular circumstances.

The above highlights that we can be far from certain when discussing processes of Roman army recruitment; the situation is arguably worse for the *classes*. Lacking any evidence, Ferrero supposed that conscription was the norm, with

⁴⁶² Brunt (1974) 90.

⁴⁶³ See below pp. 125-6.

⁴⁶⁴ Suet. *Vit.* 15.1.; cf. Tac. *Hist.* 3.58 and Mann (1983) 49-50 for further examples.

⁴⁶⁵ Vell. Pat. 2.111.1; cf. Suet. *Aug.* 25; *Tib.* 8; *Calig.* 43.

⁴⁶⁶ Brunt (1974) 103; *contra* Mann (1983) 50.

⁴⁶⁷ E.g. Tac. *Agric.* 15.3; *Hist.* 4.14; *Ann.* 4.46 with Brunt (1974) 204-5. Note also Aristid. *Or.* 26.75-8 on the apparent significance of levies, but as is frequently noted (e.g. Oliver (1953) 888, 892; Griffin (1991); Pernot (2008) 188) Aristides does not offer an accurate account of recruitment systems.

manpower increased by some volunteers.⁴⁶⁸ Chapot suggested that the process was much the same as for the legions, with a mixture of volunteers and conscripts.⁴⁶⁹ Starr, who had the benefit of working with our papyrus letters, took a similar view.⁴⁷⁰ We shall see that our evidence supports the contention that voluntary recruitment was not unusual, allowing broad, if wary, comparisons with the legions and *auxilia*.

3. Two Egyptians in search of a *classis*

The authors of our letters came from the Fayoum region of Egypt, roughly 130 miles south east of Alexandria. The area is located in a depression centred around Lake Moeris, connected to the Nile by the Bahr Yusuf, a natural channel. The Fayoum encompassed the Arsinoite *nome*, and contained around one hundred and fifty villages, as well as the *nome* metropolis, Arsinoe.⁴⁷¹ Papyri imply that the Arsinoite was a rich source of *milites*, but we should establish whether the region was truly exceptional in this regard, and the degree to which we can generalise from it.⁴⁷² Importantly, around one third of our papyri come from this area, making it appear disproportionately significant.⁴⁷³ A *diploma* from AD 86 shows that at least one member of the *classis Alexandrina* came from the Coptite *nome*.⁴⁷⁴ Although we cannot know how representative this document is, we can reasonably reject the notion that the Fayoum was wholly exceptional in providing recruits.

⁴⁶⁸ Ferrero (1878) 42.

⁴⁶⁹ Chapot (1896) 181-2; *cf.* de la Berge (1886) 158.

⁴⁷⁰ Starr (1960²) 78-80.

⁴⁷¹ For the Fayoum, see Bowman (1986) 12-13; Alston (1995) 16-17, 19, 117ff.; Davoli (1998) 73-116 and (2012). For its administration, see Derda (2006). For the estimate of villages, based on average village population in the third century BC, see Clarysse and Thompson (2006) II 110-11; accepted by Bowman (2011) 334.

⁴⁷² See above pp. 29-30 on generalising from Egypt.

⁴⁷³ Habermann (1998); Derda (2006) 3.

⁴⁷⁴ *CIL* XVI 32 (= III p.856) l.20: *C(aio) Gemello Croni f(ilio) Coptit(o)...*

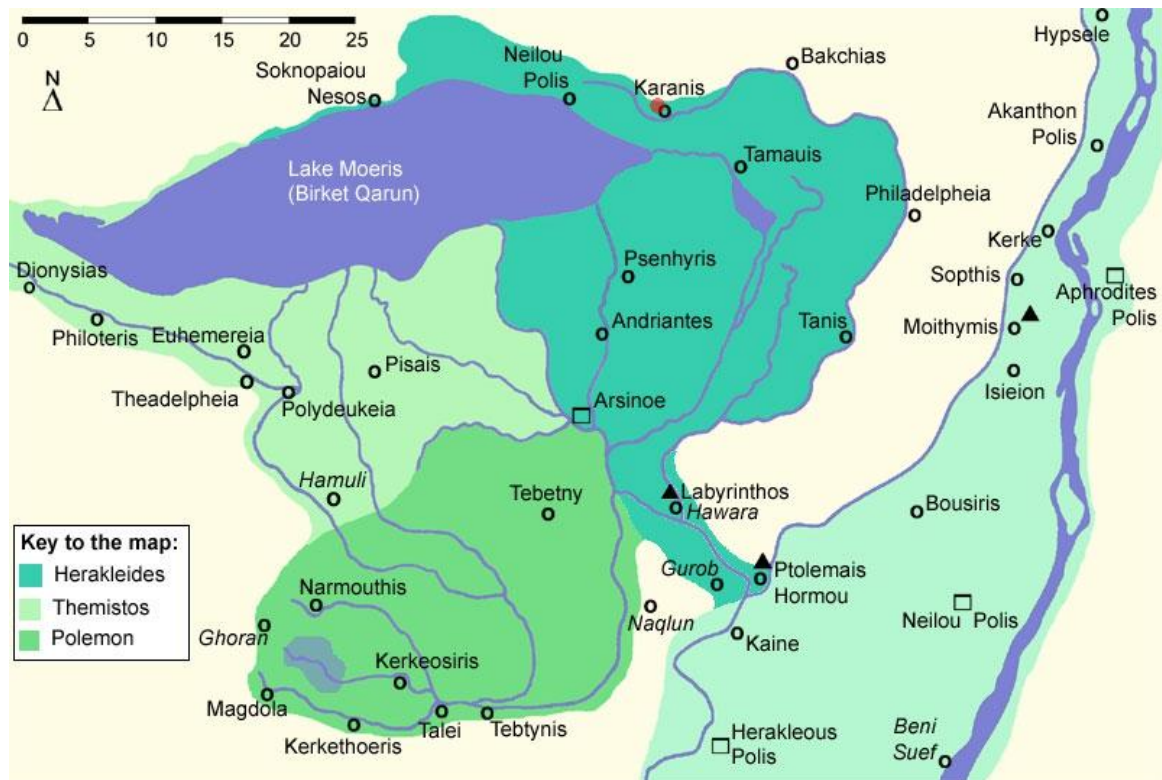


Fig. 1 The Fayoum and its villages (source: Fayoum Project – Trismegistos: http://www.trismegistos.org/fayoum/fayoum2/map.php?geo_id=1008; last accessed 05/09/2014)

Yet it was not entirely typical in other respects. For instance, Strabo described its remarkable fertility:⁴⁷⁵

ἔστι δ' ὁ νομὸς οὗτος ἀξιολογώτατος τῶν ἀπάντων κατὰ τε τὴν ὄσιν καὶ τὴν ἀρετὴν καὶ τὴν κατασκευὴν· ἐλαιόφυτός τε γὰρ μόνος ἔστι μεγάλοις καὶ τελείοις δένδροις καὶ καλλικάρποις...οἶνόν τε οὐκ ὀλίγον ἐκφέρει σῖτόν τε καὶ ὄσπρια καὶ τὰ ἄλλα σπέρματα πάμπολλα.

This could have made the Fayoum especially desirable for settlement, the significance of which will become apparent. Therefore we can only warily extrapolate from this region to provide a recruitment model for Egypt, let alone the empire.

Nonetheless, its evidence should not be dismissed, as it sheds valuable light on otherwise obscure topics. The letters to be discussed have been published,

⁴⁷⁵ Str. 17.1.35. For studies of particular estates see Rathbone (1991); Schubert (2007).

translated and commented on elsewhere (often in discussion of epistolary practices), yet *classis* scholars have often used them sparingly. Starr treated them most thoroughly but only printed English translations and restricted himself to a fairly basic exposition of their contents.⁴⁷⁶ Other scholars have concentrated on nomenclature.⁴⁷⁷ However, there is more to discuss.

Apion wrote one letter to his father Epimachos in Philadelphia, a Fayoum village.⁴⁷⁸ He began with the hope that his father and all the members of his family were well. He reported that having survived danger at sea he had arrived at Misenum. There, he had received his *viaticum* of three *aurei*. He asked for his father to write a letter about his health and that of the rest of his family, and he praised the education given by Epimachos. Because of this, he hoped for quick advancement in the *classis*. He ended by sending greetings to his family. He had been assigned to his ship, the *Athenonica*, and had received the name Antonius Maximus. To the side of the main text are greetings from other men, possibly fellow enlistees, to Epimachos. The reverse of the papyrus contains instructions for delivery:

Ἀπίων Ἐπιμάχῳ τῷ πατρὶ καὶ
 κυρίῳ πλεῖστα χαίρειν. πρὸ μὲν πάν-
 των εὐχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν καὶ διὰ παντὸς
 ἐρωμένον εὐτυχεῖν μετὰ τῆς ἀδελφῆς
 5 μου καὶ τῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτῆς καὶ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ
 μου. εὐχαριστῶ τῷ κυρίῳ Σεράπιδι
 ὅτι μου κινδυνεύσαντος εἰς θάλασσαν

⁴⁷⁶ Starr (1960²) 78-81, 84-5; cf. Davies (1969) 224-5.

⁴⁷⁷ Wickert (1949-50) 111-12; Kienast (1966) 26-7; Reddé (1986) 526; cf. above p. 43.

⁴⁷⁸ *BGU* II 423 (= *C. Pap. Hengstl.* 84 = Deissmann (1910¹) 168 = *W.Chr.* 480 = *Sel. Pap.* I 112). For translations, sometimes with commentary and images see e.g. Erman and Krebs (1899) 214-15; Deissmann (1910¹) 167-72; Campbell (1994) no.10. Winter (1933) 39-42 discusses all the letters. On the archaeology of Philadelphia see Viereck and Zucker (1926) and Viereck (1928); cf. Davoli (1998) 139-48 for criticism. Note *BGU* II 632 (= Erman and Krebs (1899) 215; Deissmann (1910) 172-5), written by an Antonius Maximus, the name taken by Apion. From its publication, this was linked to *BGU* II 423 (see also e.g. Starr (1960²) 84-5; Wickert (1949-50) 112; Davies (1969) 224 n.96; Phang (2001) 226). While this document *was* from the Arsinoite, nothing connects the two letters in content besides the name, which itself was not uncommon.

- ἔσωσε εὐθέως. ὅτε εἰσηλθον εἰς Μη-
 σήνους,⁴⁷⁹ ἔλαβα βιάτικον παρὰ Καίσαρος
 10 χρυσοῦς τρεῖς καὶ καλῶς μοί ἐστιν.
 ἐρωτῶ σε οὖν, κύριέ μου πάτηρ,
 γράψον μοι ἐπιστόλιον πρῶτον
 μὲν περὶ τῆς σωτηρίας σου, δεύ-
 τερον περὶ τῆς τῶν ἀδελφῶν μου,
 15 τρ[ί]τον, ἵνα σου προσκυνήσω τὴν
 χεραν, ὅτι με ἐπαίδευσας καλῶς,
 καὶ ἐκ τούτου ἐλπίζω ταχὺ προκόσ-
 αι⁴⁸⁰ τῶν θε[ῶ]ν θελόντων. ἄσπασαι
 Καπίτων[α] πολλὰ καὶ τοὺς ἀδελφούς
 20 [μ]ου καὶ Σε[ρηνί]λλαν καὶ το[ὺς] φίλους μο[υ].
 ἔπεμψά σο[ι] εἰ[κόνιν] μ[ου] διὰ Εὐκτή-
 μονος. ἔστ[ι]ν μου ὄνομα Ἀντῶνις Μά-
 ξιμος. ἐρρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι.
 κεντυρί(α) Ἀθηνονίκη.⁴⁸¹

To the left hand side:

ἀσπάζεται σε Σερῆνος ὁ τοῦ Ἀγαθοῦ [Δα]ίμωνος [καὶ . . .] ὁ τοῦ
 [. . .]ρου
 καὶ Τούρβων ὁ τοῦ Γαλλωνίου καὶ Δ[. . .]νᾶς ὁ τ[οῦ . . .]σεν[. . .]
 [. . .]. [. . .]. [-ca.?-]

Verso:

ε[ἰς] Φ[ιλ]αδελφίαν Ἐπιμάχῳ ἀπὸ Ἀπίωνος υἱοῦ
 ἀπόδος εἰς χώρτην πρῆμαν × Ἀπαμηνῶν Ἰο[υλι]α[ν]οῦ Ἄν. [. . .]
 λιβλαρίῳ ἀπὸ Ἀπίωνος ὥστε Ἐπιμάχῳ πατρὶ αὐτοῦ.⁴⁸²

Our next two letters were by Apollinarius, who wrote to his mother Taesis in Karanis.

In the first letter, Apollinarius told Taesis that he had already sent a letter about his safety through a man at Cyrene. He asked about the health of his family and informed

⁴⁷⁹ This plural toponym appears sporadically in Greek literature: Plut. *Ant.* 32.2; *C. Gracc.* 19.1; *Mar.* 34.3; *cf.* Jos. *AJ* 19.5; Ptol. *Geog.* 3.1.6. For a Latin plural see Prop. 1.11.4; *cf.* possibly *CIL* X 3342a. Perhaps the plural was used because the promontory and Monte Procida were identified as “Misenums”; *cf.* Beloch (1890²) 195. Alternatively, the name could have developed in analogy with other local plural toponyms e.g. Baiae and Puteoli.

⁴⁸⁰ This is most commonly read as standing for προκόψαι, following Deissmann (1910¹) 170 n.13, translated with the sense of ‘to advance’ or ‘gain promotion’.

⁴⁸¹ For the ship as a *centuria*, see above pp. 85-6.

⁴⁸² It has sometimes been thought (e.g. Diessmann (1910) 170; Wilcken in *W.Chr.* (1912), p. 565; Hunt and Edgar in *Sel. Pap.* I (1932), p. 307; Winter (1933) 42) that the letter was sent to Alexandria, where the *librarius* of the *cohors I Apamenorum* forwarded it to Epimachos. This could be correct, but, as Alston (1995) 174 suggests, it seems more natural to understand the directions as indicating that the *librarius* was near Philadelphia: see below pp. 126-7.

his mother that he had arrived at Portus but had not yet reached Rome and did not know his unit. Apollinarius closed the letter by again enquiring about his family, asking for Taesis to send him a letter soon. The letter contains a postscript, saying that he had been assigned to Misenum.⁴⁸³

Απολλινᾶρις Ταησίῳ τῇ μητρὶ
 πολλὰ χαίρειν.
 πρὸ παντὸς ἔρρωσό μοι ὑγιαίνουσα
 τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶν παρὰ πᾶ-
 5 σι τοῖς θεοῖς. καὶ ἀπὸ Κυρήνης εὐρῶν
 τὸν πρὸς σὲ ἐρχόμενον ἀνάγκην ἔσχον σοι
 δηλῶσαι περὶ τῆς σωτηρίας μου· καὶ σύ μοι
 ταχύτερον δήλωσον περὶ τῆς ἀπροσκοπίας
 σου καὶ τῆς τῶν ἀδελφῶν μου. καὶ νῦν ἀπὸ
 10 Πόρτου σοι δηλῶ, οὐπω γὰρ ἀνέβην εἰς Ῥώμην
 καὶ διετάγην. ἐπὶν διαταγῶ καὶ γνῶ εἰς ποίαν
 ἴμι εὐθέως σοι δηλῶ, καὶ σὺ δὲ μὴ ὄκνη γράφειν περὶ τῆς σωτηρίας σου καὶ
 τῆς τῶν ἀδελ-
 φῶν μου. ἐὰν δὲ μὴ εὖρης τὸν ἐρχόμενον
 15 πρὸς ἐμὲ γράψον Σωκράτη καὶ αὐτὸς μοι
 διαπέμπεται. ἀσπάζομαι πολλὰ τὰ ἀδέλφια
 καὶ Απολλινᾶριν καὶ τὰ τέκνα αὐτοῦ καὶ Καλάλα
 καὶ τὰ τέκνα αὐτοῦ καὶ πάντες τοὺς σε φιλοῦντες.
 ἀσπάζεται σε Ἀσκληπιάδης.
 20 ἔρρωσό μοι ὑγιαίνουσα.
 εἰς Πόρτον παρεγενάμην Παχῶν κε.
 γείνωσκε ὅτι εἰς Μεισηνοὺς διετάγην, ὕστερον γὰρ ἐπέ-
 γνων.

Verso

ἀπόδος εἰς Καρανίδα × Ταησίῳ ἀπὸ Ἀπολλιναρίου
 × υἱοῦ.

A second letter was written slightly later. Apollinarius told his mother that he had gone to Rome and been assigned to Misenum but did not yet know his *centuria*. He

⁴⁸³ *P. Mich.* VIII 490 (= *SB IV* 7352); cf. Winter (1927) 239-42 for text, translation and commentary. See Rowlandson (1998) 133-8 for discussion of the find context, a Karanis house. For the archaeology see Husselman (1979); Davoli (1998) 73-116. See also Starr (1960²) 79-80; Reddé (1986) 541 and 687 for translation.

sent reassurances about his own well-being, telling Taesis not to worry. He again asked for news from home:⁴⁸⁴

Ἀπολινᾶρις Ταήσι τῆ μητρει καὶ κυρία
πολλὰ χαίρειν. πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί σε
ὑγειαίνειν κἀγὼ αὐτὸς ὑγειαίνω καὶ τὸ προσκύνη-
μά σου ποιῶ παρὰ τοῖς ἐνθάδε θεοῖς. γεινώσκειν σε
5 θέλω, μήτηρ, ὅτι ἐρρωμένος ἐγενόμην εἰς Ῥώμην
Παχῶν μηνὶ κε καὶ ἐκκληρώθην⁴⁸⁵ εἰς Μισηνοῦς.
οὕτω δὲ τὴν κετυρίαν μου ἔγνων· οὐ γὰρ ἀπεληλύθειν εἰς Μισηνοῦς ὅτε
σοι τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ταύτην
ἔγραφον. ἐρωτῶ σε οὖν, μήτηρ, σεαυτῆ πρόσεχε,
10 μηδὲν δίσταζε περὶ ἐμοῦ· ἐγὼ γὰρ εἰς καλὸν τό-
πον ἦλθον. καλῶς δὲ ποιῆς γράψασσά μοι ἐπιστο-
λὴν πε[ρ]ὶ τῆς σωτηρίας σου καὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν μου καὶ
τῶν σῶν πάντων. καὶ γὰρ εἴ τινα ἐὰν εὔρω γράφω
σοι· οὐ μὴ ὀκνήσω σοι γράφιν. ἀσπάζομαι τοὺς ἀ-
15 δελφούς μου πολλὰ καὶ Ἀπολινᾶριν καὶ τὰ τέ-
κνα αὐτοῦ καὶ Καραλᾶν καὶ τὰ τέκνα αὐτοῦ.
ἀσπάζ[ο]μαι Πτολεμαῖν καὶ Πτολεμαεῖδα καὶ τὰ
τέκν[α] αὐτῆς καὶ Ἡρακλοῦν καὶ τὰ τέκνα αὐτῆς.
ἀσπάζομαι τοὺς φιλοῦντάς σε πάντας κατ’ ὄνο-
20 μα.
ἐρρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι.

verso

ἀπόδ(ος) εἰς Καρανίδα × Ταήσι ἀπὸ Ἀπολιναρίου υἱοῦ
× Μισηνάτου.

Based on letter forms and language, a second century date is normally assigned to the letter of Apion.⁴⁸⁶ The same mostly holds for the letters of Apollinarius, though Winter initially dated both to around AD 200, before revising that to early second

⁴⁸⁴ *P. Mich.* VIII 491 (= *SB* IV 7353 = *Sel. Pap.* I 111). See Winter (1927) 243-5 for commentary; cf. Schubert (2000) no.22.

⁴⁸⁵ The sense here is fairly clear: Apollinarius was assigned to Misenum, perhaps by some central authority in Rome. However, κληρώω has the more specific sense of “obtain by lot” or “be assigned by lot” in the passive (e.g. [Arist]. *Ath. Pol.* 43.2; Polyb. 6.20.2; Plut. *Pomp.* 61.1). The word does not always suggest a literal drawing of lots but could imply an element of chance: possibly recruits were randomly assigned either to Misenum or Ravenna. Compare διετάγην (from διατάσσω) used in his previous letter (lines 11 and 22), before Apollinarius had experienced the process, meaning “to appoint” or “ordain”, lacking the idea of lot drawing.

⁴⁸⁶ E.g. P. Viereck in *BGU* II (1898), p. 84; Deissmann (1910¹) 167; Winter (1933) 41. Starr (1960²) 100 n.45 without explanation described it as early second century.

century.⁴⁸⁷ This imprecision means that we cannot know whether the practices revealed should be considered in a specific context, say the Antonine Plague. True, the letters do not imply extraordinary circumstances. But this leads to a general comment on usefulness: these letters are precious, but there are only three. We cannot be certain that they reflect general practice at all times, even in Egypt. Yet, as with points on dating, there is nothing in the letters which strongly indicates that they are unusual. Therefore, and with due caution, they could well reflect general recruitment practices, at least in the second century AD Fayoum.

3.1 A voluntary process

The letters contain no hint of compulsion and thus imply that enlistment, at least for these men, was voluntary. This point is perhaps underlined by Apollinarius commenting in the second letter (ll.10-11) that he had come to a fine place (ἐγὼ γὰρ εἰς καλὸν τόπον ἦλθον). This correlates with the suggested systems of legionary and auxiliary recruitment. The concern with family evident in the letters indicates that neither man travelled to Italy with relatives.⁴⁸⁸ This reflects a particular type of migration discussed by Noy, where individuals travel for work but do not bring any dependants.⁴⁸⁹ That Apion and Apollinarius set out without their families suggests that they knew exactly what they wanted to do in Italy: join the *classes*. This could imply that they willingly enrolled at a levy in Egypt, or that they departed

⁴⁸⁷ Winter (1927) 293, 243; Winter (1933) 39. See also e.g. H. C. Youtie and J. G. Winter (1951) in *P. Mich.* VIII (1951), pp. 92, 94; Starr (1960²) 100 n.46.

⁴⁸⁸ E.g. Apion letter ll. 2-6, 12-14, 18-20; Apollinarius letter 1 ll. 7-9, 16-18; letter 2 ll. 11-13, 14-20.

⁴⁸⁹ Noy (2000) 53-6; (2011) 145-9.

independently to enlist.⁴⁹⁰ Either way, nothing indicates that they went to Italy and by chance fell into *classis* service.

Apion and Apollinarius may not have volunteered alone. In the letter from Apion, others sent their greetings to Epimachos: ἀσπάζεται σε Σερήνος... καὶ Δ[. . .]νᾶς ὁ τ[οῦ]. A man called Asclepiades did the same in the first letter from Apollinarius (I.19). From this, one could infer that groups of young men travelled together to enlist.⁴⁹¹ While impossible to prove, this interpretation of the names seems more likely than these being men who Apion and Apollinarius had just met in Italy, and is perhaps suggested by the familiarity implied between the recruits and Epimachos. This hypothesis receives fragile support from suggested army practices. Watson, discussing a letter from AD 103 listing several new soldiers, commented that ‘[the recruit] would probably travel in a small party of recruits.’⁴⁹²

3.2 The sailing season and the timing of enlistment

Assuming that this hypothesis is correct, there has been markedly little discussion of *why* these men travelled together. The departure of a reasonable number of young men from relatively small places like Philadelphia and Karanis simultaneously may imply designated recruitment periods.⁴⁹³ Forni and Gilliam have suggested that army recruitment took place throughout the year, partly because of the voluntary character

⁴⁹⁰ See below pp. 123-4 on this problem.

⁴⁹¹ Thus Deissmann (1910¹) 171; Starr (1960²) 79.

⁴⁹² Watson (1969) 42 on *P. Oxy.* VII 1022 (= *CPL* 111).

⁴⁹³ Population estimates for these villages are somewhat speculative, based on tax registers, the area of the village and general considerations about population in Egypt: see e.g. Rathbone (1990) and Bowman (2011) 335, suggesting figures of three thousand six hundred for Karanis and three thousand five hundred for Philadelphia in the period AD 70 – 160.

of recruitment.⁴⁹⁴ I do not necessarily disagree, but it may be that recruitment peaked at particular times.

This could be supported by a petition, dated to 22 January AD 150, of twenty two legionary veterans to the governor of Judaea.⁴⁹⁵ They had initially enlisted in the *classis Misenensis* (*cum militaverimus domine in classe Misenis*) together before being transferred and wanted to return to Alexandria, their *patria*, at discharge (*et felicissimis temporibus sacramento absoluti sumus, et in patriam Alexandriam ad Aegyptum ituri*).⁴⁹⁶ The pattern of a group of men from the same place joining the *classes* at the same time is therefore broadly repeated, though we cannot be precise on when enlistment took place. Perhaps, as Winter suggested, a levy was held in Egypt at particular times, ideally looking for volunteers.⁴⁹⁷ None of the letters suggests one but, even if there was, we would still like to know when. While the evidence is limited and interpretations tentative, the dating of the Apollinarius letters (1.21; 2.6) to Παχῶν (May) could point to spring or early summer.

This putative recruitment period need not have been established institutionally. Sailing from Egypt to Italy in normal circumstances would only have been practical from the spring to the autumn, as Vegetius suggested when limiting the sailing season to between 10 March and 11 November: *ex die igitur iii Id. Nov. usque in diem vi Id. Mart. maria clauduntur*.⁴⁹⁸ Therefore, these men may have set out

⁴⁹⁴ Forni (1953) 23; Gilliam (1957) 208.

⁴⁹⁵ *PSI IX* 1026 (= *CIL XVI* p. 146 no.13 = *CPL* 117 = Smallwood (1966) no.330 = *ChLA XXV* 784). The latter contains the most thorough bibliography; see also Campbell (1994) no.329. For a recent discussion summarising correct readings see Thomas (2003) 201-4. See below pp. 224ff. for further discussion.

⁴⁹⁶ *PSI IX* 1026 ll.6-7.

⁴⁹⁷ Winter (1933) 42.

⁴⁹⁸ Veg. *Ep. Mil.* 4.39; cf. Plin. *NH* 2.112: *ver ergo aperit navigantibus maria*; *B Afr.* 24 notes problems with shipping grain to North Africa in the winter. Braudel (1972) 248 envisaged all but a total shipping halt in the 'closed season'; cf. Horden and Purcell (2000) 142-3, who argue against this absolute with reference to medieval and early modern evidence; similarly Arnaud (2005) 26-8 acknowledges the impact of seasonal changes, but argues for concentrating on particular routes. Such

together not to arrive at a particular date, but because they could only depart in a certain period. Even if my hypothesis that the letters reveal collective enlistment is incorrect, the sailing season must have had some influence over when recruitment from Egypt could take place.

Connected with the sailing season was the departure date of grain ships travelling from Alexandria to Italy. Based partly on a Senecan letter discussed later, and a late second century AD epistle by a certain Eirenaïos who travelled with the Alexandrian grain ships, Rickman argued that, while grain ships were not bound to travel at precisely the same time, the majority, respecting the seasons, probably left Alexandria in the spring or early summer.⁴⁹⁹ The rough concordance between this timing and our putative *classis* recruitment period raises interesting questions about the relationship between the grain supply and the *classes*, especially the *classis Misenensis*. It is possible that by basing the *classis Misenensis* near to Puteoli, one of the major reception points for Egyptian grain, the Romans hoped to tap into a supply of manpower from those travelling between Alexandria and Italy. Moreover, Puteoli was an information hub, and one could envisage that news concerning the *classis* and its benefits travelled back to Egypt.⁵⁰⁰

Cause and effect are hard to distinguish, and we shall see that there are many potential reasons for the deployment of a *classis* at Misenum, but these regional interdependencies may have facilitated recruitment to an extent all but invisible in our sources. If I am right, and I stress how limited the direct evidence is, such rhythms of migration could have established annual recruitment times, a vital insight into how

approaches are surely correct, but it must be likely that recruits would have preferred to travel when sailing was safest.

⁴⁹⁹ Rickman (1980) 130-1. For Seneca see below p. 169. For Eirenaïos see *Sel. Pap.* I 113.

⁵⁰⁰ For Puteoli and communications, see below pp. 166-9.

background conditions, with little human “management”, may have supported the workings of empire.

3.3. Recruitment, soldiers and veterans

I shall now argue that there is some evidence indicating that this recruitment process may have been underpinned by soldiers and veterans dwelling in the Fayoum, who would have been able to spread information about the benefits of service. These would have included, at least by the later first century AD, eventual rewards of *civitas* and *conubium*, but one should consider stable pay.⁵⁰¹

Such connections may also have helped recruits enter the *classes*. Some relevant evidence is found in the letters from Claudius Terentianus to Claudius Tiberianus, called the *pater* of the former.⁵⁰² These papyri, thought to date to the first half of the second century AD, were found in a house at Karanis in the Fayoum. In one letter to Tiberianus, Terentianus described his enlistment in the *classis Augusta Alexandrina*.⁵⁰³ He states *per eos me probavi in classe ne tib[i] paream a spe am̄ar[a] parpa[tum] yagari quasi fugitivom*.⁵⁰⁴ In editing the papyrus, Youtie and Winter suggested that *per eos* refers to two men also enrolled in the *classis*, Kalabel and Deipistus, mentioned on lines 12-13.⁵⁰⁵ They suggested that these individuals had vouched for Terentianus, when an earlier attempt to enrol as a legionary had failed,

⁵⁰¹ *Classis* pay is normally regarded as equivalent to that of the *auxilia*: Starr (1960²) 81; Watson (1969) 101-2; Reddé (1986) 557-9; cf. Sander (1957) 365-7. M. A. Speidel (1992), having analysed all known evidence, argued that this was set at nine hundred sesterces per year after Domitian.

⁵⁰² *P.Mich.* VIII 467-81. Strassi (2008) provides the most recent edition, with complete bibliography. For the debated nature of the relationship between Terentianus and Tiberianus, see Strassi (2008) 113-23.

⁵⁰³ Strassi (2008) 14 no. 1 (= *P.Mich.* VIII 467 = Daris (1964) no.6).

⁵⁰⁴ Strassi (2008) 14 no. 1 ll.16-17.

⁵⁰⁵ In *P. Mich.* VIII (1951), 22; followed by Strassi (2008) 120-1.

thanks to an insufficient letter of recommendation from a man named Marcellus.⁵⁰⁶ This Marcellus appears to be described as a *collega* of Tiberianus at the end of the letter, and elsewhere.⁵⁰⁷ Tiberianus himself was a soldier, called a *speculator* in one letter and a *veteranus* in another.⁵⁰⁸ It would be unsurprising if his *collega* Marcellus had also served in the army.

This is suggestive of how knowing people already in service, or those who had experienced it, could play a part in enlistment. Of course, we should not overstate the importance of this dynamic. In a later letter, expressing his wish to transfer to a cohort, Terentianus acknowledged that *epistulae commendaticiae* were not enough (*nihil valunt*), and that money would be needed (*hic a[ut]em sene aer[e ni]hil fiet*).⁵⁰⁹ Thus, connections and commendations did not guarantee that one would be accepted as a *miles*, but they were regarded as helpful.

Turning back to the letters of Apion and Apollinarius, it must be admitted that soldiers are little mentioned. Yet we should consider the directions for delivery on the Apion letter: it was to be given to the *librarius* of the *cohors I Apamenorum*. This *librarius* was arguably based somewhere near Philadelphia.⁵¹⁰ In general, we are poorly informed about the deployment patterns of *auxilia* in Egypt.⁵¹¹ Particular cohorts had a base camp, but troops from different units were dispersed across large

⁵⁰⁶ *P. Mich.* VIII (1951), 21-2, based on ll.14-16: *[n]ec ob [haec] Marcel[l]um [o]di qu[on]i[a]m nihil mihi pro dis fuerunt nisi verba null[i]us con[c]epi o[diu]m*; see also Davies (1973) 21-2; Strassi (2008) 121. For the possible role of such letters, see e.g. Davies (1969) 216-17; Watson (1969) 37-8; Le Bohec (1994) 73-4; Alston (1999) 182-3; cf. Phang (2007) 288, noting that the role of such letters has been idealised. The argument that these were common relies heavily on examples from the correspondence of Cicero and Pliny: one might question whether they were representative.

⁵⁰⁷ Strassi (2008) 14 no. 1.134: *Marcellum collegam tuum*; Strassi (2008) 19 no. 2 (*P. Mich.* VIII 468) 1.59: *Mar[c]ellu(m) collegam tuum*.

⁵⁰⁸ *speculator*: Strassi (2008) 27 no.4 (= *P. Mich.* VIII 469) *verso*: Κλαυδίω [Τιβεριανῶ] σπεκουλ(άτορι); *veteran*: Strassi (2008) 44 no.10 (= *P. Mich.* VIII 475) *verso*: Κλαυδίω Τιβεριανῶ οὔετρανῶ π(αρά) Πα[πειρίου Ἀπολλιναρίου].

⁵⁰⁹ Strassi (2008) 19 no.2 (= *P. Mich.* VIII 468 = Daris (1964) no.7) ll.38-40. See also Davies (1973) 24-5.

⁵¹⁰ See above p. 118 n.482.

⁵¹¹ Alston (1995) 22-38; Maxfield (2000); for the army in Egypt, Lesquier (1918) remains important. For a recent overview and further bibliography, see Haensch (2012).

geographical areas.⁵¹² Alston proposed that we may be able to locate the *cohors I Apamenorum* at the Wadi Hammamat in the Eastern Desert and possibly Nikopolis near Alexandria, but neither suggestion seems especially secure.⁵¹³

We cannot prove that the cohort or subdivisions of it were based in those locations for any length of time. However, the letter of Apion implies that there were some serving soldiers in or around Philadelphia for reasonable stretches. Surely Apion would not have directed the letter through this man if he thought that his presence was only brief and temporary? Further evidence emerges in the στρατιῶται who appear in some of the documents in the archive of Nemesion, a collector of the capitation tax in Philadelphia in the 40s and 50s AD. For example, an Antinous son of Leonidas, στρατιώτης ἐκ σπείρης, was charged by a Servilius with bringing Nemesion some items.⁵¹⁴

Therefore, there were some serving soldiers around Philadelphia. This village was not exceptional in the Fayoum, as shown by evidence from Karanis, home of Apollinarius. We know for instance of M. Anthestius Gemellus, a στρατιώτης of the *cohors III Ituraeorum* (AD 92) and a legionary called C. Iulius Agrippianus (AD 147-8).⁵¹⁵ These men need not have been stationed in the area permanently; the reasonably frequent presence of soldiers is enough to support my arguments.

Moreover, a relatively large number of Roman veterans seemingly settled in the Fayoum, especially its north-east.⁵¹⁶ Examples include M. Lucretius Clemens, a

⁵¹² Alston (1995) 35.

⁵¹³ *CPL* 310 (second century AD) from the Wadi Hammamat. This *ostrakon* is fragmentary to the point that it is impossible to pronounce on its nature; *P. Mich* VII 446 (= *CPL* 226): a will or codicil of unknown provenance from the late second century AD; *P. Oxy.* XII 1511: scraps of a military account dated to before AD 247. The latter two mention the cohort alongside legionaries, which may indicate its presence at Nicopolis because it served as a legionary base, but this is wholly conjectural; *cf.* Alston (1995) 174.

⁵¹⁴ *P. Graux* II 10 ll.6-7. For further examples and discussion see Hanson (1989) 435-6.

⁵¹⁵ *P. Mich.* IX 568-9; *BGU* XI 2012-13; *cf.* Alston (1995) 124-5 for further examples.

⁵¹⁶ Alston (1995) 39.

veteran of the *cohors I Thracum* who was registered there in the 130s.⁵¹⁷ Alston provides a list of forty five veterans settled at Karanis, including C. Domitius Clemens (AD 131), M. Valerius Chairemonianus (AD 148) and L. Vespasianus Gemellus (AD 150).⁵¹⁸

Some were *classis* veterans. Their presence could have provided a network of contacts for those local youths who decided to enlist. Not every Egyptian serviceman returned from Italy, as the epigraphy underlines. But a reasonable number appear to have done so. For reasons of space, I shall not adduce all possible evidence for *classis* veterans in the Arsinoite, but shall cover the best.⁵¹⁹

This includes a wax tablet found in the Arsinoite and dated to AD 150/1, recording the sale of a slave girl for six hundred and twenty five *denarii* to a *miles* of the *classis praetoria Ravennas*, Titus Memmius Montanus.⁵²⁰ This was presumably taken by Memmius back to his home in Egypt after discharge. A papyrus contract of 22 May AD 166 records a slave purchase in Seleucia Pieria by C. Fabullius Macer, *optio* of the *classis Misenensis*, from another serviceman, Q. Iulius Priscus, for two hundred *denarii* plus the sales tax.⁵²¹ This too was found in the Fayoum, arguably carried there by Fabullius.

A few testamentary documents better indicate that *classis* veterans lived and owned property in the Arsinoite. The will of C. Longinus Castor, made in Karanis and written in AD 189, left unspecified inheritables to certain heirs, in particular to

⁵¹⁷ *P. Diog.* 4-5; see Schubert (2007) 55-69 for his family.

⁵¹⁸ *CPL* 220; *BGU* I 300; *P. Athen.* 27; Alston (1995) 124-5.

⁵¹⁹ Largely excluding, for instance, hypothetical servicemen whose identity is suggested by nomenclature or associations with other servicemen: see e.g. below n.519 for Longinus; *cf.* Alston (1995) 126-37.

⁵²⁰ *CPL* 193 (= *AE* 1922 135 = *FIRA* III.134); *cf.* Eger (1921); Söllner (2001). For a full bibliography see Martin Ferreira (2007) 109-10. The tablet is the fifth “page” of a triptych *tabula*, on which see Meyer (2004) esp. 125-215. The transaction was carried out in the κάστρα κλάσσης πραιτώρια Παβεννατους (II.10-11). This does not necessarily mean Ravenna: there could have been any number of such *castra*, including that at Rome; *cf.* Starr (1960²) 82.

⁵²¹ *ChLA* III 200 (= *P. Lond.* II 229 = *CPL* 120 = *FIRA* III 132 = *AE* 1896 21).

his slaves Marcella and Cleopatra, both freed in the will.⁵²² He also left some property to Sarapias, daughter of Cleopatra. This included five *arourae* of arable land near Karanis (καταλίπω ἀρούρας σιτικὰς πέντε, ἅς ἔχω περι κώμην Κα[ρα]νίδα ἐν τόπῳ λεγομένῳ Στρουθῶ), a third part of a palm-grove (τρίτον μέρος φοινικῶνος) and two thirds of his house, a third of which he had purchased (ὁμοίως τρίτον μέρος οἰκίας μου καὶ τρίτον μέρος ἐκ τῆς αὐ[τ]ῆς οἰκίας, ὃ ἠγόρασα πρότερον παρὰ Πραπεθεῦτος μητρὸς Θασεῦτος).⁵²³ The last bequest may indicate that Longinus added property to that which he inherited, the latter providing motivations for returning to the region.

A second example is a papyrus petition from the Arsinoite by Aitete Phrontis to the δικαιοδότης C. Caecilius Salvianus, dated 1 April AD 176.⁵²⁴ The former reported that C. Fabullius Macer, a veteran of the *classis Misenensis*, had made C. Longinus Castor his heir.⁵²⁵ Macer had stipulated that Longinus was to give two thousand drachma and a cloak to Aitete. However, Longinus had not given Aitete her due (l.8: [ληγᾶ]τον μοι μέγρ[ι] τούτου οὐ βούλεται ἀποδιδόναι), hence the petition.⁵²⁶ While here we can say little on the property of Fabullius, his presence in the Fayoum, and relationships with people there, suggests a settled veteran, perhaps one who returned home after discharge.

Servicemen of the *classis Alexandrina* were also recruited from this region and returned there at discharge. Although caveats about inferring too much from the

⁵²² Pestman (1990) no. 50 (= *BGU* I 326 = *M.Chr.* 316 = *Sel. Pap.* I 85 = *FIRA* III 50). See Lewis and Reinhold (1990³) II 191-2, Campbell (1994) no.375 and Rowlandson (1998) no.139 for translations. For Roman wills see Champlin (1991); cf. Crook (1967) 118-32. See also *P. Gen.* III 140, a set of three receipts (AD 181-3) which may refer to the same Longinus Castor possessing land at Bacchias, 10 km north-east of Karanis.

⁵²³ Pestman (1990) no. 50 ll. 18-22.

⁵²⁴ *BGU* I 327 (= *FIRA* III 65 = *M.Chr.* 61).

⁵²⁵ Possibly the same C. Longinus Castor as named in the will. That they both came from the Arsinoite *nome* supports this. The date of the petition would make identifying one Castor with the other attractive (for dating, see Phang (2001) 222 n.105). Yet the name is not unusual, and *classis* servicemen were not imaginative when selecting Roman names.

⁵²⁶ See Phang (2001) 221-3 for a discussion of why this may have happened.

practices of this provincial *classis* apply, the following may suggest that people associated with *classes* were found in considerable numbers in the Fayoum.

One difficult papyrus found at Karanis records a transaction to do with a dowry in the second half of the second century.⁵²⁷ It mentions a *miles classis Aug(ustae) Alexandrinae*, C. Valerius Gemellus, and a Demetria with whom he had some kind of relationship.⁵²⁸ Another papyrus records the sale by L. Longinus Fabullus, of the *classis Alexandrina*, of his μητρική χορτοθήκη (mother's hayloft) to a legionary.⁵²⁹ This hayloft was located at Nestou Epoikios, somewhere in the north east of the Fayoum. As with Longinus Castor, the chance of inheriting property may explain why some veterans migrated home.⁵³⁰

Other papyri show relationships between servicemen of the *classis Alexandrina* and the Fayoum.⁵³¹ Alongside these, a *diploma* of AD 79 was awarded to M. Papius M. f. Arsen(oitus), of that *classis*.⁵³² While he came from the Arsinoite nome originally, we do not know if he returned. In his 1926 publication in *JHS* 16 (pp. 95-103), A. H. Smith suggested that the document probably came from the Fayoum because of its contents. Yet it was purchased in Cairo, so Papius could have relocated.

⁵²⁷ *ChLA* V 295 (= *P. Mich.* VII 442 = *CPL* 210 = *FIRA* III 20).

⁵²⁸ This document has been variously viewed as a marriage contract, a statement of betrothal, a statement of divorce and, most popularly, a receipt acknowledging the return of a dowry after the annulment of a marriage. For bibliography see Bruckner and Marichal in *ChLA* V (1975), p. 36; cf. Phang (2001) 47-9 for a few more recent alternatives.

⁵²⁹ *BGU* II 455. Dated to before AD 133 based on the presence of the *legio XXII Deiotariana* in Egypt, which disappeared and may have been destroyed in the Bar Kokhba war: see Daris (2000). The final line [κ]υρίου ουε[- ca.22 -] could indicate a Vespasianic date.

⁵³⁰ See above pp. 128-9.

⁵³¹ See e.g. *BGU* III 709 (with Palme (1994) and Nachtergaele (2002)) from Karanis and dating to the reign of Antoninus Pius, which records the *cessio* of a plot of land by Q. Gellius Valens, a *classarius*, and his sister Gellia Didyme to Volusius Sabinianus, another serviceman. See also *BGU* III 741 (= *FIRA* III 119 = *M.Chr.* 244).

⁵³² *CIL* XVI 24 (= *AE* 1927 96).

Finally, an *epikrisis* document, dated to sometime after April 26 AD 148, explicitly states that veterans from the *classis Syriaca* (οὐετρανοὶ...καὶ ἐν κλάσση Συρι[α]κῆ) were registered in the Arsinoite.⁵³³

In sum, servicemen of the *classes Misenensis, Ravennas, Alexandrina* and *Syriaca*, alongside members of the Roman army, came from the Arsinoite, had property there and settled there in retirement. Their numbers were perhaps not inconsiderable, though we possess too little evidence to establish absolute figures or their proportion in the Arsinoite population. Based on tax rolls from AD 145-6 and 171-4, Alston estimated that the Roman element of the population of second century AD Karanis was 14%, but this figure must be approached with extreme caution regarding the second century as a whole, let alone our entire period.⁵³⁴ Whatever the precise proportions, the Arsinoite recruits who departed to join the Italian *classes* would surely have been somewhat influenced in their decision by these soldiers and veterans. Even if many were not *classis* veterans specifically, they would have been able to provide information, advice, and possibly connections helping enlistment. I am tempted to propose that, as one set of veterans returned to the Arsinoite to retire, members of the following generation would set out to replace them.

3.4 The *Gnomon of the Idios Logos*

I have so far argued that there was a considerable degree of freedom in the recruitment process in the Arsinoite. However, the *Gnomon of the Idios Logos* may dispel that view. Our Antonine version of this text, originating under Augustus,

⁵³³ *BGU* I 265 (= *W.Chr.* 459) ll.4-5; cf. *BGU* I 113 (= *W.Chr.* 458), of similar date, though of unknown provenance, mentioning οὐετρανοὶ στρατευσάμενοι...ἐν κλάσσαις δυοῖ Μεισηνάτη καὶ Συριακῆ.

⁵³⁴ Alston (1995) 121.

appears to have provided judicial guidance to representatives of the *Idios Logos*, a department responsible for the confiscation, sale and administration of certain types of property and priesthods, and which had some oversight of inheritance and status disputes.⁵³⁵

One passage has been understood as barring native Egyptian *laoi* from the legions and most *classes*, possibly even the *auxilia*:⁵³⁶

ἐὰν Αἰγύπτ[ιο]ς λαθῶν στρατεύσηται[ι ἐ]ν λεγῶνι, ἀπολυθ[ε]ις εἰς τὸ Αἰγύπτιο[ν] τάγμα⁵³⁷ ἀποκαθίσταται[αι]. ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ οἱ ἐκ [τοῦ] ἐρετικῶ ἀπ[ολ]υθέντες ἀποκαθίστανται πλὴν μόνων τῶ[ν] ἐκ Μησινῶν [σ]τόλου.

A broadly uncontroversial interpretation is that any Egyptian who surreptitiously joined a legion or provincial *classis* (the commonly presumed meaning of οἱ ἐκ [τοῦ] ἐρετικῶ) would not receive citizenship at discharge, but would be returned to the *laoi*. This was not the case for those who joined the *classis Misensis*, who were by implication allowed citizenship.⁵³⁸ Therefore, for a low status Egyptian desiring to

⁵³⁵ See Swarney (1970) 41-126 for the functions of the *Idios Logos* from the Julio-Claudians to the Antonines, based on a carefully study of relevant papyri; cf. Str. 17.1.12. On the *Gnomon* (BGU V 1210), see Uxkull-Gyllenband (1934); Johnson (1936) 711-17; Riccobono (1950).

⁵³⁶ *Gnomon* 55. For discussion of this passage see Riccobono (1950) 190-5 (with excellent bibliography); cf. Uxkull-Gyllenband (1934) 45-6; Starr (1960²) 77 and 99 n.37-8; Forni (1953) 104-5. For the unresolved problems of Egyptian status division under the Empire see Bowman and Rathbone (1992); Jördens (1999) and (2012).

⁵³⁷ Lesquier (1918) 197-8 mentioned this problematic word in the context of the ἐπίκρισις, suggesting that here it meant “class” or “ethnic group”. He compared it to τάγμα τοῦ γυμνασίου (citing in particular *P. Oxy.* IX 1202 l.18, dated to AD 217 and *P. Oxy.* X 1252 l.24 of the end of the third century AD, though the latter refers to gymnasiarchs. The gymnasial class were a privileged group comprising members of the Greek populations of *nome metropoleis*: see e.g. Bowman and Rathbone (1992) e.g. 114, 119; Vandorpe (2012) 263-4; cf. Van Minnen (2002)); cf. Carcopino (1922) 106, equating τάγμα with γένος (found in *Gnomon* 35, 39, 46, 57). Lesquier is perhaps correct, though his points of comparison are limited, and it is odd that the word appears only here in the *Gnomon*, whereas elsewhere γένος is used for a similar idea. Perhaps it is important that τάγμα can have military connotations (the *Hermeneumata Pseudodositheana* 2.33.1579 translates τάγμα as *legio*).

⁵³⁸ Starr (1960¹) 77 thought that the *classis Ravennas* was to be understood here too, but I am not convinced. Egyptians certainly entered that *classis* e.g. *CIL* XI 29: *D(is) M(anibus) / Sexti Arri / Romani / medic(i) / dupl(icarii) n(atione) / Aegypt(ius)*... cf. *CIL* VI 3159. Perhaps Egyptian recruits to the *classis Ravennas* were rare enough that it did not require a mention.

join the armed forces, the *classis Misenensis* could technically have been the only option.

Yet several problems restrict the value of this text. For example, the notion that native Egyptians were banned from the provincial *classes* is hard to explain, especially if they could enlist in *auxilia*. Although some scholars believe that the latter was not allowed, others disagree.⁵³⁹ The evidence is meagre either way. *Gnomon* 56 refers to soldiers (οἱ στρατευ[όμ]ενοι) who faced fines if they claimed Roman citizenship without proper discharge (νομίνη ἀπόλυσις). In contrast, Chapter 55 refers specifically to men who served [ἐ]ν λεγῶνι. Taken together, the sections may imply that *laoi* could serve in non-legionary forces, gaining Roman citizenship if properly discharged. This would leave the provincial *classes* in an anomalous position.

Carcopino proposed that οἱ ἐκ [τοῦ] ἐρετικῶ concerns specifically the *classis Alexandrina*.⁵⁴⁰ Following Lesquier, he suggested that that *classis* and the legions worked together in policing the Nile. Thus, he theorised that they recruited from the same source and their members were similarly dismissed. Lesquier suggested that, regarding local recruitment to the legions in Egypt, soldiers were ideally drawn from the privileged Alexandrians or the illegitimate sons of legionaries, granted citizenship on enlistment.⁵⁴¹ This argument is primarily based on a first century AD inscribed list of sixty two members of the *legio III Cyrenaica*, which counts seven Alexandrians among the thirteen Egyptians, and another catalogue of AD 194, listing forty six

⁵³⁹ For exclusion: e.g. Lesquier (1918) 224; Reinach (1920-1) 141-2; against: e.g. Carcopino (1922) 216-19; Delia (1991) 38-9; Bowman (1996) 687.

⁵⁴⁰ Carcopino (1922) 217-18; similarly Starr (1960²) 99 nn.37-8; Davies (1969) 215.

⁵⁴¹ Lesquier (1918) 203-16; cf. Devijer (1974) 455-9; further bibliography is collected by Stoll (2009) 433 n.67.

legionaries recruited in AD 168, which mentions thirty Egyptians, the majority *ex castris*, alongside four Alexandrians.⁵⁴²

It would then follow that the *classis Alexandrina* recruited primarily from Alexandrians, with *laoi* excluded. This argument is undermined by the presence of non-Alexandrians in the *classis*, as *diplomata* show.⁵⁴³ Moreover, given our earlier discussion of claims to Alexandrian identity in Italy, one must wonder whether these legionaries were being wholly accurate about their backgrounds: it is not impossible that they were from *nomen metropoleis*, or were even originally *laoi*.⁵⁴⁴ Naturally, we must be wary about revelations concerning legionary, and by extension *classis*, recruitment, provided by but two inscriptions, however lengthy.⁵⁴⁵

Therefore, the solution of Carcopino should probably be considered as unproven. A further problem surfaces. *Gnomon* 55 could imply that Egyptians were sneaking into the Misenum *classis* and therefore were not legally allowed to join, but that for some reason allowance was made if they succeeded in getting enlisted. Perhaps we could consider this a clarification to local officials, unaware of some special status which the *classis Misensis* held. In support we can adduce Swarney, who noted that its fairly narrow contents suggest that the *Gnomon* was not a ‘full manual of procedure’, but a guide for dealing with unusual cases.⁵⁴⁶ A possible explanation, but far from secure.

Thus the *Gnomon of the Idios Logos* may reveal that enlistment options for Egyptian *laoi* were very restricted, and that they were funneled into the *classis*

⁵⁴² *CIL* III 6672 (with 14147 = *ILS* 2483); *CIL* III 6580 (with 12045 = *ILS* 2304 = *AE* 1947 112 = Kayser (1994) no. 105)

⁵⁴³ See above p. 115.

⁵⁴⁴ See above p. 65 n.270.

⁵⁴⁵ Note Devijer (1974) 458 on *AE* 1969-70 633 (= 1955 238), a list of one hundred and thirty six veterans of the *legio II Traiana Fortis* discharged in AD 157, of whom only one was an Egyptian.

⁵⁴⁶ Swarney (1970) 120.

Misenensis. Yet difficulties of interpretation deny us certainty. Furthermore, it is impossible to determine how strictly such conditions were enforced.

4. Conclusion

The recruitment system which I have proposed for *classis* servicemen from the second century AD Fayoum contains several elements beyond the influence of the Roman authorities. This stands somewhat outside most recruitment studies, which emphasise the interactions between recruits and Roman authorities at the point of enlistment, and the administrative concerns of the latter.

Firstly, the direct, if limited, evidence provided by Apion and Apollinarius suggests that *classis* recruitment from the Arsinoite involved a voluntary element. Their letters contain no inkling of conscription. Modern interpretations of wider recruitment practices render this unsurprising, as volunteers appear to have formed a good number of army recruits, though precise ratios cannot be determined.

I suggest that the letters, alongside other evidence, indicate that groups of men could enlist together, possibly because of a standard early summer recruitment time, or at least a period in which most enlistment happened. I have proposed that this hypothetical time was determined by the sailing season. Even if I am not correct in my conjecture that the letters provide evidence for groups enlisting jointly, it should probably be conceded that the sailing season placed restrictions on when it was practical for Egyptian recruits to join the Italian *classes*. Moreover, I have proposed that regional interdependencies and the role of Puteoli as a communications hub may have played some part in this system.

Soldiers and veterans in the Arsinoite, for which there is considerable papyrological evidence, could have encouraged the enlistment of these men into the Roman armed forces. It is certainly plausible that the return of the discharged to the Fayoum, men who were now Roman citizens with veteran privileges, could have by their presence suggested a career to those younger than them. Egyptian recruits may have been given little option over joining the Italian *classes*, but the evidence of the *Gnomon*, and the degree to which its regulations were enforced, are too opaque to make too much of that document.

These conclusions must be set alongside the limitations of my argument. We are working with a fairly small set of documents, the critical letters impossible to date precisely. It can only be assumed that we are dealing with business as usual in the Fayoum, let alone the rest of the empire, when we have little good comparable material from other regions to work with. Many of my arguments do not rest on explicit references in the evidence, but on reasonable hypotheses based on their contents and context. The validity of these hypotheses can be disputed. Nonetheless, I believe that on some points, such as the influence which seasons had on enlistment, are fairly secure.

As noted in the Introduction, Mediterranean fleets often experienced manpower problems.⁵⁴⁷ Fernand Braudel, in comparing these fleets with those of the Atlantic and North Sea, argued that the Mediterranean was not especially productive, and there were not that many fish. Therefore, there were relatively few fishermen and few sailors, since recruitment often involved entering ports and rounding up available

⁵⁴⁷ Above p. 17.

mariners.⁵⁴⁸ Sailors naturally gravitated to the countries which offered the best pay and conditions, though even those suffered manpower problems.⁵⁴⁹

In fact, the Mediterranean waters are more productive, at least on a microregional analysis, than Braudel allowed, which should alter our thinking on this manpower problem.⁵⁵⁰ Rather than there being a shortage of sailors *per se*, states were simply incapable of mobilising them. The achievement of the Romans was seemingly their ability to facilitate manpower mobilisation, whether for the *classes* or other imperial services. But, as argued in Chapter One, when considering the imperial *classes* we are not dealing with *gens de mer*.

Recruitment from the Arsinoite *nome* clarifies that *maritime* manpower was not exclusively sought: manpower of any type would do. A combination of this attitude, the nature and roles of the *classes* as a division of manpower expected to perform general *militia*, and conditions peculiar to the Roman empire facilitating movement towards Misenum and Ravenna, in the former case visible in the connections between Alexandria and Puteoli discussed here, perhaps helped the Romans to overcome a common problem. In these conditions we may perceive imperial organics, the day-to-day movements of people and regional interdependencies that contributed to the functioning of the empire, to which we shall return in Chapter Four.

⁵⁴⁸ Braudel (1972) 138-40, 436, 448.

⁵⁴⁹ *Ibid.* 139, 146.

⁵⁵⁰ Horden and Purcell (2000) 190-4.

III. The Italian *classes* and their imperial ports

1. Introduction

By departing from the standard concentration on the “naval base”, this chapter will argue that the main ports of the Italian *classes* at Misenum and Ravenna were closely associated with imperial property, and may even have been established on imperial estates. Relatedly, I shall contend that they were situated within regions of imperial activity, especially leisure/consumption, display and production, and which otherwise appear to have been of import to Emperors across our period. This will shape our understanding of the roles of the *classis* manpower pool, especially in Italy. While military activity can certainly be considered the province of the *classes*, their situation encouraged their use in *militia* of other kinds, often to the immediate benefit of the Emperor.

I shall begin with the traditional approach to Misenum and Ravenna in *classis* scholarship, which normally treats them as “naval bases” and concentrates on the ports in isolation from their regional context, or pays the latter only passing attention. I shall suggest that the “naval base” is an unsatisfactory model because of difficulties of definition, and because neither compares easily with known “naval bases” of the Classical or Hellenistic Mediterranean, especially Athens and Carthage.

Instead, I shall consider other shared features of the sites, concentrating on proximity to imperial property. To demonstrate how this may affect our perception of Roman “naval bases”, I shall start not with Misenum and Ravenna, but with Pliny the Younger and his letter about Centumcellae. The Trajanic harbour at Centumcellae has often been considered to house a *classis* detachment, and I shall review the epigraphic

evidence. However, I shall also emphasise the features of the nearby imperial villa as described by Pliny. Centumcellae is not the model on which I am basing my interpretation of Misenum and Ravenna. Rather, Pliny lucidly unveils the different activities and characteristics associated with an imperial estate, and one at or near to which *classis* servicemen were based.

Moving on, I shall examine Misenum and Ravenna in turn. To provide proper background, I shall firstly discuss their geography and history as ports, also considering the degree to which these can be regarded as explanations for the selection of the sites as *classis* bases. In the case of Ravenna, literary evidence may suggest its particular strategic significance, though this may have only developed with the deployment of the *classis*. We shall see that these topics provide only a partial understanding or characterisation of the bases.

I shall then consider literary, documentary and archaeological evidence for imperial property at or near to Misenum and Ravenna, and in the regions of the *sinus Baianus* and the north Adriatic. Locally, this may suggest a direct association between imperial property and the *classis* bases, and I shall offer evidence for property ownership by Julius Caesar or Octavian predating the formation of the *classes*, and potentially influencing their deployment.

Evidence for imperial leisure, display and production associated with these properties and in their regions will then be considered, to formulate a picture of the environment in which the Italian *classes* were based and partly operated. Near Misenum, I shall examine the luxury *villae* of Baiae and the commercial hub of Puteoli. Around Ravenna, Aquileia, Altinum and some Histrian estates will receive particular attention. From this, I shall suggest that the *sinus Baianus* and the north

Adriatic are more alike than one might think, and that this should influence our understanding of local activities of the Italian *classes*.

2. The problem of the “naval base”

The standard view holds that the Italian *classes* operated from two main ports, Misenum and Ravenna, with strategic *stationes* around the Mediterranean, some identified through finds of *classis* funerary monuments.⁵⁵¹ Most were situated at commercial harbours also catering to military vessels. The relationship between the *classes* and their ports, and the sort of ports that they visited, would therefore have been largely unremarkable in the context of Mediterranean naval history.

But Misenum and Ravenna have been presented as reserved for the *classes*, described as “naval bases”, “military harbours” or some equivalent.⁵⁵² In determining whether this characterisation is appropriate, we must consider the “naval base”. Reddé discussed the difficulties of identifying or defining the Roman imperial ‘port militaire’.⁵⁵³ Should it be a base reserved for war vessels, their personnel, equipment and so on, or any port with which warships have contact?⁵⁵⁴ Reddé suggested that only Portus Iulius and Misenum could be considered in the first group, while we cannot be certain whether military facilities at Ravenna were shared by commercial vessels.⁵⁵⁵

⁵⁵¹ For this model, concentrating on the Italian coasts and nearby islands, see e.g. Fiebiger (1894) 319-28 and in *RE* III (1899), *s.v.* *classis*, 2638; Chapot (1896) 66-86; Starr (1960²) 13-24; Reddé (1986) 177-223.

⁵⁵² Lehmann-Hartleben (1923) 175, 177; Starr (1960²) 13, 21; Bollini (1968) 44; Blackman (1982) 189; Webster (1985³) 158; Reddé (1986) 150; Rankov (2013) 48.

⁵⁵³ Reddé (1986) 145-53.

⁵⁵⁴ *Ibid.* 145; *cf.* the definition of *naval base* in the *OED*³ (2003), (<http://www.oed.com>; last viewed 16/06/2014): ‘a base for naval operations; *esp.* a securely held seaport from which naval operations can be carried out; a naval shore establishment’.

⁵⁵⁵ See below pp. 183-5 on Ravenna.

Our oblique sources render even *Portus Iulius* problematic.⁵⁵⁶ Therefore, on the formulation of *Reddé*, we are left with *Misenum* as a ‘port militaire’, and with no kind of typology for a Roman “naval base”.⁵⁵⁷ Indeed, *Le Bohec* has gone as far to suggest that there was ‘no model for a military port’ in the empire.⁵⁵⁸ It will emerge that this may go too far.

Unlike the Roman imperial period, “naval bases” have been identified for the Classical and Hellenistic Mediterranean. In the absence of explicit literary evidence, these are commonly recognised through shipshed remains.⁵⁵⁹ Shipsheds *have* been found in commercial harbours, thus fitting the pattern whereby varied ship-types shared facilities.⁵⁶⁰ Nineteenth century accounts recorded remains suggesting that *Cantharus*, the main commercial harbour of the Athenian *Piraeus*, had shipsheds running along its southern shore.⁵⁶¹ Ninety four are attested in a series of inscriptions dating between 330/29 BC and 323/2 BC.⁵⁶² Although we can say little on the

⁵⁵⁶ Below p. 155 n. 634.

⁵⁵⁷ On the absence of a typology, see *Reddé* (1986) 150-3; *contra* *Bollini* (1968) 44-6, who identified a typology based on *Misenum*, *Ravenna*, *Portus Iulius* and *Forum Iulii*.

⁵⁵⁸ *Le Bohec* (1994) 164.

⁵⁵⁹ Their significance noted by *Lehmann-Hartleben* (1923) 111; a principle guiding for instance *Blackman* (2003). See now *Blackman and Rankov* eds. (2013) esp.3, 16-17, 30 for terminology.

⁵⁶⁰ *Reddé* (1986) 148-50. See 148 n.6 for a discussion of the absence of Latin and Greek terms to distinguish commercial and military harbours. *Baika* (2013b) 212-13 has recently suggested that *κλειστός λιμὴν*, found in some Greek coastal descriptions up to *Strabo*, specifically means ‘a fortified naval harbour protected by the city circuit’. This is *contra* *Lehmann-Hartleben* (1923) 65-74, 108 (followed by *Reddé* (1986) 153), who argued that it described any fortified harbour, and *Blackman* (1982) 194, who understood it as a harbour closed by a chain. *Baika*’s hypothesis is difficult to wholly accept, because the layout, development and even location of many examples are conjectural. For instance, *Ps. Scylax* 67 mentions three harbours at *Thasos*, one *κλειστός*. This has been connected with the so-called military harbour of the city. However, the harbour layout and the presence of shipsheds are disputed: see *Blackman and Rankov* eds. (2013), *s.v. Thasos*, 542-3. The solution of *Lehmann-Hartleben* remains preferable.

⁵⁶¹ Remains recognised on the south eastern shore and shown on a map published in *Curtius* (1842), reproduced in *Blackman and Rankov* eds. (2013) 426 and mentioned by *Ulrichs* (1843) 672; *cf.* *Graser* (1872) 58, 61. See also *Blackman and Rankov* eds. (2013) 437.

⁵⁶² *IG II²* 1627 ll. 404-5, 1628 ll. 558-9, 1629 ll. 1035-6, 1631 ll. 255-6.

development or longevity of this naval space, it offers a fair example of the suggested arrangement.⁵⁶³

However, literary evidence combined with substantial shipshed remains indicates that, at some settlements, military vessels were probably provided with separate facilities, incorporated within urban fortifications. Rhodes demonstrates Greek familiarity with harbours reserved for military use. Strabo described Rhodian concealed harbours, with punishments prescribed for unauthorised entry (τῶν δὲ ναυστάθμων τινὰ καὶ κρυπτὰ ἦν καὶ ἀπόρρητα τοῖς πολλοῖς, τῷ δὲ κατοπεύσαντι ἢ παρελθόντι εἴσω θάνατος ὄριστο ἢ ζημία).⁵⁶⁴ The Mandraki harbour has been identified as one on the basis of two shipshed complexes on its south side.⁵⁶⁵

The description of the late third or probably second century BC Carthaginian military harbour by Appian also privileges security.⁵⁶⁶ Carthage possessed two harbours, sharing one entrance. Commercial vessels used the southern rectangular harbour. The military harbour to the north was circular, with an island at its centre, and both the island and encircling harbour were set around with large quays (κρηπῖσι μεγάλαις ἢ τε νῆσος καὶ ὁ λιμὴν διείληπτο) on which stood shipsheds (νεώρια), enough for two hundred and twenty ships. On the island was the σκηνὴ of the ναύαρχος, who monitored everything coming from the sea (τὰ ἐκ πελάγους πάντα ἐφορᾷ). Merchant ships could not see into the military dockyards as they approached, and were provided with a route to the city which avoided them.⁵⁶⁷

⁵⁶³ Cf. Baika in Blackman and Rankov eds. (2013) 321-2 on the Corcyraean commercial Hyllaikos harbour.

⁵⁶⁴ Str. 14.2.5; cf. Polyb. 5.88-9; Polyaeus *Strat.* 5.17; Aristid. *Or.* 24.53; 24.3-4.

⁵⁶⁵ See esp. Blackman, Knoblauch and Yiannikouri (1996); cf. Gabrielsen (1997) 37-42; Blackman and Rankov eds. (2013), s.v. *Rhodes*, 509-17.

⁵⁶⁶ App. *Pun.* 96; cf. 127.

⁵⁶⁷ App. *Pun.* 96: οὐ μὴν οὐδὲ τοῖς ἐσπλεύσασιν ἐμπόροις εὐθὺς ἦν τὰ νεώρια σύνοπτα· τεῖχος τε γὰρ αὐτοῖς διπλοῦν περιέκειτο καὶ πύλαι, αἱ τοὺς ἐμπόρους ἀπὸ τοῦ πρώτου λιμένος ἐς τὴν πόλιν ἐσέφερον, οὐ διερχομένους τὰ νεώρια.

The essentials of this description have been confirmed by excavations at a section of its northern edge and on the island, where thirty shipsheds have been identified.⁵⁶⁸ One hundred and forty sheds are thought to have surrounded the harbour waters. Henry Hurst has acknowledged that this is but a theoretical reconstruction, yet its broad outlines make considerable progress towards understanding the harbour.⁵⁶⁹

As a final example, the smaller harbours of the Piraeus at Zea and Munychia were probably primarily naval.⁵⁷⁰ The inscriptions mentioned above reveal that in the latter half of the fourth century BC Zea possessed one hundred and ninety six sheds, and Munychia eighty two.⁵⁷¹ Archaeology suggests that sheds ringed virtually the whole of both harbours.⁵⁷² Three or possibly four construction phases have been roughly identified, ranging from the early fifth century to after the mid-fourth century BC.⁵⁷³

There are also examples of small naval stations distant from the cities which created them, recognised through shipshed remains or slipways, sometimes associated with coastal fortifications.⁵⁷⁴ One is the Rhodian base near Loryma.⁵⁷⁵ This small city lay at a strategic position within a bay in the Carian Chersonese, opposite Rhodes. Six or twelve shipsheds have been identified on a beach to the west of the acropolis. These have been associated with a fort, *Loryma III*, on the tip of the peninsula at the western entrance to the bay and dated to the first half of the third century BC by

⁵⁶⁸ Hurst (1994); cf. Blackman and Rankov eds. (2013), s.v. *Carthage*, 307-18.

⁵⁶⁹ Hurst (1994) 39.

⁵⁷⁰ For overview and bibliography see Blackman and Rankov (2013), s.v. *Piraeus*, 420-88.

⁵⁷¹ See above p. 141.

⁵⁷² See most recently Lovén *et al.* (2007); Lovén and Nielsen (2009); Lovén (2011); Lovén and Schaldemose (2011).

⁵⁷³ Blackman and Rankov eds. (2013) 476.

⁵⁷⁴ Blackman (2003) 84-5; Baika (2013a) discusses all examples.

⁵⁷⁵ Held (2002) 292-3; (2009) 126-9; for further details and bibliography see Blackman and Rankov eds. (2013), s.v. *Loryma*, 372-5. For another example note the single rock-cut slipway on the Potamos bay of north eastern Antikythera, speculatively connected with fortifications on the Kastro hill: see Pirazzoli (1979); Flemming and Pirazzoli (1981) 73; cf. Lawrence (1979) 183. See recently Blackman and Rankov eds. (2013), s.v. *Aigila (Antikythera, Palaiokastro)*, 277-83.

inscriptions and pottery.⁵⁷⁶ Appian described Loryma as Ῥοδίῳν τι φρούριον ἐν τῇ περαίᾳ; Rhodian possession of the fort is confirmed by epigraphy.⁵⁷⁷

The above suggests that shipshed complexes, monumental at the largest ports, and a concern for security characterised Classical and Hellenistic “naval bases”. However, it is difficult to apply this model to Misenum and Ravenna. There is no evidence for shipsheds at either site. Indeed, although literary evidence confirms that the Romans built shipsheds, nowhere have any been securely identified.⁵⁷⁸ Nor are fortifications clearly attested.⁵⁷⁹

Perhaps these structures have simply not survived. However, the best known large naval bases, at Athens and Carthage, are not ideal models for the imperial period. Their scale is unusual: only two other harbours are attested to have been able to hold over two hundred ships.⁵⁸⁰ Diodorus implies that, under Dionysius I, Syracuse possessed room for at least three hundred and ten ships (ὠκοδόμει δὲ καὶ νεωσοίκους...ἐκατὸν ἐξήκοντα...καὶ τοὺς προϋπάρχοντας ἐθεράπευεν, ὄντας ἐκατὸν πεντήκοντα), and according to Strabo Cyzicus had space for two hundred (ἡ Κύζικος...ἔχει...λιμένας δύο κλειστοὺς καὶ νεωσοίκους πλείους τῶν διακοσίων).⁵⁸¹ Neither has been confirmed by archaeology.

Hurst has insightfully posited that the size and scale of the Carthaginian harbour derived from a ‘siege mentality’ responding to the circumstances leading up

⁵⁷⁶ Held (2009) esp. 124-6; cf. Pimouguet (1994) 244-5; McNicoll (1997) 175-8; Pimouguet-Pédarros (2000) 380-3. Held (2002) 293 argued that the shipshed installation must have been Rhodian and of Early Hellenistic date because Loryma could not have maintained a sizeable fleet. While quite possible, the remains of the shipsheds have not been properly excavated.

⁵⁷⁷ App. *B Civ.* 4.72. For the first commander of the fort see *SEG* 53 1238.

⁵⁷⁸ On Roman shipsheds see now Rankov (2013); cf. Reddé (1986) 160-3. For attestations of shipsheds in Rome see e.g. Livy 3.26.8; 8.14.12; Plin. *NH* 36.40; cf. Vitruvius 5.12.7. See below p. 277 n.1163 on Ostia.

⁵⁷⁹ Reddé (1986) 153-4.

⁵⁸⁰ Blackman (2003) 82-5; Hurst (2010) 30.

⁵⁸¹ Syracuse: Diod. Sic. 14.42.5; cf. 14.7.3; Blackman and Rankov eds. (2013) s.v. *Syracuse*, 535-41; Cyzicus: Str. 12.8.11; cf. Blackman (2003) 82.

to the Third Punic War.⁵⁸² On Athens, he notes that the grandest phase of the Piraeus shipsheds was begun just before Athens lost political independence.⁵⁸³ It would appear that such monumental complexes were therefore unusual, perhaps designed for show, and the product of difficult circumstances, unlike the peaceful conditions of the imperial Mediterranean.⁵⁸⁴

It is therefore difficult to consider Misenum and Ravenna simply as “naval bases” because of difficulties of definition, while comparing them to naval installations of the Classical and Hellenistic Mediterranean does not get us very far, partly due to lack of evidence, and partly because our best comparanda may themselves be exceptional. Thus, I propose to set the “naval base” aside, considering instead attested shared features of the major *classis* ports. This is not to deny that the ports were broadly like “naval bases”; rather, different angles of research may shed more light than continuously speculating over where their shipsheds were.

To this end, I shall explore more fully the local and regional contexts of Misenum and Ravenna. These contexts have not been completely ignored in previous scholarship. For instance, Starr recognised that Misenum was near the ‘great ports of western Italy’, including Puteoli: we shall discuss the potential significance of this below.⁵⁸⁵ Similarly, we shall see that scholarship, concentrating on the *classis Ravennas* as a war fleet, has fairly consistently observed the regional strategic value of Ravenna.⁵⁸⁶ However, my particular interest will be in the association of the *classis* ports with concentrations of imperial property. Following from this, I shall argue that these bases should not be considered purely through the prism of military history

⁵⁸² Hurst (1994) 47.

⁵⁸³ Hurst (2010) 30.

⁵⁸⁴ Hurst (2010) argues that larger fleets would have been constructed only for specific circumstances, and that temporary wooden shipsheds were built on a large scale for such times.

⁵⁸⁵ Starr (1960²) 14. Below pp. 166-9.

⁵⁸⁶ See below p. 178.

because of the range of imperial activities undertaken around the ports, some of which were demonstrably supported by the *classes*.

Some association between the Italian *classes* and imperial estates has been mooted before. Kienast suggested that the series of imperial *villae maritimae* on the Tyrrhenian coast of Italy, and imperial travel between them, led to the formation of a strong bond between the Emperor and the *classis Misenensis*.⁵⁸⁷ But he did not consider whether there could have been a more fundamental link between these *villae* and *classis* activity, nor whether the same was true for the *classis Ravennas*.

The connection is more explicitly noted when evidence for servicemen has been found inland. For instance, three second century epitaphs belonging to members of both Italian *classes* have been found at Tivoli, and their presence should arguably be associated with the *villa Hadriana*.⁵⁸⁸ The second or early third century epitaphs of two *classis Germanica* servicemen have also been recorded.⁵⁸⁹ Reddé argued that supporting imperial communications determined their presence at the villa, a proposition which will gain circumstantial support in Chapter Four.⁵⁹⁰

The same may apply to three epitaphs found near the Fucine Lake.⁵⁹¹ Mommsen linked these to the mock naval battle held there by Claudius in AD 52 to celebrate its draining.⁵⁹² Yet only one of the epitaphs can be dated to that period.⁵⁹³

⁵⁸⁷ Kienast (1966) 48-9; similarly Chapot (1896) 54; D'Arms (1970) 95.

⁵⁸⁸ *CIL* XIV 3627 (= *Inscr. It.* IV 1.160), 3630 (= *Inscr. It.* IV 1.167); *AE* 1996 517.

⁵⁸⁹ *AE* 1899 97; *AE* 2006 394.

⁵⁹⁰ Reddé (1986) 203-4; cf. Ricci and Cecere (2006). Note the discovery of the *classis* epitaphs *CIL* XI 3736-7 at Lorium (Starr (1960²) 18; Reddé (1986) 203; cf. Kienast (1966) 77), perhaps associated with the villa of Antoninus Pius (*SHA Ant. Pius* 1.8, 12.6): see Hirschfeld (1902-3) 69; Miller (1977) 27; Maiuro (2012) 260-1.

⁵⁹¹ Note also Pais (1884) no.496, an epitaph erected by a *tr(ierarchus) cl(assis) pr(aetoriae) Mis(enensis)* and *RMD* III 142 (= *AE* 1989 315) with *AE* 1999 703, a *classis diploma* of AD 100, both from Voghenza. One could tentatively associate these with imperial holdings in the Po valley: see below pp. 186-7.

⁵⁹² *Tac. Ann.* 12.56-7; *Suet. Claud.* 21.6. Mommsen in *CIL* IX (1883), p.368; followed by Starr (1960²) 24; Reddé (1986) 452.

⁵⁹³ *Append.* 18.

Based on their form and contents, the others are probably later.⁵⁹⁴ I am tempted to suggest that they could hint at a long term association between the *classes* and putative imperial property, though evidence for the latter is scarce.⁵⁹⁵

Not all epigraphy attesting *classis* servicemen found inland can be easily associated with imperial holdings. A *miles* of the *classis praetoria Ravennas* erected a monument to his wife at Recina in Picenum, probably in the second century AD.⁵⁹⁶ A *diploma* of AD 129 for the Corsican *miles M(arcus) Numisius Saionis f(ilius) Nomasius* was found at Cremona.⁵⁹⁷ A Capuan epitaph mentions two men who served on different triremes, though could be connected to Misenum or Campanian imperial property.⁵⁹⁸ Nonetheless, this is a rather meagre subset of a small sample, and that one can connect inland finds with imperial property should be kept in mind.⁵⁹⁹

Given this phenomenon, it is surprising that similar links have not generally been drawn between *classis* bases and coastal estates, though concentrating on the “naval base” may have obscured this interesting association.

⁵⁹⁴ CIL IX 3891: *C(aio) Iulio Ce/leri mil(iti) cla(ssis) / prae(toriae) Raven(natis) / |(centuria) Seleni Sev[e]ri / mil(itavit) a(nnos) XXIX / vix(it) an(nos) L / her(es) posuit / L(ucius) Valerius Ve/recundus / b(ene) m(erenti) de se*; AE 1991 568 (= CIL IX 3993): *D(is) M(anibus) [s(acrum)] / C(aio) Ve[lo]nio Vict[ori] / mil(iti) [ex c]las(se) pr[ae]t(oria) / Raven(nate) / M(arcus) Herenniu[s] / Apelles amico / b(ene) m(erenti) / p(osuit)*.

⁵⁹⁵ Segenni (2007) 128, noting imperial construction works and a handful of inscriptions attesting imperial slaves or freedmen.

⁵⁹⁶ CIL IX 5749 (= VI 3153 = AE 1990 302): *D(is) M(anibus) // Dasiae / Verae / M(arcus) Deme/trius Epictetus / mil(es) cla(ssis) / pr(aetoriae) Rav(ennatis) / coniugi / [---]*.

⁵⁹⁷ CIL XVI 74 (= III p. 875 = V 4091).

⁵⁹⁸ AE 1980 226: *D(is) M(anibus) / bene merente(sic) / Curnutius Maxi/mus ex III Marte fe/c(it) Lappio Secun/do fratri suo ex III Athenune/ice(sic)*. Panciera (1960) 31 guessed a third century AD date, but the late second century would be acceptable.

⁵⁹⁹ Furthermore, note CIL IX 1631, from Beneventum: *[---] ex III / Diomed(e) / in fr(onte) p(edes) XII in / agr(o) p(edes) [---]*.

3. Centumcellae: imperial estate and imperial port

Before considering the main *classis* bases, let us briefly examine Centumcellae, a harbour near an imperial villa where the differing functions and mixed character of the estate can be brought into focus.⁶⁰⁰ A letter from summer AD 107 depicts its construction, written when Pliny had been called to a *consilium* of the Emperor at the nearby villa.⁶⁰¹ I shall leave aside this well-known description, concentrating on other parts of the text.

We know of eighteen *classis* epitaphs found just to the north of the harbour at Prato del Turco.⁶⁰² The majority of these epitaphs require little commentary: they display standard features of *classis* funerary epigraphy from the second and early third centuries AD.⁶⁰³ This date range is expected: a *classis* detachment is unlikely to have predated the harbour.

The epitaphs arguably point to lengthy deployment periods at Centumcellae and a permanent detachment, as usually suggested.⁶⁰⁴ While most of the deceased were *milites*, an *optio*, a *suboptio* and possibly a centurion are known, implying a full

⁶⁰⁰ In general see Hülsen in *RE* III (1899), s.v. *Centum Cellae*, 1934; Bastianelli (1954); Caruso (1991); Correnti (1990); Quilici (1993); Maiuro (2012) 260-1.

⁶⁰¹ Plin. *Ep.* 6.31 with Sherwin-White (1966) 396-8; cf. Rut. Namat. 1.237-48.

⁶⁰² *CIL* XI 3522-4, 3525 (= *ILS* 7583), 3526-30, 3531 (= *ILS* 2859), 3531a, 3532-6, 7584; *NSA* (1940), 195, reported by Bastianelli; cf. Torelli (1982) 112. For the *classes* and Centumcellae see Fiebiger (1894) 327-8; Chapot (1896) 78-9; Starr (1960²) 18, 23; Kienast (1966) 48-9; Reddé (1986) 197-201.

⁶⁰³ Exceptional is *CIL* XI 3526: *D(is) M(anibus) / C(aio) Caecilio Va(lenti) mil(iti) cl(assis) pr(aetoriae) / Misen(ensis) III Salami/na milit(avit) ann(os) VIII / vix(it) ann(is) XXXI / C(aius) Lucilius V(a)lens / corpor(is) custos / f(ecit) b(ene) m(erenti)*. Because of the *custos corporis*, Reddé (1986) 526 argued that this inscription was Flavian, indicating a *classis* presence at Centumcellae in the first century AD. However, Bellen (1981) 69-71 suggested that *corpor* was a misreading for *armor*: there are thirteen certain examples of *armorum custodes* in my sample of *classis* epigraphy (e.g. *CIL* X 3397, 3401; XI 54, 66). I am inclined to follow this suggestion: the inscription was perhaps not especially carefully carved (hence *V(a)lens*) which could lead to a misreading. Moreover, *custodes corporis* normally took their *tria nomina* from Emperors, not done here. The inscription can then be dated to the second century AD.

⁶⁰⁴ See above n. 602 for *classis* bibliography.

detachment.⁶⁰⁵ Some formed relationships at the port, indicating their long-term presence. One monument was erected by C. Iulius Sabinus and Artoria, *coniunx* of the deceased *miles*, M. Helvius Maximus.⁶⁰⁶ C. Iulius Sabinianus buried his *pater*, C. Iulius Saturninus, a *classis* serviceman.⁶⁰⁷ None of the deceased were explicitly described as *veterani*, though Helvius died at the age of 70; one could conjecture that he had obtained *honesta missio* and settled in his service area.⁶⁰⁸

These epitaphs led Hülsen to posit military functions for the harbour, at least in its origins.⁶⁰⁹ To support this, Bastianelli pointed out that *Vigiles* were found there too, though only two second or early third century epitaphs are known.⁶¹⁰ With the military theme in mind, Starr thought that the role of the Centumcellae *classis* servicemen was to police the Tyrrhenian.⁶¹¹ He attributed secondary functions to them, including guarding commerce, transporting the Emperor and officials, and acting as couriers along the *via Aurelia*. Reddé made much less of the military aspect of Centumcellae, portraying it as a relay port and emphasising communications.⁶¹²

Now, Pliny provides the only direct statement on a possible purpose of the harbour: *eritque vel maxime salutaris nam per longissimum spatium litus importuosum hoc receptaculo utetur*.⁶¹³ This does not necessarily explain why Trajan built it, only what Pliny considered would be the consequences of its construction. It

⁶⁰⁵ *Optio*: CIL XI 7583 (= 3525), which may also name a centurion: *D(is) M(anibus) / T(itus) Aetatus Verus / mil(es) cl(assis) pr(aetoriae) Mis(enensis) / | (centurio?) IIII Dacico...*; *suboptio*: CIL XI 3531 (= ILS 2859): *...C(aio) Domitio Regino / mil(iti) cl(assis) pr(aetoriae) Rav(ennatis) / suboptioni / IIII Fortuna...* See above n.603 for a probable *custos armorum*.

⁶⁰⁶ CIL XI 3531a: *D(is) M(anibus) / M(arco) Helvio / Maximo / cl(assis) pr(aetoriae) Rav(ennatis) / vix(it) an(nis) LXX / fec(it) C(aius) Iulius / Sabinus et / Artoria / Euplia con(iugi) b(ene) m(erenti)*.

⁶⁰⁷ CIL XI 3532: *D(is) M(anibus) / G(aio) Iulio Sat/urnino ex / clas(se) p(raetoria) Mise(nensi) / militav(it) an(nis) / XVI vixit / an(nis) LIII / G(aius) Iulius / Sabinianus / patri bene / m(erenti) p(osuit)*.

⁶⁰⁸ CIL XI 3531a.

⁶⁰⁹ Hülsen in *RE* III (1899), s.v. *Centum Cellae*, 1934.

⁶¹⁰ CIL XI 3520 (= ILS 2168), 3521; Bastianelli (1954) 19.

⁶¹¹ Starr (1960²) 18.

⁶¹² Reddé (1986) 200; cf. Kienast (1966) 49, similarly interested in the connection of Centumcellae with Rome.

⁶¹³ Plin. *Ep.* 6.31.17.

may hint at its possible eventual role in sheltering grain ships and supporting the *annona*, as discussed in Chapter Four.⁶¹⁴

Chapter One argued that *classis milites* should not be understood purely from a traditional “military” perspective: if correct, their presence need not be regarded as indicative of military activity. Moreover, concentrating on any military aspects of early Centumcellae does not fully take into account the connection between the harbour and the imperial estate. The letter of Pliny brings out the close relationship between the villa and its adjacent coastline (*imminet litori*) and the surrounding pleasantness: the villa was *pulcherrima*, located in *viridissimi agri*.⁶¹⁵ Pliny described a series of judicial cases heard by Trajan: that of Claudius Aristion, *princeps Ephesiorum*, an adultery charge against Gallitta, wife of a *tribunus militum*, and an investigation into the will of a Iulius Tiro.⁶¹⁶ This combined evidence implicitly connects imperial residence and activity in a charming location to the new harbour. These are points not made explicit in many studies of Centumcellae, which, aside from military matters, concentrate on harbour commerce and urban development.⁶¹⁷ But its ideological and practical functions as an imperial construction must not be forgotten.⁶¹⁸

Thus, Centumcellae provides us with an early second century example of a harbour at which members of the Italian *classes* were based. It was associated with an imperial estate, a place of pleasure and politics, as Pliny reveals. Where we encounter other *classis* harbours in similar positions, we should be mindful of the mixed usage

⁶¹⁴ See below pp. 282-3.

⁶¹⁵ Plin. *Ep.* 6.31.15. The villa has not been securely identified, but a site at Belvedere, under a mile inland, is commonly suggested e.g. Bastianelli (1954) 15, 60-1; Caruso (1991) 51; cf. Lafon (2001) 349 RM. 6, 8.

⁶¹⁶ Plin *Ep.* 6.31.3-12.

⁶¹⁷ See bibliography above at p.148 n.600 and recently Schörle (2011) 98. For exceptions see Hülsen in *RE* III (1899), s.v. *Centum Cellae*, 1934; Kienast (1966) 49; Maiuro (2012) 260-1.

⁶¹⁸ Note later imperial visits to Centumcellae: Fronto *ad M. Aurelium* 3.20 (Naber p. 56 = Haines p. 172); 5.59 (Naber p. 92 = Haines p. 52); *SHA Comm.* 1.9.

of such property, and be wary of concentrating on them purely from military or strategic perspectives.⁶¹⁹

4. Misenum

Let us now turn to Misenum and its surroundings.⁶²⁰ I shall begin with its natural advantages and history as a port as attested in literature, both sometimes viewed as significant in its selection as a *classis* port. While influential, I shall suggest that these only offer partial explanations and an insufficient understanding of the base.

Moving to imperial property, I shall consider the presence of *villae maritimae* around the port, attested in archaeology and literature, some of which were in imperial possession. We shall see that there is direct evidence for Julius Caesar possessing property locally, thus before the base was established, and which was probably inherited by Octavian. This may have influenced the decision to locate a *classis* there.

The presence of imperial *villae maritimae* encourages divergence from the traditional approach to Misenum as a “naval base”, because of the varied characteristics of those estates. To emphasise the point, the inquiry will be expanded to cover evidence for imperial property ownership in the adjacent *sinus Baianus*. This

⁶¹⁹Compare Ancona, a municipal harbour reconstructed by Trajan (recorded by an inscription on a triumphal arch: *CIL IX* 5894 (= *ILS* 298); cf Moretti (1945) 52-5; Sebastiani (1996) 35), at which there is no evidence for imperial property or the Italian *classes*: see Fiebiger (1894) 336; Lehmann-Hartleben (1923) 198-9, 243; Starr (1960²) 23; Moretti (1945); Reddé (1986) 218-20; Sebastiani (1996).

⁶²⁰For Misenum in general, see Mommsen in *CIL X* (1883), pp.317-8; Beloch (1890²) 190-202; Fiebiger (1894) 290-2; Chapot (1896) 66-8; Philipp in *RE XV* (1932), *s.v. Misenum*, 2043-8; Starr (1960²) 13-17; Bollini (1968) 49-54; Borriello and D’Ambrosio (1974) 114-64; Castagnoli (1977) 70-1; De Franciscis in *BTCGI IV* (1985), 428-33; Reddé (1986) 186-97. For the underwater archaeology of Baiae and the work of Fraia, Lombardo and Scognamiglio, see bibliography in D’Arms (2003) 232-3.

will highlight the association of *villae maritimae* and imperial activity in the region with leisure and even decadence, especially in the first century AD.

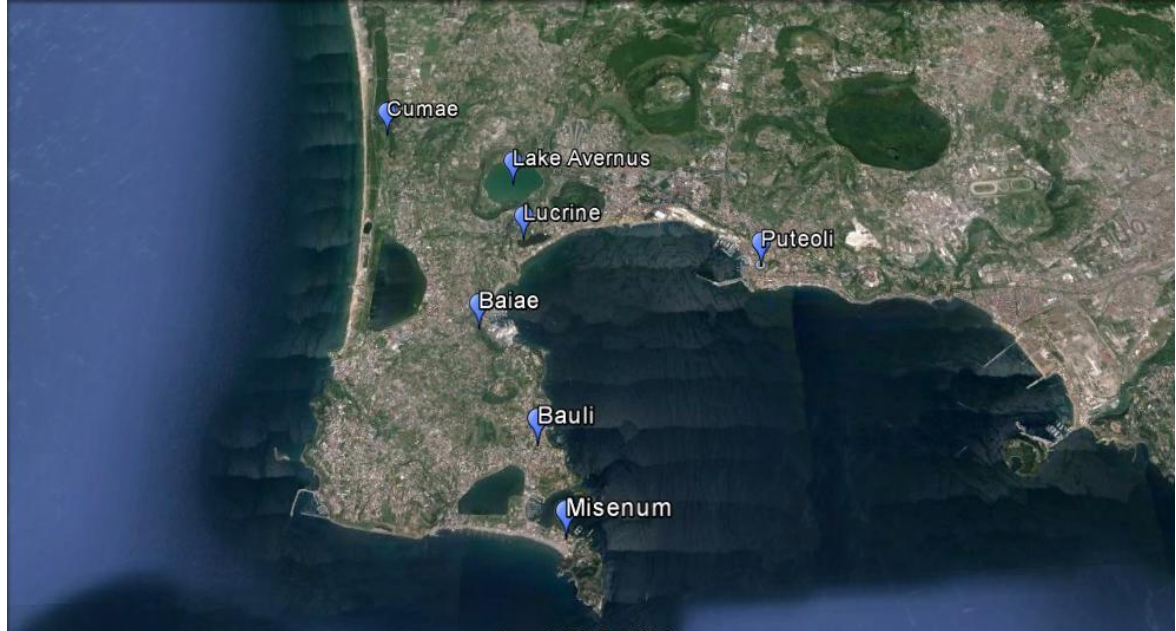


Fig. 2 Misenum and its region (source: Google Maps)

Yet, it would be incautious to be misled by literary sources sometimes hostile to Julio-Claudian *principes* into thinking that the *sinus Baianus* was defined purely by luxury, and I shall examine evidence for production locally, and for commerce and communications at nearby Puteoli. This suggests a complicated region, valuable to the imperial house, where the *classis* at Misenum was able to support imperial activity.⁶²¹

⁶²¹ One could expand this inquiry to the whole Bay of Naples and its Campanian hinterland, including Capua, which retained some importance into the early imperial period (Frederiksen (1984) 285-318). However, I shall concentrate on Baiae because of its juxtaposition to Misenum, and on Puteoli because it became the chief regional city in our period, and in its social and commercial relationships with the area can be seen as its representative.

4.1 Geography and history

Introducing Misenum, Starr overviewed the disadvantages of other locations for a Roman *classis* base. Forum Iulii was in Gaul, Brundisium was too far from Rome, Ostia and Portus Iulius were physically unsuitable, Naples and Puteoli were jammed with commercial shipping.⁶²² This summary underlines how many factors must have contributed to determining the location and character of the *classis* installation.

When considering the advantages of Misenum, scholarship often invokes its natural qualities.⁶²³ It is sheltered from south and west winds, with a deep outer harbour connected to an inner bay, now lago Miseno. Most harbour sites on the western coast of Italy were at river mouths, such as Ostia, or coastal lagoons, which the Cumaeans probably exploited. Neither is ideal for a permanent installation, certainly not without engineering, so if directed primarily by nature, and considering the drawbacks for other sites, the Romans had little option but to establish their western *classis* port at Misenum. And yet the port at Ravenna was quite probably in a lagoon, with Ancona arguably the better north Adriatic harbour.⁶²⁴ Rejection of the latter implies that imperial priorities extended beyond geographical convenience.

Its real or imagined past may have been influential. Historically, Misenum had been in Cumaean territory.⁶²⁵ Livy wrote of Hannibal laying waste to the land of Cumae down to Misenum in 214 BC (*pervastato agro Cumano usque ad Miseni promunturium*).⁶²⁶ Dionysius of Halicarnassus commented that among the benefits

⁶²² Starr (1960²) 14.

⁶²³ E.g. Chapot (1896) 66-7; Lehmann-Hartleben (1923) 176-7; Philipp in *RE* XV (1932), *s.v.* *Misenum*, 2044; Starr (1960²) 14-15; Bollini (1968) 49-51.

⁶²⁴ On Ravenna see below pp. 174-5.; Ancona as a fine harbour: Hülsen in *RE* I (1894), *s.v.* *Ancona*, 2114; Moretti (1945) 44; Susini (1967a) 367.

⁶²⁵ For the territory of Cumae see Frederiksen (1984) 32-4, 43.

⁶²⁶ Livy 24.13.6.

available to Cumae were the good harbours around Misenum (κατέχουσα τῆς Καμπανῶν πεδιάδος τὴν πολυκαρποτάτην καὶ λιμένων κρατοῦσα τῶν περὶ Μισηνὸν ἐπικαιροτάτων).⁶²⁷ Here, the toponym refers to physical features: the promontory, or the hill, Monte Miseno, which rises abruptly at its tip. This usage persisted into the imperial period, as Strabo records: πλησίον δὲ τῆς Κύμης τὸ Μισηνὸν ἀκρωτήριον.⁶²⁸ While there is no evidence for a formal community at Misenum before the *classis* was deployed there, Josephus shows that by the later first century AD the πόλις Misenum had arisen (Μισηνοῦς ἑτέραν πόλιν ἐπιθαλάσσιον), by then separated from Cumae and perhaps raised to municipal status.⁶²⁹

Despite Dionysius, who may be anachronistic, we cannot automatically identify the harbours of Republican Cumae with those of the *classis Misenensis*. Paget argued that the archaic Cumaean harbours, now unrecognisable due to coastline changes, were closer to the city.⁶³⁰ However, and while I am not as certain as Chapot, it would be surprising if the Cumaeans and visiting ships had not exploited the excellent promontory harbour before the first century AD.⁶³¹ Therefore, there may have been precedent for a port at Misenum, but nothing decisively shows that the

⁶²⁷ Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 7.3.2; cf. 12.1.9. Note 5.51.3, where the name is applied to the harbour.

⁶²⁸ Str. 5.4.5 (note also 1.2.18; 5.4.6); cf. Tac. *Ann.* 6.50: *mutatisque saepius locis tandem apud promunturium Miseni consedit in villa cui L. Lucullus quondam dominus*; 14.4; Virg. *Aen.* 6. 231-5; Plin. *NH* 3.61.

⁶²⁹ Jos. *AJ* 19.5; cf. Oros. 5.12.9. *Contra* Beloch (1890²) 190; Starr (1960²) 16, 27 n.17; Maiuri (1958³) 93-4; Borriello and D'Ambrosio (1979) 24 who suggested that Augustus founded a *colonia* and Mommsen (1878) 109 and in *CIL X* (1883), p.317; Philipp in *RE XV* (1932), s.v. *Misenum*, 2047; Frederiksen (1984) 43 (cf. Keppie (1984a) 80) who attributed a *colonia* to Claudius. A *colonia* is unattested before the later second or third century AD (see *CIL X* 3674 (= *ILS* 6335) and 3678 (= *ILS* 5689)). Honorary inscriptions on statue bases from the *sacellum* of the *Augustales* at Misenum (Borriello and D'Ambrosio (1979) 137-9; de Franciscis (1991); Guadagno (1994); D'Arms (2000); Miniero (2000)) attest a *municipium* by AD 102, when one inscription (*AE* 1993 468 (= 1994 426b) ll.25-6) mentions a fine to be paid *ad rem publicam / municipum Misenensium*; cf. *AE* 1993 472 (= 1996 424a) (AD 112); *AE* 2000 344 (AD 148-9); *CIL X* 1881 (= *ILS* 6328) (AD 165). On the assignment of the third to Misenum see Parma (1994) 35-6; D'Arms (2000) 130; Zevi (2000a) 55 (who erroneously dates it to AD 169). Given that no community at Misenum is mentioned before Josephus, I suggest that the *municipium* was created in the second half of the first century AD, with a *colonia* formed towards the end of the second century at the earliest.

⁶³⁰ Paget (1968); cf. Frederiksen (1984) 70-1.

⁶³¹ Chapot (1896) 66.

imperial *classis* was placed there because of this, or gives much insight as to its earlier character.

Perhaps more influential to its selection was the exploitation of the area as a gathering and training point for the fleet under Agrippa for use against Sextus Pompeius in 36 BC.⁶³² Scholars have occasionally argued that Misenum was chosen as a replacement for the so-called Portus Iulius, formed from the Lucrine and Lake Avernus, because of its similarity to that installation (i.e. having an outer and inner bay).⁶³³ But it is unclear whether the two can be so closely paralleled, with the Portus Iulius not fully understood.⁶³⁴ On a basic physical point, Purcell noted that the comparison of the relatively deep outer bay at Misenum with the shallow Lucrine is tenuous.⁶³⁵ Thus the view of Misenum as a replacement is not well supported. Nonetheless, there were major naval preparations locally; possibly the promontory harbours were used, or at least noticed, encouraging later exploitation.

⁶³² Vell. Pat. 2.79.1-2; Str. 5.4.5; Suet. *Aug.* 16.1; App. *B Civ.* 5.97; Cass. Dio 48.49.4 - 51; 49.1.1; Flor. 12.18.5-6.

⁶³³ See above p. 7 n.28 for references.

⁶³⁴ The standard account (see e.g. Beloch (1890²) 169-70; Pagano, Reddé and Roddaz (1982); Roddaz (1984) 95-114; Reddé (1986) 164-71; cf. Camodeca (1994) 112-13) views Portus Iulius as a military harbour created when Agrippa linked the deep Avernus and the marshy Lucrine lakes. Therefore, it could have been a model for Misenum. However, the source tradition on the harbour is neither clear nor aligned. Only Suetonius (*Aug.* 16.1) refers to it by name. He states that ships were built before the harbour (cf. App. *B Civ.* 5.92; Cass. Dio 48.49.1), whereas Velleius Paterculus (2.72.2) says that the fleet was built within it. Appian does not mention the harbour at all (see Gowing (1992) 195 n.39). Some sources were confused about basic relevant topography. For instance, Dio (48.50.2) mixed up Avernus and the Lucrine, calling the former marshy. He claimed (48.50.3) that Agrippa made both excellent harbours, whereas Strabo (Str. 5.4.6) thought that the Lucrine was unsuitable for mooring ships. Strabo (5.4.6) indicated that some authorities thought that Lucrine was actually the Acherusia, while Artemidorus identified it with Avernus. If our sources could not identify crucial physical features, they may not have known much about the location of the Agrippan project, or its purpose. Purcell (in Frederiksen (1984) 333-4) suggested that we should see the Agrippan works as facilitating the exploitation of timber resources. It is also possible that Avernus was utilised for training crews.

⁶³⁵ Frederiksen (1984) 334.

4.2 Imperial estates and the *sinus Baianus*

Geography and history were therefore potentially, though not exclusively, influential in the choice of the Misenum harbour as a station for what became the *classis Misenensis*, and certainly fundamental for understanding its character. However, the approach thus far neglects a significant feature of the Misenum region: its luxury *villae maritimae*. The harbour itself was overlooked by a large villa above the Grotta della Dragonara, at the top of the Miseno promontory, as Starr mentioned in passing.⁶³⁶ This has usually been identified with the villa of Marius, which Lucullus bought, and where Tiberius sojourned and later died in AD 37.⁶³⁷ Thus the villa passed into imperial hands, perhaps even during the Augustan period. Maiuro has recently noted that its location may have influenced the installation of the *classis* but does little to pursue this idea.⁶³⁸

The identification, based on literary sources, is a reasonable hypothesis, if not absolutely certain. Pliny described it simply as a villa *in Misenensi*.⁶³⁹ Phaedrus pictured the villa of Tiberius (*Misenensem villam venisset suam*) as looking towards Sicily and the Tyrrhenian (*quae monte summo imposita... prospectat Siciliam et prospicit Tuscum mare*).⁶⁴⁰ Seneca noted that the villa was at a height (*summis iugis montium*).⁶⁴¹ Tacitus described it as *apud promunturium Miseni*.⁶⁴² Beloch admitted

⁶³⁶ Starr (1960²) 15. Note also the probable villa on the Punta Pennata, now an island forming the north eastern harbour edge but once attached to the mainland: see Beloch (1890²) 199; Borriello and D'Ambrosio (1979) 29, 128-30.

⁶³⁷ Phaed. *Fab.* 2.5.7ff; Tac. *Ann.* 6.50; Suet. *Tib.* 72-3; Dio 58.28.1; cf. Plin. *NH* 18.32; Plut. *Mar.* 34.2. For the identification see Beloch (1890²) 198-9; Hirschfeld (1902-3) 61-2; Borriello and D'Ambrosio (1979) 27-8, 153-5; Maiuro (2012) 278.

⁶³⁸ Maiuro (2012) 278.

⁶³⁹ Plin. *NH* 18.32.

⁶⁴⁰ Phaed. *Fab.* 2.5.7-10.

⁶⁴¹ Sen. *Ep.* 5.51.11.

⁶⁴² Tac. *Ann.* 6.50.

that much of this could apply to Monte Procida, but remains there are few.⁶⁴³ Nothing clearly refutes the traditional interpretation, and I follow it with due caution.

Even if the identification of these ruins with the imperial villa is incorrect, we still possess clear evidence in Tacitus for a property on the *promunturium Miseni*. Thus, the most significant *classis* base on the western coast of Italy was established adjacent to property potentially in imperial possession under Augustus. Additionally, there is rather good evidence for prior property ownership locally by Octavian. Tacitus records that Agrippina the Younger was buried along the road to Misenum, near a villa of Julius Caesar (*viam Miseni propter et villam Caesaris dictatoris quae subiectos sinus editissima prospectat*).⁶⁴⁴ His adopted son surely inherited this, and I am tempted to suggest that this could have had some direct influence on where the *classis* was installed.

We can also adduce the villa once belonging to the orator Hortensius at Bauli. Pliny described how Antonia, wife of Drusus and daughter of Antony and Octavia, adorned fish there: *in eadem villa Antonia Drusi murenae, quam diligebat, inaures addidit*.⁶⁴⁵ D'Arms argued that, following the demise of the son of Hortensius after Philippi, the villa became the property of Antony or Octavian, and ultimately the latter.⁶⁴⁶ While this proposal lacks absolutely conclusive evidence, the probable confiscation of the property of an enemy of the triumvirs makes it very attractive. If

⁶⁴³ Beloch (1890²) 198.

⁶⁴⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 14.9; note Cic. *Att.* 11.6.6.

⁶⁴⁵ Plin. *NH* 9.172; cf. Varro *Rust.* 3.17.5.

⁶⁴⁶ D'Arms (1970) 68-9; *contra* Beloch (1890²) 179 (followed by Hirschfeld (1902-3) 65), who suggests that the villa was owned by Drusus and passed to Agrippina the Younger. This is based on the belief of Beloch (1890²) 201 that Bauli was north of Baiae, and Tac. *Ann.* 14.5, which reveals that Agrippina owned a villa near the Lucrine. On Bauli Beloch followed Plin. *NH* 3.61: *...Misenum, portus Baiarum, Bauli...* but this is contradicted by e.g. Tac. *Ann.* 14.4: *complexu ducitque Baulos. id villae nomen est, quae promunturium Misenum inter et Baianum lacum flexo mari adluitur*; cf. Varro *Rust.* 3.17.5; Plin. *NH* 9.127. More recent studies have located Bauli at m. Bacoli, south of Baiae (see e.g. Borriello and D'Ambrosio (1979) 21-3 for discussion of the problem and bibliography; see also Di Fraia, Lombardo and Scognamiglio (1985-6) 290-2). This makes the hypothesis of Beloch on the subsequent ownership of the *villa Hortensiana* harder to sustain.

correct, it would provide further evidence for very early imperial interest in the area around Misenum.

The above encourages us to rethink the nature of the “naval base” at Misenum, considering the varied characteristics of imperial *villae maritimae* as identified when discussing Centumcellae. This should have implications for how we view any tasks undertaken by the *classis Misenensis*, especially around Campania.

In particular, the resort character of nearby Baiae, and its luxury *villae maritimae*, prompt reconsideration with pleasure and luxury in mind. I shall examine evidence, especially in literature, for imperial property in the wider *sinus Baianus*, alongside its connections with opulence, and use this to reinterpret the *classis* base. I shall set out some direct evidence for imperial leisure or display activities in the region, hinting at its importance to the imperial house. However, we should not view the region purely through the prism of luxury, as evidence for the productive capacities of such *villae maritimae*, and the commerce and communications of nearby Puteoli, will demonstrate. Such an approach was encouraged by D’Arms, who advocated seeing the *villae* of Augustus in the Bay of Naples within the context of economic, military, social and cultural developments.⁶⁴⁷

We shall begin with evidence for imperial property in the region, which followed a Republican tradition of ownership from around the mid-second century BC.⁶⁴⁸ Imperial visits to the *sinus Baianus* are well documented in literature, especially for the Julio-Claudian period, and have received much attention in work on

⁶⁴⁷ D’Arms (1970) 79; cf. Frederiksen (1984) 331.

⁶⁴⁸ Aside from the examples noted above (pp. 156-7), Republican property owners included Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi (Plut. *C. Gracc.* 19.1; cf. Oros. 5.12.9); Cicero (Plin. *NH* 31.6; cf. Cic. *Att.* 13.45.2, 13.47, 14.7.1, 15.27.1 for estates at Cumae and Puteoli) and Antony (Cic. *Phil.* 2.48, 73; cf. Cic. *Att.* 10.8.10; 14.20.2; 15.1.2). See D’Arms (1970) esp. 1-72; Lafon (2001) esp. 89-95, 187-225.

imperial property or the Bay of Naples.⁶⁴⁹ Therefore, the following is not comprehensive, but offers several important examples. Sometimes we hear directly of Emperors or their families residing at imperial estates, while elsewhere we must resort to inference. Some evidence has been presented, but a further sample will reinforce the point.⁶⁵⁰

Augustus responded negatively to L. Vinicius calling on his daughter Julia at Baiae (*quidem coetu adeo prohibuit, ut L. Vinicio...scripserit quondam parum modeste fecisse eum, quod filiam suam Baias salutatum venisset*), from which we can assume a residence.⁶⁵¹ We have seen that Tiberius died at Misenum.⁶⁵² Furthermore, his presence in Campania from AD 27 until his death, especially at Capri, was infamous, as Tacitus described: *quanto intentus olim publicas ad curas tanto occultiores in luxus et malum otium resolutus*.⁶⁵³ In recording a meeting at Baiae in AD 38 between Gaius Caligula, Herod, tetrarch of Galilee and Peraea and Fortunatus, freedman of Herod Agrippa, Josephus mentioned the opulently decorated ‘royal houses’ there (βασιλαιοί τέ εισιν οικήσεις αὐτόθι πολυτελέσι κεχρημέναι κατασκευαῖς) and the attempts of each Emperor to outdo his predecessor (φιλοτιμηθέντος τῶν αὐτοκρατόρων ἐκάστου τοὺς προγεγονότας ὑπερβάλλεσθαι).⁶⁵⁴ This brings to mind both the luxury of the *sinus Baianus*, and how Emperors exploited the area to display their own wealth and power.

⁶⁴⁹ Hirschfeld (1902-3) 64-5; D’Arms (1970) esp. 73-115; Miller (1977) 24-7; Lafon (2001) 232-4, 243-6; Maiuro (2012) 278-80.

⁶⁵⁰ See above pp. 156-7.

⁶⁵¹ Suet. *Aug.* 64.2.

⁶⁵² Above p. 156.

⁶⁵³ Tac. *Ann.* 4.67; cf. 6.1; Suet. *Tib.* 40-4; M. Aur. *Med.* 12.27.

⁶⁵⁴ Jos. *AJ* 18.249.

A bronze inscription found near Tridentum containing an edict of Claudius shows that the Emperor was at a *praetorium* in Baiae in AD 46:⁶⁵⁵

M(arco) Iunio Silano Q(uinto) Sulpicio Camerino co(n)s(ulibus)
Idibus Marti(i)s Bai(i)s in praetorio edictum
Ti(beri) Claudi Caesaris Augusti Germanici propositum fuit id...

This *praetorium* was arguably the heart of an imperial estate but, despite speculation, its whereabouts are unknown, and it seems a fruitless endeavour to connect it with any archaeological remains, however imposing they may be.⁶⁵⁶

Domitia, the aunt of Nero, owned land there, on which the Emperor built ἡβητήρια after her possibly hastened death in AD 59:⁶⁵⁷

καὶ ἔσπευσέ γε τοῦτο ποιῆσαι διὰ τὰ κτήματα αὐτῆς τὰ ἐν ταῖς Βαίαις καὶ ἐν τῇ Ῥαβεννίδι ὄντα, ἐν οἷς καὶ ἡβητήρια εὐθὺς μεγαλοπρεπῆ κατασκεύασεν, ἃ καὶ δεῦρο ἀνθεῖ.

Although these cannot be identified, we should also note that Nero was generally fond of spending time in the area (*Nero multo apud Puteolos et Misenum maris usu*

⁶⁵⁵ *CIL* V 5050 (= *ILS* 206 = *AE* 1983 445; cf. Sherk (1988) no.52) ll.1-3. See also Plin. *NH* 31.5 for springs at Baiae named after the Claudian imperial freedman Posides.

⁶⁵⁶ Beloch (1905²) 185: possibly identified with *villa Caesaris* which he located to the west of the castle at Baiae, but there is no evidence (see Borriello and D'Ambrosio (1979) 19 n.107). Maiuri (1958³) 85 placed Caesar's villa and *praetorium* on the castle hill. De Franciscis (1967) located it at the vast thermal complex of Baiae; see also D'Arms (1970) 109; Borriello and D'Ambrosio (1979) 19 n.112; Mauro (2012) 280 but see below note. Camodeca (2007) 151 located it at the nymphaeum in the water off the Punta Epitaffio, following B. Andrea in *Baia. Il ninfeo imperiale sommerso di Punta Epitaffio*, Napoli, (1983), pp. 67-71, suggesting that a statue group found in the excavation pertains to the family of Claudius. But the identification of the statues, some of them very fragmentary, is extremely tenuous.

⁶⁵⁷ Cass. Dio 61.17.2; Tac. *Ann.* 13.21. The ἡβητήρια could be private luxury 'gymnasia' (as rendered by Carey (1925) p. 73), but that Nero also built them at Ravenna perhaps indicates they were training grounds or leisure facilities for *classis* servicemen. The *Suda* and Hesychius suggest that ἡβητήριον can mean "banqueting hall" (ἑστιατήρια) or "training ground" (παιδευτήριον); cf. Plut. *Pomp.* 40.5; 53.1. De Angelis d'Ossat (1977) 238-43 speculatively identified parts of the large thermal complex at Baiae with the ἡβητήρια; cf. Boriello and D'Ambrosio (1974) 63-9.

laetabatur).⁶⁵⁸ In the second century, Hadrian died at Baiae (*apud ipsas Baias periit*), and was supposedly buried at the *villa Ciceroniana Puteolis*, perhaps implying, as Hirschfeld suggested, that the estate had become imperial property.⁶⁵⁹

Much of this evidence, and that discussed below pertaining to imperial activity, relates to the Julio-Claudian period. This is partly due to the nature and interests of our literary sources: as is well known, we are better equipped with full and reasonably reliable historical or biographical narratives for the Julio-Claudians than for the Flavian period and later, with these sources particularly interested in the salacious activities of the early imperial household.

The reduction of attested imperial residence may also partly reflect reality: later Emperors could favour residence elsewhere, for instance Vespasian at Reate, Domitian at Alba and Hadrian at Tibur, though the third did die at Baiae. But that does not demonstrate that imperial interest or property ownership there declined entirely.⁶⁶⁰ The *Historia Augusta* says of Alexander Severus:⁶⁶¹

in matrem Mamaeam unice pius fuit, ita ut... in Baiano palatium cum stagno, quod Mamaeae nomine hodieque censetur. fecit et alia in Baiano opera magna in honorem adfinium suorum et stagna stupenda admissis mari.

⁶⁵⁸ Tac. *Ann.* 15.51; cf. 15.52 for the *villa Pisonis*, where Nero was accustomed to spend time; Suet. *Ner.* 27.3.

⁶⁵⁹ SHA *Hadr.* 25.6-7; Malalas *Chron.* 11.20; cf. SHA *Ant. Pius* 7.11 and Hirschfeld (1902-3) 65. D'Arms (1970) 106 with n.154 (cf. Maiuro (2012) 280) suggests that the burial was invented, citing SHA *Ant. Pius* 5.1 and *Marc.* 6.1 for his burial in Rome. Possibly the property was imperial anyway.

⁶⁶⁰ D'Arms (1970) 109 emphasises continuity.

⁶⁶¹ SHA *Alex. Sev.* 26.9; cf. Amm. *Marc.* 28.4.19. Note Ostrow (1979) for the *palatium*.

Belief in this investment may be encouraged by an unquantified collection of lead pipes found at Baiae stamped with the name of Alexander.⁶⁶² Consequently, Emperors still maintained estates around Baiae in the third century AD, or at least could be imagined as doing so. Thus, some of the essential features of the area would have persisted throughout our period, with consequences for the *classis Misenensis*.

The evidence indicates that the *classis Misenensis* was based in a region of high status and imperial property ownership. Campania, and in the Late Republican and imperial periods Baiae in particular, were closely associated with debauched leisure and luxury.⁶⁶³ The notorious reputation of Baiae could be exploited in Republican politics. It is clear from the 56 BC speech of Cicero in defence of M. Caelius Rufus that to impugn his character the prosecution had accused Caelius of spending time there.⁶⁶⁴ Cicero responded by alluding to Clodia visiting the resort.⁶⁶⁵

This topos persisted into the Augustan period and the first century AD, with the dubious temptations of Baiae and its surrounds a recurring theme in poetry, as a small sample demonstrates. Propertius devoted one poem to persuading Cynthia to leave Baiae, saying: *tu modo quam primum corruptas desere Baias*.⁶⁶⁶ Ovid may refer to this corruption when he comments on its waters, playing on the reputation of the healing waters of Baiae: *non haec, ut fama est, unda salubris erat*.⁶⁶⁷ Writing about *casta Laevina*, Martial said of her trip to Baiae: *coniuge Penelope venit, abit Helene*.⁶⁶⁸

⁶⁶² De Franciscis (1967) 215; noted by D'Arms (1970) 107 n.164; cf. *AE* 1997 308, a pipe found in dredging operations in the waters at Baia in 1923-24: *Imp(eratoris) M(arci) Severi Alexandri Aug(usti)*. For pipes and ownership see below p. 286 with n.1211.

⁶⁶³ D'Arms (1970) 42, 119-21; Lafon (2001) 187-225.

⁶⁶⁴ Cic. *Cael.* 27: *tibi autem, Balbe... qui Baias viderit*; 35: *accusatores quidem libidines, amores, adulteria, Baias, actas...*

⁶⁶⁵ Cic. *Cael.* 38; cf. Cic. *Att.* 1.16.10.

⁶⁶⁶ Prop. 1.11.27.

⁶⁶⁷ Ov. *Ars Am.* 1.258.

⁶⁶⁸ Mart. 1.62.6.

One letter by Seneca listed all the negative associations Baiae held for his construction of the wise man.⁶⁶⁹ Describing some of its worst aspects, he says:⁶⁷⁰

videre ebrios per litora errantes et comessationes navigantium et symphoniarum cantibus strepentes lacus et alia quae velut soluta legibus luxuria non tantum peccat sed publicat, quid necesse est?

Thus, Baiae was a place to avoid, because *illum sibi celebrandum luxuria desumpsit*.⁶⁷¹

We can offer some evidence for Julio-Claudian Emperors partaking of this luxury, already hinted at in some examples above, or consider how their actions in the *sinus Baianus* or wider Bay of Naples could have been interpreted through this notoreity.⁶⁷² A striking if familiar instance is the construction by Gaius Caligula of a bridge of boats from Puteoli to Baiae/Bauli/Misenum in AD 39.⁶⁷³ The real motivations for the bridge and following processions are much debated, but only that they were considered pieces of extravagant imperial display matters here.⁶⁷⁴

Suetonius essentially highlighted the glorious novelty of the display (*novum praterea atque inauditum genus spectaculi*), as the Emperor rode over the bridge on a

⁶⁶⁹ Sen. *Ep.* 5.51; cf. 5.55.7.

⁶⁷⁰ *Ibid.* 5.51.4.

⁶⁷¹ *Ibid.* 5.51.1.

⁶⁷² For a full collection of the sources for imperial activity in the Bay of Naples, see D'Arms (1970) 73-115.

⁶⁷³ Sen. *Brev. Vit.* 18.5-6; Jos. *AJ* 19.5-6; Suet. *Calig.* 19; Cass. Dio 59.17. Dating based on its position the narrative of Dio: for recent affirmation see Wardle (2007).

⁶⁷⁴ Balsdon (1934) 50-4; D'Arms (1970) 90-2; Purcell in Frederiksen (1984) 336 have emphasised the presence of Parthian hostages including Darius, son of the Parthian king (Suet. *Calig.* 19.2; Cass. Dio 59.17.5) to suggest that the event was a declaration of Roman power over the East, or a 'surrogate triumph' (Hurley (1993) 74) celebrating the submission of Artabanus to L. Vitellius in AD 37. This is encouraged by comparisons by Seneca (*Brev. Vit.* 18.5), Suetonius (*Calig.* 19.3) and Dio (59.17.11) to Xerxes bridging the Hellespont. Barrett (1989) 212 presents it as a simple display of autocratic power. Kleijwegt (1994) suggests that the event was intended to cement the bonds of Gaius with his soldiers, and to demonstrate these bonds to the Senate. Malloch (2001) understands the event as an example of Alexander *imitatio* (specifically his return from India) to suggest the military victories awaiting Gaius (cf. Edmondson (1992) 164). While this interpretation neatly explains parts of the account of Cassius Dio, it is striking that no source gives this as an object. For other conjectures see Wardle (1994) 194-6. The Gaius literary tradition is so difficult that the event seems impossible to rationalise.

horse and then chariot, armed with sword and shield, bedecked in a gold *chlamys* and accompanied by friends and soldiers.⁶⁷⁵ However, other sources emphasised the madness or megalomania of Gaius. Seneca described his behaviour as *furiosi et externi et infeliciter superbi regis imitatio*, probably alluding to Xerxes and his bridge over the Hellespont.⁶⁷⁶ Josephus introduced the bridge as one of the all but insane deeds of the Emperor: καὶ τᾶλλα ἔπρασεν μανίας οὐδὲν ἀπολελειμμένα.⁶⁷⁷

Dio claimed that dissatisfaction with a normal triumph spurred Gaius to his adventure (Γάιος δὲ ἐκείνης μὲν τῆς πομπῆς οὐδὲν προετίμησεν).⁶⁷⁸ In the particular context of the leisure of the *sinus Baianus*, we should note the feast after the return from Puteoli:⁶⁷⁹

καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο αὐτός τε ἐπὶ τῆς γεφύρας ὥσπερ ἐν νήσῳ τινί, καὶ ἐκεῖνοι ἐν ἑτέροις πλοίοις περιορῶντες, τό τε λοιπὸν τῆς ἡμέρας καὶ τὴν νύκτα πᾶσαν εἰσιτάθησαν... ἐμπλησθεῖς δὲ δὴ καὶ ὑπερκορῆς καὶ σίτου καὶ μέθης γενόμενος συχνούς μὲν τῶν ἐταίρων ἐς τὴν θάλασσαν ἀπὸ τῆς γεφύρας ἔρριψε, συχνούς δὲ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἐν πλοίοις ἐμβόλους ἔχουσι περιπλεύσας κατέδυσεν, ὥστε καὶ ἀπολέσθαι τινάς· οἱ γὰρ πλείους καίπερ μεθύοντες ἐσώθησαν.

The dining and drunkenness described here seems to fit well with the topos of morally dubious Baiae. Thus, while any criticism levelled at Gaius for this extravagance can be largely regarded as part of a tradition hostile to him, one suspects that the particular setting could have contributed to seeing the celebrations as particularly debased.

⁶⁷⁵ Suet. *Calig.* 19.1.

⁶⁷⁶ Sen. *Brev. Vit.* 18.5. Uniquely Malloch (2001) 208-9 (*contra* e.g. Barrett (1989) 212; Edmondson (1992) 166; Wardle (1994) 193) thinks that Alexander could be the allusion, but given the explicit comment by Suetonius (*Calig.* 19.3) that many believed (*scio plerosque existimasse*) in the comparison with Xerxes (*cf.* Cass. Dio 59.17.11), I am tempted to follow the standard view.

⁶⁷⁷ Jos. *AJ* 19.5.

⁶⁷⁸ Cass. Dio 59.17.1.

⁶⁷⁹ Cass. Dio 59.17.8-9; *cf.* Suet. *Calig.* 32.1.

I have mentioned that Nero enjoyed the region; he also murdered his mother there.⁶⁸⁰ We hear of a grand Neronian project to link Avernus to the Tiber and to build a pool from Misenum to Avernus.⁶⁸¹ We shall see that both schemes were considered follies, and the latter is portrayed by Suetonius as devoted to leisure, despite potential practical uses.⁶⁸² Dio records that Nero also put on games at Puetoli for Tiridates, king of Armenia, in AD 66, noting that Patrobius, an imperial freedman, ensured they were a very grand and expensive affair (καὶ τοσαύτη γε τῆ λαμπρότητι καὶ τῆ δαπάνῃ ἐχρήσατο).⁶⁸³

The above suggests that the *sinus Baianus* could be exploited as a place for imperial leisure and display, at least by the Julio-Claudians.⁶⁸⁴ We should be careful not to overplay the hostile topos of degeneracy. A different literary tradition surfaced at the end of the first century AD, if not earlier, which envisioned Baiae as a place of simple loveliness and hot baths.⁶⁸⁵ For instance, Juvenal wrote: *ianua Baiarum est et gratum litus amoeni / secessus*.⁶⁸⁶ On the pleasant bathing environment, Martial could say: *dum nos blanda tenent lasciui stagna Lucrini / et quae pumiceis fontibus antra calent*.⁶⁸⁷ However, even this changed perspective underlines that this was regarded as a region of leisure and consumption: we must take this into account when considering the nature of the base at Misenum, and the possible uses to which the *classis Misenensis* could be put.

⁶⁸⁰ Tac. *Ann.* 14.1-12; Suet. *Ner.* 34.1-4; Cass. Dio 61.12-15; see below pp. 170-1.

⁶⁸¹ Plin. *NH* 14.61; Stat. *Silv.* 4.3.7-8; Tac. *Ann.* 15.42; Suet. *Ner.* 31.3.

⁶⁸² See below pp. 239, 278-9.

⁶⁸³ Cass. Dio 63.3.1.

⁶⁸⁴ See above pp. 160-1.

⁶⁸⁵ Lafon (2001) 257-9. He suggests that overuse of the topos could have killed it, or perhaps the favour shown to the area by successive Emperors improved its reputation. Both proposals seem reasonable.

⁶⁸⁶ Juv. 3.4-5.

⁶⁸⁷ Mart. 4.57.1-2; cf. 11.80.2. See also e.g. Stat. *Silv.* 3.5.96; Plut. *Mar.* 34.1-2. These themes were found earlier e.g. Hor. *Epist.* 1.1.83; Str. 5.4.5.

4.3 Production, Puteoli and communications

The *sinus Baianus* was not devoted wholly to luxury, and we should view its maritime estates and Misenum against a background more richly textured. Consider arguments made, by among others, D'Arms, Lafon and Marzano, that, despite literary traditions, *villae maritimae* were not solely devoted to consumption and idleness but had economic functions, and that Baiae had productive capacities.⁶⁸⁸ The direct archaeological evidence for production at or near Baiae is not abundant: a couple of *piscinae* have been tentatively identified by Borirello and D'Ambrosio by the water near the theatre at Miseno, but I would not make too much of this.⁶⁸⁹ However, we could put this in the context of the fish kept at the former villa of Hortensius mentioned above, partly for display purposes, but perhaps partly for true production.⁶⁹⁰

There are few explicit literary references, probably because of the topos of the luxurious resort. Yet, looking back to the Republican period, Sergius Orata was supposedly the first to exploit the Lucrine for oyster production, which Pliny notes was done *nec gulae causa sed avaritia*.⁶⁹¹ Martial praised the productive *villa Baiana* of Faustinus, contrasting it with the *famis munda* of suburban *villae*.⁶⁹² The precise nature of the property is unclear, though there are references to fishing (*tremulave*

⁶⁸⁸ D'Arms (1981) 82-6; Lafon (2001) 127-86; Marzano (2007) 47-81. On Baiae see also Di Fraia, Lombardo and Scognamiglio (1985-6) 297-8. For a good treatment of the literary traditions about *villae maritimae*, see Marzano (2007) 15-33. Note also Purcell (1995).

⁶⁸⁹ Borriello and D'Ambrosio (1979) 141-2, *cf.* 111.

⁶⁹⁰ On *piscinae* at *villae maritimae* see Marzano (2007) 46-63; *cf.* Lafon (2001) 164-79. Higginbotham (1997) argued that *piscinae* were primarily a form of elite ostentation, but Marzano demonstrates their probable commercial uses.

⁶⁹¹ Val. Max. 9.1.1; Plin. *NH* 9.168-9. For oysters and Baiae or the Lucrine see e.g. Mart. 3.60.3; 13.82; Juv. 4.141; 11.49.

⁶⁹² Mart. 3.58.

captum linea trahit piscem).⁶⁹³ Yet this poem may over-praise the estate, perhaps playing on the traditional association of Baiae with luxury.⁶⁹⁴

Generally, the idea that seawards *villae* could be desirable because of their potential produce is suggested by the oft-cited story of C. Canius, an *eques* who bought a villa near Syracuse because he was presented with a huge number of fishermen using the waters in front of it.⁶⁹⁵ Nor should we fixate on the sea: coastal properties in the *sinus Baianus* could potentially have exploited the fertile slopes rising from the shore, as any traveller to the region will observe is possible. North Adriatic examples will provide comparative evidence for the productive potential of *villae maritimae*.⁶⁹⁶

The potential production taking place at some of the *villae* of the *sinus Baianus* must be placed alongside Puteoli, a hub of commerce and communication, with which both the harbour at Misenum the estates at Baiae probably interacted.⁶⁹⁷ Puteoli lay just over three miles NNE of Misenum. An emporium of great significance during the Late Republican period, it continued in this role well into the Empire.⁶⁹⁸ There is copious evidence for its commercial role. For instance, Cicero commented on the merchants of Puteoli (*mercatores, homines locupletes atque honesti*) whose *socii, liberti* and *conliberti* had supposedly been disrupted in their business by Verres.⁶⁹⁹ Diodorus Siculus discussed how iron from Elba was purchased by merchants and taken to Puteoli and other emporia (ἔμποροι καὶ μεταβαλλόμενοι

⁶⁹³ *Ibid.* 3.58.27.

⁶⁹⁴ Sullivan (1991) 158-9.

⁶⁹⁵ Cic. *Off.* 3.58-9; cf. Cic. *Verr.* 2.5.46.

⁶⁹⁶ See below pp. 198-207.

⁶⁹⁷ For evidence, see D'Arms (1981) 80-1.

⁶⁹⁸ Mommsen in *CIL* X (1883) pp.182-90; Dubois (1907); Frederiksen in *RE* XXIII.2 (1959), s.v. *Puteoli*, 2036-60; Frederiksen (1984) 319-58; L. Corsi in *BTCGI* XIV (1996), 409-68; Jones (2006) 23-46; G. Maria Ida and D. Steuernagel in *Brill's New Pauly* XII (2008), s.v. *Puteoli*, 234-6. See also D'Arms (2003) 230-2, 241-3 for further bibliography.

⁶⁹⁹ Cic. *Verr.* 2.5.154.

κομίζουσιν εἰς τε Δικαιάρχειαν καὶ εἰς τᾶλλα ἐμπόρια) for working and trade.⁷⁰⁰

Strabo described Puteoli as the greatest emporium (ἡ δὲ πόλις ἐμπόριον γεγένηται μέγιστον).⁷⁰¹

Around forty inscriptions from Puteoli indicate commercial or productive activity.⁷⁰² Well-known is the inscription of AD 174 mentioning the members of the Tyrian *statio* at Puteoli, demonstrating the wide-ranging trade networks into which the city was integrated.⁷⁰³ Individual merchants, businessmen and craftsmen are recorded, for instance the second century M. Claudius Trypho, *negotiator vascularius argentarius*.⁷⁰⁴ Other examples include M. Antonius Trophimus, a *negotiator sagarius* and P. Caulius Coeranus, *negotiator ferrariarum et vinariariae*.⁷⁰⁵

The excellent harbour of Puteoli, a gateway to Italy, saw much human traffic. When he returned to Rome from his Sicilian quaestorship, Cicero stopped off at Puteoli.⁷⁰⁶ In the *In Flaccum*, Philo stated that Herod Agrippa was advised by Gaius to sail to Alexandria. He went down to Puteoli, saw Alexandrian ships there, and sailed off on one (καταβάς δ' εἰς Δικαιάρχειαν καὶ ναῦς ὑφόρμους Ἀλεξανδρίδας ἰδὼν εὐτρεπεῖς πρὸς ἀναγωγὴν, ἐπιβάς μετὰ τῶν ἰδίων, εὐπλοία χρησάμενος).⁷⁰⁷ Later, the creation of the Eusebeia at Puteoli by Antoninus Pius brought visitors from

⁷⁰⁰ Diod. Sic. 5.13.2.

⁷⁰¹ Str. 5.4.6. See the bibliography in D'Arms (2003) 242-3. Note also the pozzalana of Puetoli (Str. 5.4.6; Vit. 2.6.1; Sen. *Q Nat.* 3.20.3; Cass. Dio 48.51.3-4) used in harbour construction (Brandon *et al.* (2005) 25; cf. Oleson and Branton (1992) 58-60; Gianfrotta (1996) 74-5 on Sebastos) and production of the pigments *caeruleum* (Vit. 7.11.1; Plin. *NH* 33.161-2) and *purpurissum* (Plin. *NH* 35.45).

⁷⁰² Out of around two thousand inscriptions (excluding *instrumenta* and Christian texts) last examined on the Epigraphik-Datenbank Clauss/Slaby (http://db.edcs.eu/epigr/epi_en.php) on 27/05/2014.

⁷⁰³ *IG* XIV 830; cf. D'Arms (1974).

⁷⁰⁴ *AE* 1996 416.

⁷⁰⁵ *CIL* X 1872, 1931 (= *ILS* 7535).

⁷⁰⁶ Cic. *Planc.* 65.

⁷⁰⁷ Philo *In Flacc.* 27.

the Greek cities of the Panhellenion, as an honorary inscription erected by delegates from Kibyra in Asia Minor shows.⁷⁰⁸

This is but a small sample of presumably thousands of travellers. Anticipating our later discussion on communications, we should note that this coming and going brought a vital commodity: information.⁷⁰⁹ Cicero alluded to this when mentioning a rumour current in Puteoli that Ptolemy was on the throne of Egypt in 55 BC (*Puteolis magnus est rumor Ptolomaeum esse in regno*).⁷¹⁰ Seneca provides important evidence when describing the arrival of the grain fleet at Puteoli. People ran down to the harbour to hear “the news”, Seneca suggesting that information travelled with the grain ships:⁷¹¹

in hoc omnium discursu properantium ad litus magnam ex pigritia mea sensi voluptatem, quod epistulas meorum accepturus non properavi scire quis illic esset rerum meorum status, quid adferrent: olim iam nec perit quicquam mihi nec acquiritur.

The *Alexandrinae naves* which travelled before the fleet were known as *tabellariae* (messenger boats).⁷¹² Kolb has argued that these were not public post-carrying ships, but were called this only because they “announced” the arrival of the fleet.⁷¹³ While she is surely right on the first point, it is possible that they had an informal role in carrying private correspondence, as Seneca could imply. In any case, news travelled with these ships, and we shall see later that even rumours brought by merchants could have significant impacts on behaviour in Rome.

⁷⁰⁸ *SEG* 53 1090 (= *IG* XIV 829 = *SEG* 44 823 = *AE* 2006 315). For bibliography on the festival, see Frederiksen (1984) 348 n.171.

⁷⁰⁹ See below pp. 245-53.

⁷¹⁰ *Cic. Att.* 4.10.1; *cf.* 16.14.1.

⁷¹¹ *Sen. Ep.* 9.77.3.

⁷¹² *Ibid.* 9.77.1.

⁷¹³ Kolb (2000) 201. As previously suggested by Reddé (1986) 400; *contra* Hirschfeld (1905²) 202-3. Rickman (1980) 130 suggests they could be convoy vessels, but how official? Rougé (1966) 266 without evidence posits some connection with the *classis Alexandrina*.

4.4 *Classis milites* in the Bay of Naples

A picture emerges of a sector of the Bay of Naples in which spaces of pleasure and consumption were at the very least linked to those of commerce and production, and into which the *classis Misenensis* was inserted. There is no good evidence for a distinct military sector at Misenum, and indeed such a sector seems difficult to posit given the presence of *villae maritimae* around the harbour itself. That is not to say that the *classis* did not add any military flavour to the area, but that it seems hard to strongly mark off this aspect from the other human activities. I therefore suggest that we should consider the *classis* port not simply as a “naval base”, but a site supporting imperial activity of different kinds in the region. Our literary sources emphasise luxurious consumption and display, but production and imperial interest in communications passing through Puteoli should not be ignored.

The next chapter investigates the last topic. But we should here note the small amount of further literary evidence for *classis* manpower being deployed in the Bay of Naples. Suetonius records that servicemen at Capri waited to smash up the bodies of those thrown down by Tiberius:⁷¹⁴

carnificinae eius ostenditur locus Capreis, unde damnatos post longa et exquisita tormenta praecipitari coram se in mare iubebat, excipiente classiariorum manu et contis atque remis elidente cadavera, ne cui residui spiritus quicquam inesset.

In the light of arguments made in Chapter One, it is notable that these *classiarii* seem to have been equipped with oars. Sticking with violence, alongside the freedman and *praefectus classis Misenensis* Anicetus at the murder of Agrippina were Herculeius, a

⁷¹⁴ Suet. *Tib.* 62.2.

trierarchus and *Obaritus*, a *centurio classarius*.⁷¹⁵ More vaguely, Dio stated that Nero sent Anicetus with some *nautae* (εὐθὺς μετὰ τῶν ναυτῶν ἀπέστειλε).⁷¹⁶ We can reasonably assume that these were *classis* servicemen. More speculatively, while merchant vessels were used by Gaius for his bridge of boats, *classis milites* may have aided its construction.⁷¹⁷

These examples may derive from the hostile tradition generated for the Julio-Claudians, and could select the most distasteful duties entrusted to servicemen. Their typical activities may have been more mundane. Pliny allows us to glimpse a task entrusted to the Claudian *praefectus classis Misensis* Ti. Iulius Optatus.⁷¹⁸ He was instructed to distribute a type of wrasse (*scarus*), normally found in the Carpathian Sea, *inter Ostiensem et Campaniae oram*. Any *scari* caught had to be thrown back for a period of five years, but Pliny implies that fishing was allowed afterwards (*admovitque sibi gula saporis piscibus satis et novum incolam mari dedit*). Such activity should probably not be construed as an attempt to establish commercial fishing grounds, but could be connected with luxury fish rearing at *villae maritimae*, thus suggesting how *classis* activity could have supported the productive character of the Campanian *villae maritimae*.

The examples given so far are few, though more will appear in the following chapter. At this stage, I would emphasise the very presence of *classis* members at the service of Emperors. They were a readily available manpower source of *milites* available to perform *militia* in and around the area of Misenum.

⁷¹⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 14.8; cf. 14.3.

⁷¹⁶ Cass. Dio 61.13.4.

⁷¹⁷ Suet. *Calig.* 19.1: *onerarii naves*; Cass. Dio 59.17.2: *πλοῖα*.

⁷¹⁸ Plin. *NH* 9.62-3; cf. Macrob. *Sat.* 3.16.10.

5. Ravenna

Let us now turn to Ravenna. I shall again begin with traditional approaches to the *classis* base, examining its natural and strategic setting and settlement history based on literary and documentary evidence. This will provide much needed context, but again will yield only a partial understanding of the base. Alongside this, I shall adduce literary evidence suggesting that Julius Caesar, and hence Octavian, may have owned property at Ravenna before the installation of the *classis Ravennas*.

I shall then discuss further evidence for imperial property, and its possible association with the *classis*. In contrast with Misenum, we do not know precisely where the *classis* port was located, nor is the archaeological evidence for *villae maritimae* in the territory of Ravenna especially good. Thus we cannot reasonably show that the port was physically overlooked by imperial property.

However, there is good evidence for Ravennate imperial property, especially the *regio Ravennatium*, and I shall consider epitaphs, inscribed glassware, bricks and tiles mentioning or in some way associated with it. This will suggest that a productive imperial property was located within the region. To further suggest emerging similarities with Misenum, I shall consider Aquileia as a communications hub as a parallel for Puteoli.

I shall then argue that imperial property around Ravenna was not simply productive, but also had resort characteristics by considering literary evidence for imperial residence around the city. This analysis will include a regional element, examining especially Aquileia, to suggest that, as with the *sinus Baianus*, we are dealing with a *classis* base in a region in which there were residential and

hypothetically luxurious imperial properties. Previous studies have rarely imposed this regional perspective on the Ravenna *classis* base, concentrating on the city, or perhaps collecting scattered Adriatic epigraphy in attempts to identify *classis stationes*.⁷¹⁹

That the north Adriatic can be considered a luxurious region will be further suggested by discussion of Altinum and archaeological evidence for luxury Histrian *villae maritimae*, which can reasonably be integrated within this discussion because of links of the peninsula to north eastern Italy.

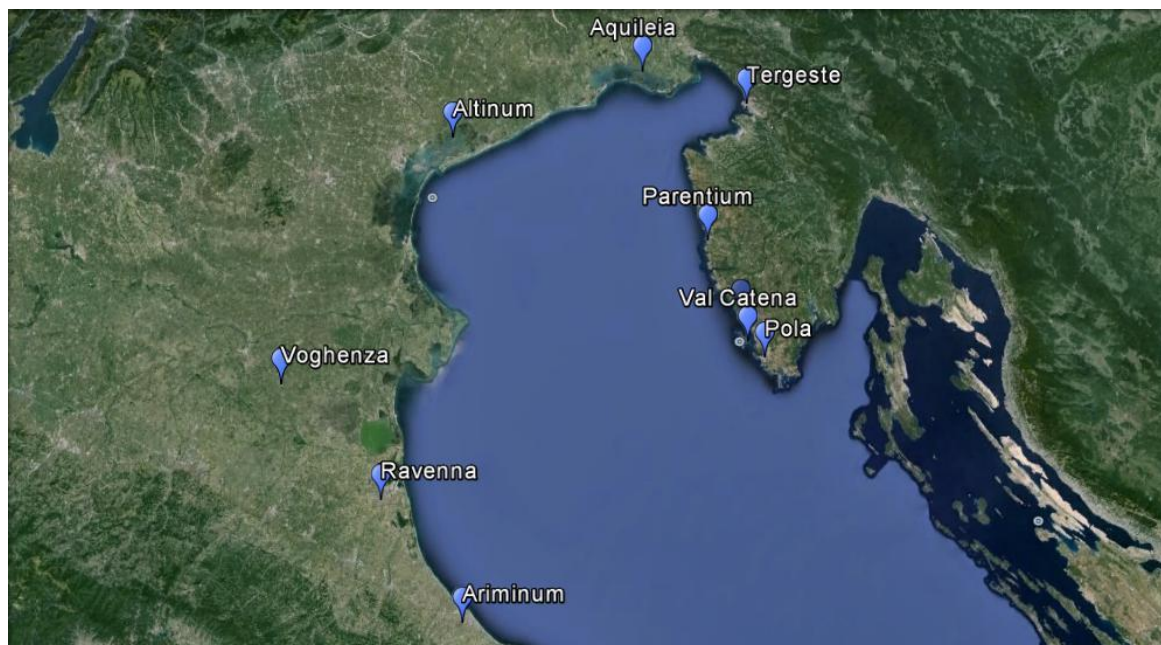


Fig. 3 Ravenna and the North Adriatic (source: Google Maps)

A major limitation to this discussion, to an even greater degree than for Misenum, is the absence of literary references to *classis* activity in the north Adriatic. Therefore, we must rely on sensible hypotheses for the presence of *classis* servicemen, as

⁷¹⁹ E.g. Fiebiger (1894) 334-7; Starr (1960²) 23; Reddé (1986) 213-26.

suggested by epigraphy, at particular places. As such, this section aims to explore the human environment of Ravenna and its region to suggest the sort of activities that the *classis* could have supported, rather than definitively stating what they did. That they could have performed *militia* to the benefit of the Emperor and appropriate to the conditions of the north Adriatic is surely a reasonable proposition, when such activity is attested for the *classis Misenensis*.

5.1 Natural and strategic advantages

We shall begin with the natural qualities of Ravenna and its history as a port and community, to analyse their potential role in its selection as a *classis* base.⁷²⁰ Scholars have argued that the lagoons and marshes around Ravenna provided space for a harbour reserved for the *classis*, while also ensuring that the city was relatively easy to defend, as Procopius would later comment: οὐκ εὐέφοδος δὲ οὔτε ναυσὶν οὔτε πεζῶν στρατῶ φαίνεται οὔσα.⁷²¹

Ravenna was not the best natural harbour on the eastern coast of Italy, with the superior site at Ancona signalled.⁷²² This contrasts with the fine harbour at Misenum, and indicates that the Romans were not looking for one type of harbour for

⁷²⁰ Very much following scholarship traditions. For Ravenna and its *classis*, see esp. Fiebiger (1894) 282-90; Lehmann-Hartleben (1923) 177-8; Starr (1960²) 21-3 and Reddé (1986) 177-86, who catalogues further bibliography, and more recently Bollini (1990); Giacomini (1990); Boschetti (2001); Mauro ed. (2005). For Ravenna in general see Bormann in *CIL* XI (1888), pp. 1-6; Rosenberg in *RE* II.1A (1920), s.v. *Ravenna*, 300-5; Deichmann (1969) and (1989); Susini ed. (1990); Manzelli (2000); Mauro ed. (2001); Cirelli (2008). See also Augenti (2012), concentrating on Classe and Late Antiquity but including further bibliography; cf. Augenti (2010) 43-50; Augenti (2011). Earlier scholarship is compromised by our now better understanding of landscape change in the Po delta, though many older generalisations hold true. For the geology of Ravenna, see Manzelli (2000) 31-8; cf. Uggeri (1975) for the Po delta. I shall not discuss the layout of the city: we have an idea of the main waterways and street layout and there are reasonable hypotheses on the forum location, but little else is certain (Cirelli (2008) 19-50; cf. Deichmann (1989) 24-32).

⁷²¹ Procop. *de Bell.* 5.1.16; Fiebiger (1894) 288; Lehmann-Hartleben (1923) 177; Starr (1960²) 22; Reddé (1986) 177-81, 489. For the marshes see Str. 5.1.7; Plin. *NH* 3.119ff.

⁷²² See above p. 153.

their *classis* bases, a diversity already noted by Reddé.⁷²³ But its strategic regional position with respect to travel across the top of the Adriatic perhaps overrode any disadvantages. Ravenna lay south of the main branch of the river Po, at one end of a system of rivers, lagoons and canals running to Altinum: *diductus in flumina et fossas inter Ravennam Altinumque per CXX*.⁷²⁴

The use of these waterways, advantageous because of the protection they offered from the open sea, is suggested by the *Itinerarium Antonini*, thought to be based on a Severan original.⁷²⁵ A journey between Ravenna and Aquileia is described thus:⁷²⁶

ab Arminio recto
 itinere Ravenna m.p. XXIII,
 inde navigatur
 Septem Maria
 Altinum us-
 que,
 inde Concordia m.p. XXXI
 Aquileia m.p. XXXI.

The use of *navigare* for the journey between Ravenna and Altinum implies regular boat travel. Moreover, Herodian described how horsemen, travelling between Aquileia and Ravenna with the head of Maximinus Thrax, sailed through the marshlands between Altinum and Ravenna: ὡς δὲ διέπλευσαν τὰς τε λίμνας καὶ τὰ τενάγη <τὰ> μεταξύ Ἀλτίνου καὶ Ῥαβέννης.⁷²⁷ Later, the Emperor Pupienus

⁷²³ Reddé (1986) 150. Similarly Wickert (1949-50) 104.

⁷²⁴ Plin. *NH* 3.120-1; cf. Uggeri (1975) 68-74, 160-9 and (1987) 337-47; Bosio (1991) 237-49; Ortalli (2007) 346 n.1 for further bibliography. On Altinum, a *municipium* on the north-western edge of the Venetian lagoon, see esp. Mela 2.62; Vitruvius 1.4.11; Strabo 5.1.7; Plin. *NH* 3.126 with Hülsen in *RE* I (1891), s.v. *Altinum*, 1697-8; Nissen in *Ital. Landes*. II.1 222-3; Scarfi and Tombolani (1985); Denti (1991) 115-27.

⁷²⁵ Cuntz (1929); Dilke (1985) 125-8; Löhberg (2006).

⁷²⁶ Cuntz (1929) p.18 126.5-9.

⁷²⁷ Hdn. 8.6.5.

Maximus went from Ravenna to Aquileia through the lagoons known as the *Septem Maria*, mentioned in the *Itinerarium* and by Pliny.⁷²⁸

Although there is no clear evidence for travel along this course in our period, its avoidance is hard to believe. As for the passage to Aquileia, Bosio rightly notes that the *Itinerarium* suggests a return to land after Altinum.⁷²⁹ This is supported by, for example, the *Tabula Peutingeriana*, which shows a route from Ariminum to Altinum via Ravenna, and one going further to Aquileia.⁷³⁰

However, Bosio and others have suggested that inland waterways could have been used up to Aquileia, citing for instance Procopius on the similar lagoonal landscape found between there and Ravenna, and a letter of Cassiodorus which suggests that transport between Histria and Ravenna could follow watery channels.⁷³¹ Yet the total lack of evidence for such travel before the sixth century AD encourages greater caution, potentially indicating that a land route was previously preferred.

I have emphasised the possibilities offered by inland waterways because of the greater scope these would offer for *classis* activity, either in transport or control. Nonetheless, the *classes* were not tied to the water. The general significance of the route from Ravenna to Aquileia, and its relationship to the *classis*, may be suggested by the presence of servicemen at both ends, at least in the first half of the first century

⁷²⁸ Hdn. 8.7.1: Μάξιμος ἀπὸ τῆς Ῥαβέννης <ἀπ>άρας ἐπέστη Ἀκυληία, διαβάς τὰ τενάγη, ἃ ὑπὸ τε Ἡριδανοῦ ποταμοῦ πληρούμενα καὶ τῶν περικειμένων ἐλῶν ἐπτὰ στόμασιν ἐς θάλασσαν ἐκχεῖται· ἔνθεν καὶ τῆ...φωνῆ καλοῦσιν οἱ ἐπιχώριοι Ἑπτὰ πελάγη τὴν λίμνην ἐκείνην; cf. Plin. *NH* 3.119: *qua largius (Padus) vomit Septem Maria dictus facere*.

⁷²⁹ Bosio (1991) 243.

⁷³⁰ *Tab. Peut.* III.IV-V. Commonly referred to as the *via Popillia-Annia* because of milestones attesting a *via Annia* at Aquileia (*CIL* V 7992, 7992a (= *ILS* 5860)), and a sandstone distance marker from near Adria reading *P(ublius) Popillius C(ai) f(ilius) / co(n)s(ul) / LXXXI (CIL I² 637 (= V 8007 = *ILS* 5807 = *ILLRP* 453))*. There is much dispute over the route and date of the *via Annia* in particular: for a summary with major bibliography see Bosio (1991) 69-70. Note also Panciera (1957) 49-52; Wiseman (1970) 128-30; Chevallier (1976) 136-7.

⁷³¹ Procop. *de Bell.* 5.1.19-23; Cassiod. *Var.* 12.24 e.g. *nam cum ventis saevientibus mare fuerit clausum, via vobis panditur per amoenissima fluviorum*. For further discussion and evidence see Panciera (1957) 48 n.8; Uggeri (1975) 74 and (1987) 343-4; Bosio (1991) 243-8.

AD.⁷³² *Classis milites* at Aquileia in the Augustan or Julio-Claudian period included a *Daza Panetis f(i)lius*), the *centurio Liccaeus Verzonis f(i)lius*) and two brothers, a *trierarchus* and a *centurio*.⁷³³ A funerary monument for a Sestia was set up by a *tr(ierarchus) [d]e lib(urna) Aug(usta)*.⁷³⁴ A *missicus ex classe*, L. Decimius Scava, possibly settled there.⁷³⁵ Similarly, the *veteranus ex classe Sex(tus) Baebius Bai f(i)lius*) may have stayed at Aquileia after service, erecting a dedication.⁷³⁶ The epitaph of L. Trebius Ruso comes from Aquileia.⁷³⁷ Possibly slightly later is that for the *centurio* M. Mevius Telephus.⁷³⁸ A very fragmentary inscription may commemorate a *gubernator* of a trireme.⁷³⁹

We cannot know how long these men stayed at Aquileia, or precisely how many servicemen were present at a given time. But, as Panciera suggested in 1978, their range of ranks suggests a detachment, and possible local settlement by veterans could indicate lengthy stays.⁷⁴⁰

A couple of epitaphs from along the route suggest at least the occasional presence of *classis* servicemen. A likely Julio-Claudian epitaph from Portus Lipientiae mentions two servicemen, *Batola Dionis f(i)lius*) and *Paius Verzonis f(i)lius*).⁷⁴¹ C. Turellius Rufus was commemorated at Altinum by another *classis miles*,

⁷³² Panciera (2006a), where the evidence is collected.

⁷³³ Append. 23-5.

⁷³⁴ Append. 11.

⁷³⁵ Append. 33.

⁷³⁶ *InscrAqu* III 3490 (= *CIL* V 774 = *ILS* 3120; cf. *AE* 1972 193): *Domnab(us) / sacrum / Sex(tus) Baebius / Bai f(i)lius) vet(eranus) ex classe / vestiarius / v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito)*.

⁷³⁷ Append. 39.

⁷³⁸ *InscrAqu* II 2822 (= *AE* 1972 199): *M(arcus) Mevius / Praxiai f(i)lius) Telephus / ((centurio) classicus / l(ocus) q(uadratus) p(edum) XVI*. Especially because of the early character of other *classis* epitaphs from Aquileia, one could place this inscription, either commemorating a veteran or a man who received citizenship for reasons unknown during service, among the pre-Flavian epitaphs; see Panciera (2006a) 1349-50.

⁷³⁹ *InscrAqu* II 2824 (= *CIL* V 960): *[---] signa [---] / [---] guber[nator---] / [---de] III Croco[dilo---] / [---]sic[---]*.

⁷⁴⁰ Panciera (2006a) 1351; similarly but less clearly argued by Fiebiger (1894) 334; Kienast (1966) 128; Reddé (1986) 215; *contra* Starr (1960²) 23.

⁷⁴¹ Append. 15.

Q. Spedius Mercator, probably in the second century AD.⁷⁴² Although the evidence is very limited, I am tempted to regard as particularly significant the presence of these men at the terminus of the inland waterways between Ravenna and Altinum. They could be connected with control of this route, or imperial movement along it.⁷⁴³

Regardless of the explanation for the epitaphs at Portus Lipientiae and Altinum, the *classis* servicemen at Ravenna and Aquileia suggest the potential for controlling a route of strategic significance, given its almost certain exploitation for military activity towards the north and east, especially in the early empire. Indeed, because of its position, Starr suggested that Ravenna would have been ‘an excellent supply base for war in the eastern hinterland of the Adriatic’, the installation of the *classis* a ‘preliminary step’ towards the Alpine and Danubian campaigns of Augustus.⁷⁴⁴ We shall see that Augustus placed himself at Ravenna and Aquileia during some of these.⁷⁴⁵

The seizure of Ravenna in the civil wars of AD 69 and 193 indicates its later strategic significance as a gateway to Italy, though our sources emphasise control of

⁷⁴² *CIL* V 8819: *D(is) M(anibus) / C(aio) Turellio Ruff]o / III Venere n(atione) Sard(us) / v(ixit) a(nnos) XLV m(ilitavit) a(nnos) XXV / Q(uintus) Spedius Mercator / ex ead(em) h(eres) b(ene) m(erenti) p(osuit)*.

⁷⁴³ Imperial interest in the route may be suggested by the *fossa Augusta* and *fossa Flavia* (Plin. *NH* 3.119-20), the former connecting Ravenna to the main branch of the Po, the latter probably found to the south of m. Chioggia. The former is frequently associated with the installation of the *classis Ravennas* (e.g. Nissen in *Ital. Landes.* I 205; Starr (1960²) 21-2; Uggeri (1975) 68-9, 165-8 and (1987) 339-40; Reddé (1986) 178; Cirelli (2008) 19-20. See also Weiss in *RE* VII, (1912), *s.v. fossa*, 74; Zaffagnini (1969); Bosio (1991) 241). On the *fossa Flavia* see Nissen in *Ital. Landes.* I 205; Philipp in *RE* XVII (1937), *s.v. Neronia*, 48; Bosio (1970) 45 n.14; Uggeri (1987) 341. Less convincing is the attribution of a *fossa Clodia* (Plin. *NH* 3.120) to Claudius (e.g. Bosio (1970) 47; Uggeri (1975) 69 and (1987) 341; Cracco Rugini (1987) 250; Buchi (2002) 86; *contra* Nissen, *Ital. Landes.* I 206-7: Republican; Tassaix (2005) 159-60: project of the local Clodii), while Philipp’s suggestion (*RE* XVII (1937), *s.v. Neronia*, 48, followed by e.g. Bosio (1970) 45; Uggeri (1975) 69-70 and (1987) 341) of the existence of a *fossa Neronia* based on the *statio Neronia* of the *Tabula Peutingeriana* (*Tab. Peut.* IV-V) is pure speculation.

⁷⁴⁴ Starr (1960²) 22; drawing on Fiebiger (1894) 282-3; broadly followed by Wickert (1949-50) 104; Reddé (1986) 350 and (2001) 43-7; Boschetti (2001) 225; Manzelli (2005) 39; Panciera (2006a) 1351. See Šašel (1975/6) for sources pertaining to these campaigns

⁷⁴⁵ See below pp. 194-5.

the *classis*.⁷⁴⁶ We have already encountered and will see more of this evidence, but two statements of Tacitus are worth citing here. When Caecina abandoned the Vitellian cause, he pretended that he intended to address the *classis* at Ravenna (*ipse Ravennam devertit praetexto classem adloquendi*), suggesting that the *classis* was the object of any military interest in the city.⁷⁴⁷ Secondly, note an action of Antonius Primus and the Flavians, before they had heard of the defection of the *classis Ravennas* in AD 69: *relictum Altini praesidium adversus classis Ravennatis <conatus>*.⁷⁴⁸ This may again imply that the presence of the *classis* gave Ravenna its importance. The placement of a garrison at Altinum is particularly striking, given the discussed connections between the two cities. Overall, the interest in the *classis*, rather than Ravenna itself, may indicate that it was only with the introduction of the former that the latter realised its strategic import.

5.2 A Republican naval base?

This was so despite Ravenna being a true municipality before the creation of the *classis* base, in contrast with Misenum.⁷⁴⁹ In his defence of Balbus from 56 BC, Cicero shows that before the Social War it was a *civitas foederata*: *Cn. Pompeius pater rebus Italico bello maximis gestis P. Caesium...Ravennatem foederato ex populo nonne civitate donavit?*⁷⁵⁰ Whether its status changed following the war but prior to grants of citizenship by Caesar in 49 BC has been debated, though the

⁷⁴⁶ See below pp. 221-2, 229.

⁷⁴⁷ Tac. *Hist.* 2.100.

⁷⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 3.6.

⁷⁴⁹ See above p. 154 with n.629.

⁷⁵⁰ Cic. *Balb.* 50; cf. Susini (1967b) 363-4.

outcome matters little here.⁷⁵¹ It had municipal status by the Augustan period, its status attested by multiple inscriptions dated, if none precisely, from the first to third centuries AD.⁷⁵²

Yet little implies the strategic value or maritime role of this city before the triumviral period. Scholars have noted its pre-imperial use for ship construction, and relatedly its role in the timber trade.⁷⁵³ Some sources suggest that the Po valley was well-supplied with pine trees suitable for ship building.⁷⁵⁴ According to Pliny, Metrodorus of Scepsis claimed the Po (Padus) received its name from the Gallic word for pine trees: *quoniam circa fontem arbor multa sit picea, quales Gallice vocentur padi*.⁷⁵⁵ A funerary inscription of the late first century BC commemorates P. Longidienus, *faber navalis*.⁷⁵⁶ In 38 BC, Octavian brought warships from Ravenna to Puteoli and Brundisium in readiness for attacking Sextus Pompeius (ναῦς τε μακρὰς ἐκ Ῥαβέννης καὶ στρατὸν ἐκ τῆς Κελτικῆς καὶ παρασκευὴν ἄλλην ἐς τὸ

⁷⁵¹ For a summary see Luzzatto (1968) 298-300.

⁷⁵² *CIL* XI 19, 27, 43, 124, 126, 128, 129, 131, 352. I follow Luzzatto (1968) 290-2, who builds on arguments made by Susini and Degrassi, in rejecting the thesis of Bormann (*CIL* XI (1888), p. 6; followed by Rosenberg in *RE* II.1A (1920), *s.v. Ravenna*, 303; Starr (1960²) 22; C. Heuke in *Brill's New Pauly* XII (2008), *s.v. Ravenna*, 418) that Ravenna technically qualified as a *municipium* but lacked internal jurisdiction, and resembled a *vicus*. This was based on the absence of evidence for municipal *IIIviri* at Ravenna. *CIL* XI 863, a funerary monument from Mutina, mentions a *IIIvir aed(ilicia) pot(estate) et mag(ister) mun(icipii) / Raven(natis)*. Based on this inscription and following *Not. Dign. Oc.* 42.7 (*praefectus classis Ravennatum cum curis eiusdem civitatis*), Bormann believed that the *praefectus classis* had authority over Ravenna, assisted by *aediles* and the *magister municipii*. However, as Luzzatto notes, the fifth century *Notitia* is no sure guide for earlier municipal arrangements. He also sensibly argues that the very idea of a *municipium* carried with it notions of autonomy and internal jurisdiction. The *magister municipii* is problematic, but alternatives of *magister muneris* or *munerum Ravennae* have been offered (see Luzzatto (1968) 297-8) for bibliography). For agreement see e.g. Susini (1990) 133-4; Manzelli (2000) 27. Possible veteran settlement at Ravenna is attested by Strabo (5.1.11), perhaps Caesarian or Triumviral (note Keppie (1983) 54), but despite Christie and Gibson (1988) 191-2; Susini (1988) and (1990) 133; Manzelli (2000) 26 nothing really suggests that Ravenna received colonial status.

⁷⁵³ For shipbuilding and the Ravennate economy, see Starr (1960²) 22; Meiggs (1982) 354-5; Deichmann (1989) 239. Note the use of wood in Ravennate buildings: Str. 5.1.7: ξυλοπαγῆς ὄλη; Vitr. 2.9.11: *est autem maxime id considerare Ravennae, quod ibi omnia opera et publica et privata sub fundamentis eius generis habeant palos*. See also Vitr. 2.9.14-16 for larch distribution.

⁷⁵⁴ See Meiggs (1982) 151, 354-5 for full details.

⁷⁵⁵ Plin. *NH* 3.122; cf. Cassiod. *Var.* 5.17.

⁷⁵⁶ *CIL* XI 139 (= *ILS* 7725 = *AE* 1972 185).

Βρεντέσιον...)⁷⁵⁷ He then had triremes built at Rome and Ravenna for the same purpose (τριήρεις δὲ ἑτέρας ἐν Ῥώμῃ καὶ ἐν Ῥαβέννῃ προσέτασσε γίνεσθαι).⁷⁵⁸ Such ‘previous naval activity’ might, as Starr posited, have encouraged the choice of Ravenna as a base.⁷⁵⁹

Otherwise little indicates that a “military port” existed at Republican Ravenna, despite claims to the contrary.⁷⁶⁰ Bollini has cited the description by Appian of Metellus Pius sailing round to Ravenna from the area of the river Aesis in 82 BC to sieze territory in Cispadana for the Sullans: καὶ Μέτελλος ἐπὶ Ῥάβενναν περιπλέων τὴν Οὐριτανὴν χώραν, πεδιάδα καὶ πυροφόρον οὔσαν, προκατελάμβανεν.⁷⁶¹ However, given the lack of other evidence for the strategic significance of Republican Ravenna, I am inclined to follow Vattuone, who argued that Ravenna was used as a landing point because Ariminum, the really significant regional city at the time, was occupied by Marian forces.⁷⁶²

One might note that Ravenna *was* the last place under the authority of Julius Caesar during his Gallic command (καὶ τῆς Καίσαρος ἀρχῆς τελευταία).⁷⁶³ This could indicate some strategic value, if only one dependant on the formulation of his *provincia*. But this does not demonstrate, as Reddé presumed, that Caesar ‘avait sans doute utilisé le port de Ravenne’.⁷⁶⁴

Caesar did spend several periods there during his Gallic campaigns. In a letter to Lentulus Spinther from December 54 BC referring to events of 56 BC, Cicero

⁷⁵⁷ App. *B Civ.* 5.78.

⁷⁵⁸ *Ibid.* 5.80.

⁷⁵⁹ Starr (1960²) 22.

⁷⁶⁰ E.g. Lehmann-Hartleben (1923) 177; Bollini (1990) 298; Reddé (1986) 177-8, 489, 491; *cf.* Gnoli (2012) 158.

⁷⁶¹ App. *B Civ.* 1.89. Bollini (1990) 298; similarly Manzelli (2005) 39. On τὴν Οὐριτανὴν χώραν see Strachan-Davidson (1902) 91-2; *contra* Gabba (1967²) 236-7, followed by Vattuone (1990) 58.

⁷⁶² Vattuone (1990) 58. For the occupation of Ariminum, see e.g. App. *B Civ.* 1.67, 87; *cf.* Mansuelli (1941) 25-6 on the strategic significance of Ariminum and below p. 252.

⁷⁶³ App. *B Civ.* 2.32.

⁷⁶⁴ Reddé (1986) 177.

stated that Pompey and Caesar met at Luca, with the latter already annoyed at Cicero: *Caesar, quippe qui etiam Ravennae Crassum ante vidisset ab eoque in me esset incensus.*⁷⁶⁵ Cicero himself appears to have visited Caesar at Ravenna in the winter of 53-2 BC, revealing that he had offered some help to ensure that Caesar would be allowed to stand for his second consulship.⁷⁶⁶ In 51 BC, Caelius mentioned to Cicero that T. Munatius Plancus Bursa, a supporter of Clodius driven into exile by Cicero, had gone to Ravenna and received gifts from Caesar (*Plancus quidem tuus Ravennae est et magno congiario donatus a Caesare*).⁷⁶⁷

Additionally, it is well known that Caesar waited in Ravenna during negotiations with the Senate before crossing the Rubicon.⁷⁶⁸ His repeated visits to Ravenna need not indicate military significance, but rather that the city was the sort of place that an ex-consul would spend his time, possibly indicating that it possessed resort characteristics.

It is even possible that Caesar resided there because he possessed Ravennate property. Suetonius mentioned that, when Caesar had stopped at Ravenna (*conventibusque peractis Ravennae substitit*) to wait for the senate to make its move, he was considering building a gladiator school there (*et formam, qua ludum gladiatorium erat aedificaturus, consideravit*).⁷⁶⁹ While we lack absolute confirmation, the residence of Caesar in Ravenna on several occasions could support this tantalising hint that he owned land there. Importantly, this property would have passed to Octavian. Although proof is impossible, we can cautiously hypothesise that the

⁷⁶⁵ Cic. *Fam.* 1.9.9.

⁷⁶⁶ Cic. *Att.* 7.1.4: *nam ut illi hoc liceret adiuvi, rogatus ab ipso Ravennae de Caelio tribuno pl. ab ipso autem?* with Shackleton Bailey (1968) 279; cf. Florus 1.45.22, where Caesar was at Ravenna holding a levy in early 52 BC.

⁷⁶⁷ Cic. *Fam.* 8.1.4; Bursa: *MRR* II 235.

⁷⁶⁸ Caes. *B Civ.* 1.5.2; Suet. *Iul.* 30-1; App. *B Civ.* 2.32-4; Oros. 6.15.2.

⁷⁶⁹ Suet. *Iul.* 30.1, 31.1.

presence of Caesarian property locally could have had some influence on the installation of the *classis* at Ravenna.

In sum, Ravenna appears to have had some strategic value through its position at one end of a route to Altinum and Aquileia, the latter a launchpad for campaigns towards the Danube and Alps. Chapter Four will bring the *via Flaminia* into the debate, to further suggest the role of Ravenna in a significant regional communications network. However, it is not clear that the history of Ravenna did much to suggest the placement of a *classis* base there, either because this strategic value had previously been recognised or because it had prior significance as a military port.

5.3 Ravenna and imperial estates: the *regio Ravennatum*

While not denying the value of the above, or the natural advantages of Ravenna, we should look elsewhere to better understand the base of the *classis Ravennas*. Ortalli has implicitly connected imperial property interests in the Po delta to provisioning of Ravenna and its *classis*.⁷⁷⁰ Maiuro has loosely suggested that imperial holdings at Ravenna may have been connected with the port.⁷⁷¹ Given the apparent consequence of imperial property around Misenum, we should explore whether the relationship between the *classis Ravennas* and imperial property was a substantial one, and how such property may affect our perception of the *classis* base.

⁷⁷⁰ Ortalli (2007) 338.

⁷⁷¹ Maiuro (2012) 171.

Uncertainty over the location of the *classis* port provides serious obstacles. The only direct literary evidence comes from the sixth century AD *Getica* of Jordanes, apparently citing Dio:⁷⁷²

a meridie item ipse Padus, quem Italiae soli fluviorum regem dicunt, cognomento Eridanus, ab Augusto imperatore latissima fossa demissus, qui septima sui alvei parte per mediam influit civitatem, ad ostia sua amoenissimum portum praebens, classem ducentarum quinquaginta navium Dione referente tutissima dudum credebatur recipere statione.

However, it is not clear which port Jordanes refers to, nor can we ascertain whether significant changes took place between the Augustan period and, at the earliest, the third century AD.⁷⁷³ Reddé noted that we do not know whether the number of ships mentioned includes only military vessels, or if a commercial harbour was under discussion.⁷⁷⁴ Even if Jordanes did accurately describe the *classis* base, given our generally poor knowledge of the archaeology of first and second century AD Ravenna, it is very difficult to place the harbour in an urban context.

Nonetheless, the Augustan “naval base” has been hypothetically located to the south of Ravenna, at modern Classe.⁷⁷⁵ This, Starr suggested, was a lagoon port with a *castra*, connected by canal to Ravenna and the Po.⁷⁷⁶ Reddé analysed archaeological evidence confirming port structures at the Fiumi Uniti to the north of Sant’Apollinare in Classe, alongside remains identified as the *castra*.⁷⁷⁷ He rightly expressed a great deal of scepticism, noting that excavations were conducted without regard to

⁷⁷² Jord. *Get.* 29.150.

⁷⁷³ Sources mention several ports from different eras: for details see Reddé (1986) 183-6; Cirelli (2008) 28-9.

⁷⁷⁴ Reddé (1986) 183.

⁷⁷⁵ Fiebiger (1894) 287-8; Rosenberg in *RE IA* (1914), s.v. *Ravenna*, 302; Lehmann-Hartleben (1923) 177-8; Starr (1960²) 21; Wickert (1949-50) 105; Susini (1967a) 367; Bollini (1968) 34.

⁷⁷⁶ Starr (1960²) 21.

⁷⁷⁷ Reddé (1986) 179-82, including the most important bibliography on the port. For the *castra* see Lanciani in *NSA* (1881), 315.

chronology, and that the *castra* may instead be a *horrea*.⁷⁷⁸ There was a port at Classe, but we do not know whether it operated in our period.

More recently, the Augustan port has been located to the south of the Porta Aurea, in an inner basin posited to the south west of Ravenna.⁷⁷⁹ Major restructuring and movement of port activity to the south are thought to have come with the end of the first century AD.⁷⁸⁰ However, this hypothesis has been criticised by Cirelli.⁷⁸¹ It is based primarily on two shafts of 1.5m diameter sunk in 1968 and studied by Roncuzzi and Bermond Montanari, in which, below a grey clay deposit, material datable to up to the second half of the first century AD was found at depths of 5.7-7.5m. This included broken ceramics, bricks, plaster and other rubbish, and was interpreted as a fill, perhaps relating to port reorganisation.⁷⁸² Combining this with some manual penetrometric surveys, whose value, according to Cirelli, ‘è più che discutibile’, a harbour basin of 650m in diameter was identified.⁷⁸³ This basin may have existed, though our constantly changing views on the landscape of Roman Ravenna advise caution. However, the evidence does not identify an Augustan military port.

Thus, in contrast with Misenum, it is impossible to directly connect the harbour area with any known *villae*, archaeological evidence for which around Ravenna, imperial or otherwise, is limited.⁷⁸⁴ The most significant *villa maritima* known, occupied from the Augustan period until the fourth century, lay just to the

⁷⁷⁸ Reddé (1986) 182-3; cf. Augenti (2012) 50: no evidence for barracks.

⁷⁷⁹ Bermond Montanari (1990) 240-1; Manzelli (2000) 164-5; Maioli (2001) 219-20; Heucke in *Brill's New Pauly* XII (2008), s.v. *Ravenna*, 408 with map on 409-10, inexplicably locating the *castra* within the city walls.

⁷⁸⁰ Bermond Montanari (1990) 241; Manzelli (2000) 234; Maioli (2001) 220.

⁷⁸¹ Cirelli (2008) 27-8.

⁷⁸² See esp. Bermond Montanari (1990) 240-1; Manzelli (2000) 164-5.

⁷⁸³ Bermond Montanari (1990) 240; Manzelli (2000) 164; Cirelli (2008) 27.

⁷⁸⁴ Scagliarini Corlàita (1968); Lafon (2001) 442 and 441 fig. 175; cf. Deichmann (1989) 225. For a recent summary, see Maiuro (2012) 171-2, 331-5.

north at Agosta.⁷⁸⁵ The modern name, apparently derived from the ancient toponym *Augusta* of the *Tabula Peutingeriana*, is sometimes connected with the *fossa Augusta*.⁷⁸⁶ However, one wonders about the influence of imperial ownership.

To the west of other remains there, set over a large area, Uggeri described the remnants of large pillars for supporting a roof, perhaps for a wooden building, interpreted as a place for drying ceramics.⁷⁸⁷ Furnaces have not been excavated, but waste associated with brick or tile production is attested.⁷⁸⁸ A large but unquantified number of *Pansiana* tiles dating from the Late Republic to the second century AD were found, the local production of which could indicate imperial ownership.⁷⁸⁹

Inauspicious beginnings are countered by epigraphy suggesting a large regional imperial property, or collection of properties, in the Po delta, usually regarded as within the administrative orbit of Ravenna.⁷⁹⁰ Voghenza is frequently regarded as the administrative seat for one or multiple adjacent imperial estates.⁷⁹¹ From there came perhaps the most important evidence for imperial possessions at Ravenna. This is a late second or early third century AD epitaph naming Atilia Primitiva, *coniunx* of *Herma Augg(ustorum) verna*, who was *disp(ensator) region(is/-*

⁷⁸⁵ Uggeri (1973); (1975) esp. 136-7; (1989) 71-6; see also Lafon (2001) 442 FE 1; Maiuro (2012) 334. Note Scagliarini Corlàita (1968) 40 no.1 and Lafon (2001) 442 RA 1 for traces of another littoral villa at the Isola di Palazzolo, south east of Agosta.

⁷⁸⁶ *Tab. Peut.* V.1; see Uggeri (1973) 176; Maiuro (2012) 334.

⁷⁸⁷ Uggeri (1973) 175 and (1989) 74-5.

⁷⁸⁸ Uggeri (1973) 175-6 and (1975) 136.

⁷⁸⁹ Uggeri (1973) 177 and (1975) 136-7; Maiuro (2012) 334; though *cf.* below pp. 189-90.

⁷⁹⁰ Pupillo in *SupIt* 17 (1999), 132-3 has details and bibliography. The evidence seems very limited: three inscriptions (*CIL* V 2394, 2437; *AE* 1999 705 (= *SupIt Ferrara* no.9) from the delta area commemorate members of the *Camilia* tribe, into which the citizens of Ravenna were placed.

⁷⁹¹ Uggeri (1975) 104-12; Bollini (1989) 220; Pupillo in *SupIt* 17 (1999), pp. 133-4; Ortalli (2007) 337 and 346 n.3 for further bibliography; Maiuro (2012) 332. Suggested by several local inscriptions (c. 1 AD – c. 2 AD) attesting imperial freedmen (*CIL* V 2410-1; *SupIt* 17 *Ferrara* nos.4-5, possibly 24-6). for discussion see Mansuelli (1967) 10-11; Uggeri (1975) 74-9; *cf.* Pupillo (2006). Note also from Voghiera, close to Voghenza, the first century AD *SupIt* 17 *Ferrara* no.3: *Halus Augustae saltuarius*; *cf.* *CIL* V 2386 from Vigarano, west of Ferrara: *Fronto / Ti(beri) Claudii Caesaris / Aug(usti) Germanici / dispe(n)sator...*

um) *Padan(ae) Vercellensium Ravennatium*.⁷⁹² Thus, a *regio*, a unit of patrimonial land encompassing several estates, which incorporated territory near Ravenna.⁷⁹³

Further evidence confirms the existence of this *regio Ravennatium*. A stamp on a glass balsamarium (type Is.82) from the early third century AD, found at the necropolis of Porta Palio near Verona, reads: *patrimoni [f(iscus)] rat(ionis) / reg(ionis) Raven(natium)*.⁷⁹⁴ A second balsamarium from the same site was stamped: *vec(tigal) monopolium p(atrimoni) Imp(eratoris) Caes(aris) M(arci) Antonini*.⁷⁹⁵ At the centre of the stamp was a monogram interpreted as *Rave(nna?)*. Seven balsamaria of the second type, dating from the mid-second century AD to the early third, are also known from Ugozzolo near Parma, Adria and Milan.⁷⁹⁶ Thus, probably by the second century AD, there was a distinct imperial *regio Ravennatium* where these balsamaria and perhaps their contents were produced.⁷⁹⁷

Tile and brick stamps of the first two centuries AD, made locally in imperial workshops, suggest that this *regio*, or at least sites around Ravenna, could have produced ceramics.⁷⁹⁸ These have been much discussed; just a couple of the most

⁷⁹² *CIL* V 2385 (= *ILS* 1509); cf. *SupIt* 17 pp.142-4 for full bibliography.

⁷⁹³ On *regiones* see Schulten (1896) 41-4, 68-9; Bollini (2007); Maiuro (2012) 173-4. Much debated is whether this estate extended from Ravenna to Vercelli in Piedmont (Mommsen in *CIL* V (1877), p. 736; see recently Righini (1997) with bibliography) or was more localised, with an unknown Vercelli in the Po delta (beginning with Passeri, who published the inscription in 1765 in *Monumenta Ferrariensa*; modern proponents include Mansuelli (1967) 10-12, 150-1; Uggeri (1975) 78-9). For a history of the debate, see Visser Travagli (1985²) 290-7; cf. Ortalli (2007) 341-2. New evidence is needed to resolve a controversy enduring over two and a half centuries.

⁷⁹⁴ *AE* 1994 712a.

⁷⁹⁵ *AE* 1994 712b.

⁷⁹⁶ Ugozzolo: Frova (1971); Adria: Bonomi (1996) 77 no.144; Milan: Sannazaro *et al.* (1998) 79-81. See also Righini (2007) 321-2; Maiuro (2012) 331-2.

⁷⁹⁷ For glass production around Ravenna, see Righini (2007) 325 n.28.

⁷⁹⁸ In general see Uggeri (1975) 135-54; Biordi (1993); Zaccaria ed. (1993); Righini ed. (1998); Righini (2007); Maiuro (2012) 334. There is still much uncertainty over the reading and purpose of Roman brick and tile stamps, with great variety across space and time, on which see e.g. Helen (1975); M. Steinby in *RE Suppl.* XV (1978), s.v. *Ziegelstempel v. Rom*, 1489-1531; Steinby (1982); Brodribb (1987) 117-25; Steinby (1993a), (1993b); Bruun (2005). It is generally thought that, when two names appear on stamps, one refers to the *offinator*, perhaps the overseer of production, and the other the *dominus*, who owned the workshop (*figlina*) or land on which the workshop was built (though one can also find the name of the *figlina*). But we cannot be too schematic, especially when much of our

important examples will be cited to provide further evidence for imperial property around Ravenna. The first are the *Pansiana* ceramics.⁷⁹⁹ Over four hundred and eleven tiles are known from the Cispadana region, most from around Ferrara (one hundred and eighty), Ariminum (one hundred and forty four) and Ravenna (fifty two).⁸⁰⁰ Twenty main stamp types have been identified, up to twelve naming Emperors. The earliest type, *Pansae Vibi*, exhibits four examples.⁸⁰¹ C. Vibius Pansa Caetronianus (cos.43 BC) is often regarded as the original owner, though no source states this explicitly.⁸⁰²

The traditional interpretation asserts that the property was confiscated by the triumvirs, allowing us to posit ownership by Octavian. If correct, this could provide further evidence for Caesarian ownership around Ravenna before the installation of the *classis*. However, Righini has noted that this would be an extremely surprising act regarding Pansa, a Caesarian “hero” who was officially commemorated in Rome.⁸⁰³ Chilver mentioned another possible owner known from a funerary inscription from Bovegno in Lombardy, C. Vibius Pansa, an Augustan *legatus pro / [pr(aetore) i]n Vindol(icis)*.⁸⁰⁴ If this speculation is correct, it would place the imperial takeover of the property rather later.

The problem is underlined by the absence of stamps clearly attesting Augustan ownership. Three examples of a type reading *Pans(iana) Cae(saris)*, found

evidence comes from Rome and its surrounds, cautiously exploited as a basis for interpreting practices elsewhere.

⁷⁹⁹ Mommsen in *CIL* V (1877), p. 957; Uggeri (1975) 135-49; Matijašić (1983); Righini, Biordi, and Pellicioni Golinelli (1993) 41-5, 48-55; Righini (1998) 45-68 and (2007) 311-16.

⁸⁰⁰ Righini, Biordi, and Pellicioni Golinelli (1993) 42-5. Though others have been found elsewhere, including in Histria and Dalmatia: see Wilkes (1979); Matijašić (1983) 962.

⁸⁰¹ *CIL* V 8110, 1b-c; Uggeri (1975) 138 nos.1, 3; Righini, Biordi, and Pellicioni Golinelli (1993) 48.

⁸⁰² For Vibius Pansa see *MRR* II pp. 334-6; for the suggestion see e.g. *Röm. Staatsr.* II.2 1007 n.1; Shatzman (1975) 437; Uggeri (1975) 62-3; Matijašić (1983) 962-3; Biordi (1993) 140; Righini (2007) 311-12.

⁸⁰³ Righini (1998) 50 and (2007) 312.

⁸⁰⁴ *Inscr. It.* X 5.1133 (= *CIL* V 4910 = *ILS* 847 = *AE* 1979 297); Chilver (1941) 12, 176; cf. Uggeri (1975) 62 n. 34; Righini (1998) 49.

at Ariminum, were considered Augustan by Uggeri, but Matijašić grouped them with tiles produced under Gaius Caligula.⁸⁰⁵ Six tiles from Voghenza read *Pansiana LAS*, adventurously rendered *L(iviae) A(ugustae) s(altuarii)* by Pellicioni.⁸⁰⁶ Other types carry the name of each Emperor from Tiberius to Vespasian, excluding Otho and Vitellius, for instance *Ti(beri) Pansiana*, *Ti(beri) Claud(i) Pansi(ana)* and *Vesp(asiani) Caes(aris) Pansian(a)*.⁸⁰⁷ Thus, while we can push back imperial ownership near Ravenna to the early first century AD, one cannot prove that the workshops were in imperial hands by the Augustan period.

The precise location of these workshops, or their relationship to the *regio Ravennatium*, has not been determined, but the large number of tiles found near Voghenza and Ariminum are regarded as possible evidence for production there.⁸⁰⁸ Yet, the wide diffusion of the tiles prevents definite localisation of production, and areas near the mouth of the Po cannot be ruled out. The important point for our purposes is that the workshops demonstrate imperial productive interests in the area of the north Adriatic *classis* base.

Our second major group comprises around two hundred and sixty stamped objects, virtually all bricks.⁸⁰⁹ Two hundred and ten come from Ravenna and Classe. All are stamped with the name of Emperors alone, from Hadrian to Alexander Severus. The majority come from the reigns of Antoninus Pius (one hundred and twenty one) and Hadrian (sixty three). This group has traditionally been directly connected with the *Pansiana* workshops, but Righini has expressed doubts, citing the

⁸⁰⁵ *CIL* XI 6685, 5a-c; Uggeri (1975) 148; Matijašić (1983) 975; cf. Righini (1998) 52; (2007) 314.

⁸⁰⁶ Pellicioni (1985²) 247; Righini, Biordi, and Pellicioni Golinelli (1993) 43, 50; Righini (2007) 313.

⁸⁰⁷ *CIL* V 8110, 12c; 8110, 19c; 8110, 28d-e; for a full catalogue see Righini, Biordi, and Pellicioni Golinelli (1993) 49-55.

⁸⁰⁸ For a summary of the debate, see Biordi (1993) 136-41; cf. Righini (2007) 315.

⁸⁰⁹ Bormann in *CIL* XI (1888), p.1030; Righini, Biordi, and Pellicioni Golinelli (1993) 57-62 contains full catalogue; cf. Righini (1998) 56-9 and (2007) 316-18.

gap between production groups, with *Pansiana* production seemingly stopping with the Flavians, different forms of stamps, different types of production (tiles versus bricks) and different distribution areas.⁸¹⁰

Again, certainty over where these were produced is unattainable, but the Agosta complex has been suggested because of the large number of stamps found there, and especially because of one waste object stamped with the name of Antoninus Pius.⁸¹¹ Whether that site also produced *Pansiana* material is unclear, though several first century tiles have been found there.⁸¹²

The above establishes the existence of imperial property around Ravenna, especially the *regio Ravennatium*, sets out some commodities imperial workshops produced and warily attempts to localise that production. There is no good evidence delineating the relationship of imperial holdings to municipal Ravenna or the unlocated *classis* base. The supposed *villa maritima* at Agosta, if under imperial ownership and producing stamped bricks, could indicate imperial interest in the coast near the mouth of the Po. But we can say little else.

Despite these limitations, the concentration of imperial property near Ravenna prompts comparison with Misenum. The attachment of the Ravenna *classis* base to Caesarian/imperial property remains a tantalising possibility, and we should at least consider the *classis Ravennas* as situated in an area of import to the Emperor.

⁸¹⁰ Righini (1998) 59-60; (2007) 318-19; *contra* Bormann in *CIL* XI (1888), p. 1030; Uggeri (1975) 136.

⁸¹¹ Uggeri (1973) 177 and (1975) 136-7; Righini (1998) 63 and (2007) 318; *cf.* Mansuelli (1941) 43-4; Stoppioni ed. (1993) and (1998); Biordi (1998) for Ariminum as a major production centre.

⁸¹² As noted in the catalogue of Righini, Biordi and Pellicioni Golinelli (1993) 49 (one example of Type 2c), 50 (one of Type 3b), 52 (four of Type 11a, one of 11b, two of 11c, three of 11d, two of 11e), 54 (four of Type 16f, one of 16l) 55 (one of Type 18b).

5.4 ‘A second Puteoli’. Aquileia and communications

Thus far, the productive capacities of this property have been emphasised. Indeed, the Roman north Adriatic is commonly associated with production and commerce, perhaps because of the nature of the evidence for the region.⁸¹³ As with Misenum, this should influence how we think about the nature and possible functions of the Ravenna *classis* base.

Within this context, we can note that Rostovtzeff once described Aquileia as a ‘second Puteoli’ because of its commercial and industrial success from the Augustan period.⁸¹⁴ A brief digression on Aquileia is worthwhile, because its relationship to Ravenna may parallel Puteoli and Misenum. Strabo characterised the city as an *emporium* with a largely regional outlook.⁸¹⁵

ἀνεῖται δ’ ἐμπόριον⁸¹⁶ τοῖς περὶ τὸν Ἰστρον τῶν Ἰλλυριῶν ἔθνεσι-
κομίζουσι δ’ οὗτοι μὲν τὰ ἐκ θαλάττης, καὶ οἶνον ἐπὶ ξυλίνων πίθων
ἀρμαμάξαις ἀναθέντες καὶ ἔλαιον, ἐκεῖνοι δ’ ἀνδράποδα καὶ βοσκήματα
καὶ δέρματα.

Later, Herodian presented the second and third century city as a thriving commercial centre: ὥσπερ τι ἐμπόριον Ἰταλίας ἐπὶ θαλάττῃ προκειμένη.⁸¹⁷ Because of its commercial vitality it was extremely populous, with a mixture of locals, visitors and

⁸¹³ For commerce in the north Adriatic, see e.g. Rostovtzeff (1957²) 71, 167, 610-11; Panciera (1972); Uggeri (1975) 127-54; Royal (2012) esp. 440-52.

⁸¹⁴ Rostovtzeff (1957²) 71. For a brief but useful overview with older bibliography see Rostovtzeff (1957²) 548, 567 610-11; cf. Calderini (1930) 297-332; Panciera (1957); Chevallier (1990) 55-68. For recent papers documenting the history of Aquileia from the Late Republic to the third century AD see Rossi (2003); Buchi (2003); Strobel (2003); cf. in general Hülsen in *RE* II (1896), s.v. *Aquileia*, 318-21; Calderini (1930). For an overview of Aquileian archaeology with bibliography see Bertacchi (2003).

⁸¹⁵ Str. 5.1.8.

⁸¹⁶ Meineke (1921) 293 inserts [τοῖς τε Ἐνετοῖς καὶ] here, but as Jones (1923) p. 316 n.5 remarks, it seems unnecessary. Similarly Lassere (1967) p. 48 and Aly (1972) p.275, but note Radt (2007) 16 suggesting the insertion could be correct.

⁸¹⁷ Hdn. 8.2.3.

merchants.⁸¹⁸ Around fifty inscriptions attest commercial operations and tradespeople, such as the freedmen Q. Aebutius Scitus and P. Carfulenus Modestus, a *nummularius* and *negotiator* respectively, and L. Valerius Primus, *negotiator margaritarius*.⁸¹⁹

Of particular interest, given the apparent importance of Dalmatians and Pannonians in recruitment for the *classis Ravennas*, are the demonstrable links between Aquileia and the Danubian provinces, alluded to by Strabo. The geographer provides further evidence for the relationship between Aquileia and the Danube in describing how τὰ ἐκ τῆς Ἀκυληίας φορτία was conveyed from that city to Nauportus, the site of modern Vrhnika in Slovenia, and then ἐκεῖθεν δὲ τοῖς ποταμοῖς κατὰγεται μέχρι τοῦ Ἰστρου καὶ τῶν ταύτη χωρίων.⁸²⁰

In a studying epigraphic evidence from the first to fourth centuries attesting these links, Zaccaria has recorded around twenty inscriptions from Aquileia, mostly referring to merchants or soldiers, either of Illyrian origin or whose home was found in the Danubian regions.⁸²¹ A further hundred inscriptions may identify Aquileians in Illyricum, though Zaccaria admits that only twenty or so are definite examples, with a further twenty very probable.⁸²² One must emphasise the limitations of this material: both the uncertainty over what the individual inscriptions do tell us, and the fairly small number of finds across many centuries. However, putting this alongside literary attestations of traffic through Aquileia, it seems reasonable to accept these

⁸¹⁸ Hdn. 8.2.3: ἰδίου δήμου πολυάνθρωπος ἦν; 8.2.4: ἔνθεν πολὺ τι πλῆθος ἐπεδήμει οὐ πολιτῶν μόνον ἀλλὰ ξένων τε καὶ ἐμπόρων; cf. Chevallier (1990) 40-54 on population composition.

⁸¹⁹ *CIL* V 8318 (= *InscrAqu* I 73); *AE* 1982 380; *ILS* 7603 (= *InscrAqu* I 718). Out of around four thousand inscriptions (excluding *instrumenta* and Christian texts) examined on the Epigraphik-Datenbank Clauss/Slaby (http://db.edcs.eu/epigr/epi_en.php) on 25/05/2014. Aquileia also lay at one edge of the *Publicum Portorii Illyrici*, a large *portorium* district: see esp. De Laet (1949) 175-242; Panciera (1957) 63-73.

⁸²⁰ Str. 4.6.10.

⁸²¹ Zaccaria (1985) 88-94; see 106-21 for a catalogue of the inscriptions. Zaccaria (1985) 85 nn.2-4 collects earlier bibliography, of which see esp. Calderini (1930) 338-57; Panciera (1957) 75-81.

⁸²² Zaccaria (1985) 94.

inscriptions as hinting at the relationships existing between there and the Danubian provinces.

The above is significant because, as with Misenum, the *classis Ravennas* may be regarded as situated in a traffic and communications zone, with Aquileia a major hub.⁸²³ The distance between the two is much greater than for our Campanian subjects, but this may have been partly mitigated by the discussed routes between the cities.⁸²⁴ This has implications for the duties potentially entrusted to the *classis Ravennas*, as the next chapter discusses.

5.5 Leisure and display in the north Adriatic?

I have already argued for a reading of Misenum and the *sinus Baianus* that allows space for production and commerce, even if literary sources obscure this. Likewise, I shall now suggest that we can perceive a more complex Ravenna and north Adriatic, and that this should affect how we understand the *classis* base. In particular, I shall suggest that at least some of the estates of this region could have been places of leisure, consumption and display. This argument is harder to make than for the *sinus Baianus*, because of limited archaeology and because our literary sources were less interested in the region, not commonly associating it with Campanian-style luxury. Nonetheless, a more nuanced view may prove revealing.

Firstly, I shall consider literary references to imperial visits to Ravenna and the wider region, in particular Aquileia. While we are not explicitly told that an Emperor or member of their family stayed in a property they owned, this is not an

⁸²³ Described as a commercial 'sistema' by Brizzi (1978) 84.

⁸²⁴ See above pp. 174-6.

unreasonable assumption to make. Moreover, whether imperial owned or otherwise, it is surely likely that these properties would have been of a standard appropriate to their residents. Regarding Claudius, I shall consider an example of imperial display, from which further parallels with the Misenum area may be drawn.

Once more, the literary evidence mostly concerns Augustus or the Julio-Claudians. However, that our sources fail to show interest in later imperial visits does not disprove their happening. Nor should we conclude that imperial property ownership was reduced over time. Indeed, documentary evidence for the *regio Ravennatium* comes from after the first century. Therefore, we can reasonably suggest that some of the essentials of the region surrounding the *classis* base persisted.

To further support the contention of a luxurious region, if not clearly at Ravenna, the inquiry will be widened to cover Altinum and the estates of Histria, which had commercial and social ties to the Italian peninsula, including its north-east littoral. Some of these estates were centered around particularly splendid *villae maritimae*, the archaeological evidence for which will be examined.

Firstly, we should review the evidence for imperial residence. We observed that Caesar spent time in and quite possibly owned property at Ravenna.⁸²⁵ These appointments were surely suitable for a consular, though further precision is unattainable.

In the early empire, members of the imperial house sojourned at Ravenna to direct military campaigns to the north and east. According to Suetonius, Augustus stayed at Ravenna, among other cities, when overseeing expeditions:⁸²⁶

⁸²⁵ See above pp. 181-2.

⁸²⁶ Suet. *Aug.* 20.

reliqua per legatos administravit, ut tamen quibusdam Pannonicis atque Germanicis aut interveniret aut non longe abesset, Ravennam vel Mediolanum vel Aquileiam usque ab urbe progrediens.

While Augustus may have stayed with a friend or local notable, given that imperial property is explicitly attested for the region, possibly even from the Augustan period if the traditional chronology of the *Pansiana* workshops is correct, it is surely likely that he would have used it.

In the same section, the biographer states that Augustus spent time at Aquileia.⁸²⁷ Elsewhere, Suetonius revealed that a child of Tiberius and Julia was born and died at that city (*fili...qui Aquileiae natus infans exstinctus est*); presumably their presence was connected with one of the campaigns of Tiberius.⁸²⁸ Again, one can reasonably suggest that appropriate residences were used, even if their presence was connected to military activity. Centumcellae shows that Emperors conducted business, albeit political and judicial, in pleasant surroundings.⁸²⁹

We should recall the presence of *classis* servicemen at Aquileia in the first half of the first century AD. These servicemen could have been associated with the campaigns of the period. However, I am tempted to follow Panciera, who suggested that they were in Aquileia primarily because of the Emperor or his family members.⁸³⁰ They could even have been connected with their residence at imperial property, if we accept a not infrequent connection between the deployment of *classis*

⁸²⁷ See above note and Jos. *AJ* 16.91.

⁸²⁸ Suet. *Tib.* 7.3.

⁸²⁹ See above pp. 148-50.

⁸³⁰ Panciera (2006a) 1351.

servicemen in Italy and imperial estates. One caveat, albeit not refuting the hypothesis, is that other evidence for Aquileian imperial property is rather thin.⁸³¹

The presence of Claudius is attested around Ravenna. Pliny records the remarkable celebration of his British triumph near the city:⁸³²

Augusta fossa Ravennam trahitur, ubi Padusa vocatur, quondam Messanicus appellatus. proximum inde ostium magnitudinem portus habet qui Vatreni dicitur, qua Claudius Caesar e Britannia triumphans praegrandi illa domo verius quam nave intravit Hadriam.

From there, he sailed around the coast of Italy to Rome.⁸³³ Claudius did not leave from Ravenna itself, but by the ancient, main branch of the Po to the north, probably where the modern Reno enters the sea.⁸³⁴ Perhaps coincidentally, this is not so far from the ruins at Agosta. Despite the distance from Ravenna, around 10 miles, and although it is not directly attested, I cautiously suggest that the Emperor spent some time in or around the city, perhaps at an imperial estate.

More compellingly, one is encouraged to compare this to the bridge of boats of Gaius, or the games put on for Tiridates by Nero at Puteoli, as imperial set pieces.⁸³⁵ This implies that the regions could potentially be viewed and used in a similar fashion by at least some Emperors, providing spectacular backdrops for imperial exploitation.

⁸³¹ Crawford (1976) 67 does not record any evidence for property at Aquileia; Zaccaria (2007) has collected epigraphy attesting imperial slaves or freedmen in its territory, observing that around one fifth of the twenty inscriptions refer to the management of an estate. However, none explicitly show that this was in Aquileian territory; cf. Maiuro (2012) 337-40.

⁸³² Plin. *NH* 3.119.

⁸³³ For the invasion and triumphal celebrations in Rome see Tac. *Agr.* 14.1; Suet. *Claud.* 17; *Vesp.* 4.1; Cass. Dio 60.19-23; Oros. 7.6.9-11; Eutr. 7.13. For a recent account see Osgood (2011) 84-105 and 281-2 for bibliography. For the “procession” of Claudius from Britain to Ravenna, see Fasolini (2006) 144-9.

⁸³⁴ Uggeri (1975) 37, 45, 49.

⁸³⁵ See above pp. 163-5.

We should set this display within the context of further Claudian activity at Ravenna. An inscription, once on the attic of the so-called Porta Aurea, a gate in the south-west portion of the city walls, recorded that Claudius was responsible for the work:⁸³⁶

Ti(berius) Claudius Drusi f(ilius) Cae-
sar Aug(ustus) Germanicus
pont(ifex) max(imus) tr(ibunicia) pot(estate) II
co(n)s(ul) desig(natus) III imp(erator) III p(ater) p(atriciae)
dedit.

The inscription indicates that the gate was erected in the second half of AD 42 or early AD 43.⁸³⁷ This would perhaps be too early to connect its construction to the triumphal departure from the Po, probably in late AD 43 or early 44. However, depending on the long-term planning of the invasion and processional return, the gate could be seen as part of a monumental landscape constructed for the Emperor to perform his eventual triumph in.

There are few other direct attestations of imperial visits to the region during our period. We have already mentioned the construction of ἠβητήριον by Nero, though this does not demonstrate his presence, only his property.⁸³⁸ Returning to Aquileia, Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus conducted campaigns from there in AD 168.⁸³⁹ The *Historia Augusta* claims that Verus did not want to cross the Alps, as he enjoyed hunting and feasting at Aquileia: *invitoque Lucio Alpes transgressi, cum Verus apud*

⁸³⁶ *CIL* XI 5; cf. Horster (2001) no.8.5.

⁸³⁷ Usually dated to AD 43. However, La Rocca (1992) 270 n.19 dated it to the second consulship of Claudius in AD 42, in the belief that line four read: *co(n)s(ul) II desig(natus) III*; cf. Deichmann (1989) 26. Recorded in Renaissance drawings, the inscription is now lost, save for a few fragments (see e.g. Muratori (1937) 7) and the reading cannot be checked. The picture of the arch by Sangallo which recorded the whole inscription does not include the *II*. Indeed, the only image to do so is a reconstruction of the arch by Rosi (1939), which I have been unable to see, found in e.g. Bovini (1956) 31, fig.3 and Mansuelli (1967) fig.5.

⁸³⁸ See above p. 160.

⁸³⁹ *SHA Marc.*14.2.

*Aquileiam tantum venatus convivatusque esset.*⁸⁴⁰ After their campaigns had been completed, they returned to Aquileia at the urging of Verus (*urgente Lucio Aquileiam redierunt*), a man who desired *voluptates urbanae*.⁸⁴¹ While we must adopt scepticism towards this hostile characterisation of Verus, that Aquileia, and possibly any imperial property there, could be perceived as a place of leisure shows that this aspect of the north Adriatic must not be neglected.⁸⁴²

We have a handful of literary references to Emperors or imperial family members visiting and staying in Ravenna or Aquileia, and the suggestion that Claudius at least exploited Ravenna and the mouth of the Po for imperial display. Given our good documentary evidence for imperial estates around Ravenna, if not Aquileia, they could have stayed in imperial property. In any case, while all examples cited relate to military activity – even Claudius was returning from a campaign – it does not follow that they would have been relegated to poor accommodation, or that at least some of their time could not have been spent in leisured activity, as the example of Lucius Verus exaggeratedly suggests.

5.6 The luxury *villae maritimae* of Histria

The reference to Verus at Aquileia suggests that parts of the north Adriatic were considered places for leisure. A poem of Martial on the area begins: *aemula Baianis Altini litora villis*.⁸⁴³ This must refer to the luxury and pleasure of the *sinus Baianus*, and therefore, at least for Martial (but there is no reason to consider his viewpoint

⁸⁴⁰ SHA *Verus* 9.8.

⁸⁴¹ *Ibid.* 9.10.

⁸⁴² For the *Vita Veri* having little if any value see e.g. Mommsen (1890) 246; Birley (1966) 312-14; *contra* e.g. Barnes (1967); Syme (1968); 133-4; Barta (1971). For recent overviews of the *Historia Augusta* and its difficulties, see Matthews (2007) 296, 302; Mehl (2011) 171-8.

⁸⁴³ Mart. 4.25.1.

unusual), its replication in north-eastern Italy. The links between Altinum and Ravenna raised earlier should be considered with this in mind, with the possibility that, as in the *sinus Baianus*, the *classis Ravennas* could have had some part in supporting imperial leisure. However, no literary evidence documents imperial visits to Altinum.

To further argue that the north Adriatic and its *villae* were not simply centres of production, I shall extend the inquiry to Histria. This will provide comparisons for a hypothetical human environment around Ravenna, but perhaps more importantly will hint at the complex characteristics of the wider region surrounding the base of the *classis Ravennas*.

Histria was progressively brought under Roman control from the end of the third century BC.⁸⁴⁴ The western coast entered Roman influence most rapidly: several towns were founded or developed by the Romans along this coastline. These included the *coloniae* of Tergeste, Parentium and Pola, the last, *colonia Iulia Pola*, being of particular significance and possessing an excellent port.⁸⁴⁵

The physical distance of Histria from Ravenna means that its inclusion within a regional study of the *classis* base requires some justification. The peninsula can reasonably be examined here because of its economic and social integration within Italy: it was after all part of *regio X* from the Augustan period.

To underline the point, I shall briefly discuss some commercial relationships.⁸⁴⁶ Coastal Histria was especially productive, its exported olive oil of

⁸⁴⁴ For the history of Roman Histria down to the Principate, see Matijašić (1991); *cf.* Weiss in *RE* VIII (1913), *s.v.* *Histria*, 2111-16; Mlakar (1962) 5-13; Vedaldi Isabez (1994) for literary sources.

⁸⁴⁵ Tergeste: Str. 5.1.9; 7.5.2; Plin. *NH* 3.127; Ptol. *Geog.* 1.15.3; 3.1.27; Parentium: Plin. *NH* 3.129; Pola: Str. 1.2.39; 5.1.9; Plin. *NH* 3.129; Ptol. *Geog.* 3.1.27; *cf.* Matijašić (2001b) 169 and below for further references.

⁸⁴⁶ One example of social integration is the possession of Histrian lands by high status Roman families of the Republic and Empire: for a recent survey, see Tassaux (2005) esp. 140-6. See also Rostovtzeff

particular repute.⁸⁴⁷ Pliny ranked this oil alongside that from Baetica, just below Italy: *relicum certamen inter Histriae terram et Baeticae par est.*⁸⁴⁸ Over fifty sites connected with oil production are known from the territory of Pola alone.⁸⁴⁹

There is only slim evidence for the products of the major Dressel 6B amphorae workshops of Histria which carried this oil ending up in Ravenna itself, with one stamp of Hadrianic date.⁸⁵⁰ However, these amphorae have been found along the Po and in locations between Ravenna and Aquileia.⁸⁵¹ For instance, thirty one stamped Laecanii amphorae dating from across the first century AD have been discovered at Aquileia, considered a transit point for Histrian produce, while forty seven are known from Padova in the same period.⁸⁵² The distance which these amphorae and their contents could travel in Italy is hinted at by six stamped vessels known from Vercelli in Piedmont.⁸⁵³ This may demonstrate traffic along the Po, the relationship of which to Ravenna should encourage us to consider that city within any systems of exchange between northern Italy and Histria.

There is also evidence for the produce of the Po delta in Histria. The study by Matijašić of the chronology of the *Pansiana* tiles includes eighty three finds from

(1957²) 235-7; Andermahr (1998) 78-83 and relevant catalogue entries; Alföldy (1999) 283-315. Note for instance the estates of the Crassi Frugi (see Syme (1960)) around Capodistria: see Tac. *Hist.* 2.72 and *CIL* V 495 (= *Inscr.It.* X 3.15) with *PIR* II p. 183; *PIR*² L 241; Chilver (1979) 232; Andermahr (1998) 320-1. The last (see also Andermahr (1998) 200-1) considers this distinct from any property owned by the Calpurnii Pisones in southern Histria, *contra* Degrassi (1954) 65; Šašel (1964) 363-7; Shatzman (1975) 314; Tassaux (1985) 153-4 and (2005) 141; Maiuro (2012) 342-3. As Andermahr (1998) 201 notes, none of the sixteen inscriptions collected by Šašel (1964) 364-5 attesting Calpurnii in northern Histria can be unequivocally connected with the senatorial Calpurnii Pisones.

⁸⁴⁷ Weiss in *RE* VIII (1913), *s.v.* *Histria*, 2113; Degrassi (1956); Rostovtzeff (1957²) 235-7; Mlakar (1962) 44, 47; Tassaux (1985) 146-8; Bertacchi (1995). Note also Degrassi (1955), basic on the Histrian ports.

⁸⁴⁸ Plin. *NH* 15.8. Similarly Mart. 12.63.1-2; Paus. 10.32.19.

⁸⁴⁹ Matijašić (1993) 248.

⁸⁵⁰ *RTAR* II 890: *Imp(eratoris) Hadriani Aug(usti)*, with comments by Marion and Starac (2001) 112 n.92.

⁸⁵¹ For diffusion of Loron amphorae see Marion and Starac (2001); Tassaux (2001); on products of the Laecanii see Bezeczky (1998) 73-6.

⁸⁵² Bezeczky (1998) 74. For Aquileia as a transit see e.g. Degrassi (1956) 106; Tassaux (1985) 148.

⁸⁵³ Bezeczky (1998) 76.

Histria, thirty three coming from Pola.⁸⁵⁴ As a further specific example, three different types have been found at Loron, a productive estate on the western coast of the peninsula.⁸⁵⁵ Whether these were to be used on site, or shipped elsewhere, is unclear, but they do again indicate commercial relationships between the Po delta and Histria, encouraging integrating the peninsula into our study.

Before continuing, it must be stated that there is little evidence for the *classis Ravennas* in Histria. Only one second century AD epitaph, found at Tergeste, attests normal servicemen:⁸⁵⁶

D(is) M(anibus) T(iti) Dom[i]-
 ti Gracilis
 na(tione) Ditio(nis)
 vix(it) an(nos) L
 mil(itavit) an(nos) XIII
 IIII Pado
 heredes
 L(ucius) Plaetorius
 Bassus et
 L(ucius) Murranius
 Super b(ene) m(erenti) p(osuerunt).

It is rather likely that two fellow *militēs* erected the monument. Therefore, we can count three *classis* servicemen at Tergeste. The quadrireme recorded may hint at their involvement in imperial transport, as we shall note in the following chapter, but this is far from certain.

The following discussion of the potential for the *classis Ravennas* to support imperial activity in Histria must bear this limited evidence in mind, but this does not

⁸⁵⁴ Matijašić (1983) 663-85.

⁸⁵⁵ Matijašić (2001a) 45-6.

⁸⁵⁶ *CIL* V 541 (= *Inscr. It.* X 4.52); cf. *CIL* V 533 (= *ILS* 2702 = *Inscr. It.* X 4.32), commemorating a dedication at Tergeste by the *classis praefectus Ravennatis* Clodius Quirinalis (*PIR*² P 72 and recently Bollini (2004)) and *CIL* V 328 (= *Inscr. It.* X 2.3 = *ILS* 3290), recording work on a temple and harbour at Parentium in the first century AD by a former *subpraefectus classis Ravennatis*.

deny the possibility that *classis* manpower was sometimes deployed on the peninsula. Let us now consider the estates of Histria. Much has been written about the ceramics workshops of the Laecanii, especially Fažana, five miles north east of Pola, and at Loron.⁸⁵⁷ However, I shall concentrate on two examples of Histrian luxury *villae maritimae*, which also provide evidence for productive infrastructure, reinforcing earlier arguments concerning potential productive activities at the *villae maritimae* of Baiae.⁸⁵⁸

The Val Catena villa in Verige Bay on the eastern side of Veli Brijun is our first subject.⁸⁵⁹ This is one of three main *villae* on the Brijuni isles, just off the coast of Pola.⁸⁶⁰ This complex, thought to be of Late Republican origins before being transformed into a ‘true *villa maritima*’ in the Augustan period, possessed a peristyled *domus* on the south side of the bay, next to a large garden, and with a terrace overlooking the sea.⁸⁶¹ The *domus* included a *pars urbana* and *pars rustica* devoted to production, in which olive and/or grape presses have been discovered.⁸⁶² At the end of the bay was a temple area, with a cryptoporticus and *ambulatio* running east towards a thermal complex with a *palaestra*, and *piscina* set before the bathing pavilion. This phase has been considered post-Augustan.⁸⁶³ East from this is another productive quarter, not well-understood, near to harbour remains.

⁸⁵⁷ On the workshop at Fažana, identified by Gnirs on the basis of ‘die zahlreich auftretenden Beispiele gestempelter Tonwaren’, see Gnirs (1910a), (1910b) 95-7, (1911) 35-8; Tassaux (1982) 250-1; Bezeczky (1995) 42-5; Bezeczky and Pavletić (1996) 143-8; Bezeczky (1998) 3-43; Tassaux (2007) 51; Buonopane and Pesavento Mattioli (2007); Maiuro (2012) 343-4. On Loron see Tassaux, Matijašić and Kovačić eds. (2001); Marchiori, Mondin and Rosada (2006); cf. Lafon (2001) 458 Y 36; Maiuro (2012) 345-6.

⁸⁵⁸ Besides the examples discussed, Matijašić (2001c) 300 lists the villa of Sorna near Parenzo and that of Valbadon near Fažana, alongside unexplored sites.

⁸⁵⁹ Gnirs (1915); Degrassi (1955) 160-2; Matijašić (1982) 55-6; Bezeczky (1998) 49-57; Schrunk and Begović (2000) 253-65; Lafon (2001) 459 Y 46-7.

⁸⁶⁰ Gnirs (1908) 134-43 and (1915) 99-157; Matijašić (1982) 54-9; Bezeczky (1998) 49-72; Schrunk and Begović (2000).

⁸⁶¹ See Schrunk and Begović (2000) 256 and 261 for dating.

⁸⁶² Bezeczky (1998) 52-7; Schrunk and Begović (2000) 256, 264-6, 268-70.

⁸⁶³ Schrunk and Begović (2000) 261-2.

Discovering who owned this *villa maritima* is not decisive to the argument for luxury in the north Adriatic. However, imperial possession would add support to the proposition of a *classis* base potentially supporting a range of regional imperial activities.⁸⁶⁴ The *villae* on Brijuni are normally supposed to have been owned by the Laecanii, a Histrian senatorial family, whose property is argued to have passed into imperial hands under the Flavians.⁸⁶⁵ That Val Catena belonged to the Laecanii is based on the discovery of Laecanius stamped amphorae at the site, with over one hundred found in one room.⁸⁶⁶ Bezczky has noted that these stamps have been found in no other ‘luxurious’ *villae* in south Histria, though few sites have received the attention of Val Catena.⁸⁶⁷

Whether these were produced there, or at the Fažana workshops, is unclear. One could conjecture that the owner of Val Catena purchased them from nearby Fažana, arguably one of the major Histrian workshops producing Dressel 6B amphorae, or that they were in such widespread use that a large collection at this villa proves nothing about its ownership.

Thus, while an attractive hypothesis, ownership by the Laecanii is unproven. The next step, that the imperial family obtained the villa in the later first century AD, is based on no direct evidence, but follows from the standard hypothesis that the Fažana workshops and other Histrian property of the Laecanii fell into imperial hands at this time.⁸⁶⁸

⁸⁶⁴ In general on Histrian imperial property Mommsen in *CIL* V (1872), p.3; Tassaux (2007) *passim* but see 57 nn.1-8 for collected bibliography; Maiuro (2012) 342-6; *cf.* Crawford (1976) 67.

⁸⁶⁵ Tassaux (1982).

⁸⁶⁶ Bezczky (1995) 47, 49 and (1998) 52, 68; see also Tassaux (1982) 252 and (1998) 86; Schrunk and Begović (2000) 270-3.

⁸⁶⁷ Bezczky (1995) 49.

⁸⁶⁸ For discussion of which Laecanius Bassus the property was obtained from, see Bezczky (1998) 14-15; Tassaux (1998) 82-6 and (2007) 51.

Analysing this argument requires a careful review of the evidence. As stated, Dressel 6B amphorae were seemingly the major product of Fažana.⁸⁶⁹ They have been found elsewhere in Histria, northern Italy, Pannonia and Noricum, particularly at Magdalensberg.⁸⁷⁰ Among the thousands of amphorae there are over six hundred and fifty stamps. Through find context, the Magdalensberg material has been used to date the stamps down to c. AD 50, when the site was abandoned.⁸⁷¹ The earliest of these amphorae were stamped at the centre of the rim with the name of a Laecanius, and above the handle with that of the *officinatores* who managed the workshops. The evidence has been collected and catalogued elsewhere, but a couple of examples will serve to clarify.⁸⁷² Type 2, of the Tiberian or Claudian period, is stamped *C(ai) Laek(ani) // Adel(phi)*.⁸⁷³ Type 3, dated to the Claudian or Flavian period, reads *C(ai) Laek(ani) Bass(i) // Amethysti*.⁸⁷⁴

Baldacci was the first to propose that the Flavian Emperors gained possession of Fažana, noting that the *officinator* Clymenus appears to have featured on amphorae stamped with the name of C. Laecanius Bassus (*C(ai) Laek(ani) Bas(si) // Clymen(i)*) and an Emperor (*Imp(eratoris) // Clymen(i) or Clyme(ni)*).⁸⁷⁵ The same argument has more recently been made for the *officinator* Paganus.⁸⁷⁶ Importantly, in that case, six of the imperial stamps were found at Fažana itself.

While not conclusive, further evidence encourages the general acceptance of this hypothesis. Four stamps from Fažana, Iuvavum and Aquincum may refer to

⁸⁶⁹ Bezczky (1998) 11-13.

⁸⁷⁰ Bezczky (1995) 47-9 and (1998) 73-81; Buonopane and Pesavento Mattioli (2007) 298-300.

⁸⁷¹ Bezczky (1995) 41, 56-62; Bezczky (1998) 22-8; Buonopane and Pesavento Mattioli (2007) 295-8.

⁸⁷² Bezczky (1998) 95-250.

⁸⁷³ *Ibid.* 96 nos.7-8.

⁸⁷⁴ *Ibid.* 96-8 nos.9-18.

⁸⁷⁵ Baldacci (1967-8) 34; Bezczky (1998) 122-5 nos.108-17 and 240 nos.649-51; followed by e.g. Bezczky (1987) 17 and (1998) 15; Buonopane and Pesavento Mattioli (2007) 294-5

⁸⁷⁶ Bezczky (1998) 200 no.490 and 242-3 nos.652-61; *cf.* also Bezczky (1998) 244 nos.662-4 and Buonopane and Pesavento Mattioli (2007) 295 for Pollio and Colonus.

Vespasian explicitly: originally read as *C(ai) Lae(cani) Bas(s)i // Dati*, these have more recently been reinterpreted as *Imp(eratoris) Caes(aris) Vesp(asiani)*.⁸⁷⁷ Although the stamp is not of the best quality, a photograph certainly supports the new reading.⁸⁷⁸ Amphorae bearing the stamp of Titus have recently been attributed to Fažana: these include one reading *Im(peratoris) T(iti) Cae(asaris) Aug(usti) // Primigen(i)* and four linking him with an *offinator* whose stamp reads *Berent(i)*.⁸⁷⁹ Single stamps naming Domitian and Trajan may attest products of the same workshop.⁸⁸⁰

The above provides reasonable evidence for the Flavian takeover of workshops which had previously produced ceramics for the Laecanii, and their continued ownership to the Trajanic period at the latest. If the Laecanii did own Val Catena, subsequent imperial possession of that property, and therefore a site of imperial leisure in the north Adriatic, is plausible.⁸⁸¹ However, the evidence is simply not good enough to be convincing.

Another example of Histrian luxury, though on a smaller scale, is the *villa maritima* of Barbariga, north-west of Fažana.⁸⁸² A peristyle around a courtyard forms one part of the complex; one of the rooms off the courtyard contained an ‘elaborate’ floor mosaic, with a floral motif at the centre.⁸⁸³ The villa had a thermal section, and a

⁸⁷⁷ Bezczky (1998) 238-9 nos.640-3; new reading in Buonopane and Pesavento Mattioli (2007) 295.

⁸⁷⁸ Bezczky (1998) pl.59, fig.641.

⁸⁷⁹ Marion and Starac (2001) 124; Buonopane and Pesavento Mattioli (2007) 296; *cf.* Bezczky (1998) 246-7 nos.667-74.

⁸⁸⁰ Domitian: Kelemen (1987) 30-1; Marion and Starac (2001) 124; Buonopane and Pesavento Mattioli (2007) 297, noting three possible other stamps; Trajan: Kelemen (1987) 38 nos.46-7; attributed without explanation to Fažana by Buonopane and Pesavento Mattioli (2007) 297.

⁸⁸¹ Note also arguments for imperial ownership at Pola from the Augustan period, providing context for property at nearby Brijuni: Mommsen in *CIL* V (1872), p.3; Forlati Tamaro in *Inscr. It.* X 1 (1947), p. 223 discussing no.593; Crawford (1976) 47, 67; Tassaux (2007) 50-3; Maiuro (2012) 343-4. This is based on inscriptions attesting imperial freedmen, and three epitaphs suggesting the presence of slaves or freedmen of Maecenas.

⁸⁸² Schwalb (1902); Matijašić (1982) 57-8.

⁸⁸³ Matijašić (1982) 57.

promenade from which one could view the sea.⁸⁸⁴ Possibly connected to this *villa maritima* was an “oil plant” to the north, combining luxury and production in one estate.⁸⁸⁵ Nothing identifies the owners. But again, that matters less than the evidence the property provides for well-appointed *villae maritimae* in a north Adriatic context.

Therefore, I suggest that Ravenna itself, and the wider north Adriatic, deserve a more nuanced appreciation. Several imperial properties in the region have been identified, including the *regio Ravennatium* and possible property at Aquileia. Furthermore, there is inconclusive evidence for property in Histria. While these estates were certainly productive, from the remains of some Histrian *villae maritimae*, alongside comparisons between Altinum and Baiae, we can see that the region was more than a grand workshop. There is little literary evidence for the presence of Emperors or their families in the region in our period, and when they do appear, it is often to fight wars. This has perhaps contributed to a neglect of the proposed resort character of the region. Yet even then the properties in which they resided were surely well-appointed.

Literature encourages contrasting this region with the Bay of Naples, especially the *sinus Baianus*, by concentrating on its luxurious qualities. Yet we saw the weight of the literary topos in generating this image, perhaps underplaying other aspects of Baiae and its surrounds. Similarly, I suggest that we should seek a middle ground in our understanding of the north Adriatic: certainly a productive region and strategically vital for imperial campaigns towards the Alps and the Danube, but also a place of leisure and display. I am tempted to suggest that the regions into which the Italian *classes* were inserted were rather more alike, or grew to be more alike, than

⁸⁸⁴ *Ibid.* 58.

⁸⁸⁵ *Ibid.* 58-9.

one might suspect. By taking account of some of these neglected similarities we can perhaps gain a fuller understanding of the role of *classis* manpower in its human environments.

6. Conclusion

It is within this overall context that we should reassess the “naval bases” of Misenum and Ravenna. I have attempted to demonstrate the limitations of considering the *classis* ports only as such installations, and treating them in isolation. As an alternative, I have taken a regional approach to Misenum and Ravenna, with particular emphasis on the connection of the bases with imperial property and activity. These relationships must affect how we regard any possible duties entrusted to the *classes*. I cited the example of Centumcellae to suggest how an imperial harbour with a *classis* presence in the vicinity of imperial property should not be viewed purely in terms of military activity, in a traditional sense.

Geography and history are likely to have played some part in encouraging the institution of the *classes* at Misenum and Ravenna, though neither were decisive. Ravenna is perhaps marked out by its military strategic position in a communications corridor, potentially capable of supporting campaigns conducted to the north and east, especially under Augustus. Military activity occurred in the region during both civil wars in our period, and under Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus. One could conjecture that its position granted to the *classis* Ravennas a greater number of “local” military tasks than the *classis Misenensis*, but this is not explicitly attested. Whether we should claim, as Wickert did, that Ravenna was more of a “military

harbour” than Misenum is very difficult to answer.⁸⁸⁶ It is however interesting that its strategic value was not clearly acknowledged prior to the imperial period.

Both bases were associated with imperial property. At Misenum, it is possible that imperial *villae maritimae* overlooked the *classis* port. It is impossible to identify such features at Ravenna because we have not located the harbour. However, it is tempting to suggest that similar conditions were found there, especially when the next chapter will offer evidence for the association between *classis* detachments and imperial property elsewhere.

I have raised the possibility – certainly at Misenum, more tentatively at Ravenna – that the *classes* were installed on property owned by Octavian, perhaps inherited from Caesar. Further work could reveal why. I am tempted to consider as relevant the apparent siting of the *castra* of the *legio II Parthica* by Septimius Severus on imperial property at Alba.⁸⁸⁷ Strategic reasons, and proximity to Rome, are often advanced to explain this deployment.⁸⁸⁸ Yet Lugli noted that the imperial property around the camp favoured ‘l’espansione e il movimento richiesti da un campo militare’.⁸⁸⁹ More recently, Menéndez Argüín and Maiuro have observed that, by using imperial property, appropriation of private property was avoided, the latter also noting that placing a legion in Italy could still have proved ideologically difficult.⁸⁹⁰ Similarly, the grant of bases (with *territoria*?) to the *classes* in Italy may have been viewed as politically unfavourable by Augustus. By stationing them on his property, such problems would be partly overcome.

⁸⁸⁶ Wickert (1949-50) 105.

⁸⁸⁷ For the *legio* see Ritterling in *RE* XII (1925), *s.v. legio II Parthica*, 1476-83; Forni (1953) 97-9; Smith (1972) 486-7; Menéndez Argüín (2003). On the *castra* see Lugli (1919a); Benario (1972); Tortorici (1974); Menéndez Argüín (2003) 317-21. For the imperial villa see Lugli (1917), (1918), (1919b), (1920); *cf.* Von Hesberg (2009); Maiuro (2012) 254-5.

⁸⁸⁸ Lugli (1919a) 258; Benario (1972) 258; Tortorici (1974) 18; Menéndez Argüín (2003) 317.

⁸⁸⁹ Lugli (1919a) 261.

⁸⁹⁰ Menéndez Argüín (2003) 317; Maiuro (2012) 255; *cf.* Platnauer (1918) 161.

We can more safely contend that both *classes* were situated in regions with concentrations of imperial property, at which a variety of activities were carried out, and which were of some import to the imperial family. Due to the nature of the evidence, scholarship has emphasised luxury and debauchery in the *sinus Baianus* and military and commercial activity in the north Adriatic. Yet I have suggested that this provides only a partial picture. While the *sinus Baianus* was a resort, its dubious reputation was largely a literary topos, and its *villae* may well have been productive as well as luxurious entities. Similarly, while the evidence for north Adriatic estates highlights production, its leisure aspects should not be overlooked, nor should its potential use as a resort and display area for the imperial family.

This would suggest that, to a degree, the *classes* were placed in regions more similar than has sometimes been recognised. I have also noted that each base was located not too far from a major communications and commercial hub: Puteoli in the Bay of Naples, and Aquileia in the north Adriatic. We have seen some direct literary evidence for members of the *classis Misenensis* supporting imperial activity around the *sinus Baianus*, and more will be discussed in the following chapter. There is nothing directly comparable for the north Adriatic: one could speculate over the potential role of the *classis Ravennas* in the triumphal departure of Claudius from the Po. Moreover, it is possible that the servicemen attested at Altinum and Aquileia were entrusted with tasks to the direct benefit of the Emperor or his family members, but again we cannot be certain or specific. Nevertheless, these regional backgrounds and imperial interests must be remembered when considering the *militia* which servicemen may have been expected to perform around Misenum and Ravenna, and should caution against a purely military approach to the *classes*.

We must end with limitations. These conclusions provide a rich background for thinking about the sort of activities which the Italian *classes* may have supported in the Bay of Naples or the north Adriatic. But the distribution of epitaphs and other documentary evidence indicates that both *classes* had a much wider Mediterranean and empire-wide roles, some of which we shall examine in the following chapter. Nonetheless, our findings may encourage a reconsideration of why there is evidence for *classis* servicemen elsewhere in the Mediterranean. It is commonly assumed that they were performing traditional military tasks, but given a potentially wider understanding of *militia*, and the varied activities attested and suggested for the manpower pools around their bases, perhaps other types of duties can be proposed.

IV. The Italian *classes* and imperial organics.

1. Introduction

Having examined the servicemen and main bases of the Italian *classes*, this chapter is devoted to some of their functions. It builds on several key observations: the warning against placing too much emphasis on the maritime characteristics of the *classes*; the identification of the *classis* servicemen as *milites* who performed a variety of tasks broadly considered *militia*; systems of manpower mobilisation; the conceptual closeness of the Italian *classes* to the imperial house; the association of their bases with imperial property and regions of mixed imperial activity. I shall argue that the duties performed by the servicemen demonstrate the role of the *classes* as flexible manpower pools rather than typical Mediterranean war fleets. There is no need to consider these activities as secondary to the imagined main military tasks of the *classes*, or the product of a ‘tendency to draw off “useless” naval personnel’.⁸⁹¹ Moreover, I shall suggest that the *classes* were integrated into systems, which I shall term imperial organics, supporting the functioning of the empire.

I shall offer a preliminary definition of these organics. Recent collections demonstrate that studies of ancient states and empires often concentrate on highly visible institutions or social relations as interpretative tools.⁸⁹² Thus, in analysing the Roman empire, Peter Bang scrutinises the army, the “court”, provincial cities and aristocracies, and how their relationships with the ruling authority (and each other)

⁸⁹¹ Starr (1960²) 204 n.77.

⁸⁹² Morris and Scheidel eds. (2009); Arnason and Raaflaub eds. (2011); Bang and Scheidel eds. (2013). See also below pp. 213-14 on Roman “government”.

were managed.⁸⁹³ This approach usefully elucidates ‘high-end’ dynamics, such as major relationships between high status actors, the values they held, and how these played their part in the formation, sustainment and evolution of the empire.⁸⁹⁴

But it has its drawbacks and can potentially encourage misleading interpretations. Among these one might place the supposed military logistics activities of the *classes*. This argument seems influenced by a desire to associate *classis* activities with some well-known events of imperial history as part of a major institution, the Roman army. However, despite Reddé, *classis* involvement in military logistics is far from certain.⁸⁹⁵

The approach also neglects less visible activities potentially vital to understanding the empire. As a comparison, Horden and Purcell examined the differences between ‘high-end’ and ‘low-end’ commerce, emphasising how much the historian of the Mediterranean misses when concentrating on the former, prestigious and of high economic value, while neglecting the ‘Brownian motion’ of small traders.⁸⁹⁶

Thus organics can be thought of as ‘low-end’ dynamics maintaining the empire, here especially the placement of manpower sources of use to the Emperor, the movement of people between and through particular interdependent regions, and how placement and movement can be related. These dynamics are often germinated, not always intentionally, by imperial (i.e. by the Emperor or his representatives’) activity. They then function in a self-sustaining manner, requiring little if any direct input from the central authority.

⁸⁹³ Bang (2013); *cf.* Hopkins (2009) for a recent expression of his fiscal approach; *cf.* Hopkins (1980).

⁸⁹⁴ Note also cultural or ideological approaches taken by e.g. Lendon (1997); Ando (2000); *cf.* Lendon (2006) for criticism. For Rome and world-systems analysis see Woolf (1990).

⁸⁹⁵ See Prologue.

⁸⁹⁶ Horden and Purcell (2000) 143-52, 365-77.

This concept owes considerable intellectual debts, and is not wholly new. It bears some relationship to the barely perceptible deep structures favoured by Braudel: transhumance or migrations of *gens de mer* from port to port, their impact on Mediterranean history, and the capacity of empires wishing to control manpower to act within it.⁸⁹⁷ Some recent studies of ancient empires allude to background structures, but they are often left difficult to grasp, and without clear formulation.⁸⁹⁸

One curious feature of these organics is how they appear to grow and function somewhat of their own accord, hence the biological terminology. The idea that states could act with unintended consequences, affecting their dynamics over the long term, can be found elsewhere, for instance concerning decisions made by central authorities on mechanisms of extraction, which could then grant unintended powers to local figures of high status, as Goldstone and Haldon note regarding sixteenth and seventeenth century Indian states.⁸⁹⁹

This discussion naturally appends to debates concerning the nature of Roman “government”, and whether rational and deliberate acts typical of modern administrations can be identified in our period. By retrojecting modern systems onto the Romans, scholars have discussed Roman government, administration and bureaucracy.⁹⁰⁰ Yet there is little evidence for such complex structures, urging the argument, especially following Millar, that the Romans did not create a comprehensive administrative system, or see the need to. Although the Emperor himself dealt with copious business, normally reacting to letters or petitions from

⁸⁹⁷ Braudel (1972) e.g. 85-7, 145-7.

⁸⁹⁸ E.g. Goldstone and Haldon (2009) 21-2, though still concentrating on human institutions such as property rights; cf. Lendon (1997).

⁸⁹⁹ Goldstone and Haldon (2009) 16.

⁹⁰⁰ Ubiquitous in non-specialist material and in much scholarship of the twentieth century and earlier, as book titles demonstrate e.g. the *Römische Staatsverwaltung* of Marquardt and *Die kaiserlichen Verwaltungsbeamten bis auf Diocletian* of Hirschfeld; of more recent work see e.g. Eck (1997-98a).

individuals or groups, he had no time or inclination to formulate consistent policy, and Roman “government” can thus be considered minimalist.⁹⁰¹

Set against this is the ‘*mémoire perdue*’ approach advanced by Nicolet and his followers. This argues for exploiting scattered references to study an archival corpus ‘comportera non des textes retrouvés, mais en quelque sorte l’*idée* des textes perdus’ (author’s italics).⁹⁰² For instance, Bats and Coudry have studied references to the *acta senatus* and *senatus consulta* for what can be learnt about their composition, publication, storage and use.⁹⁰³ The amount of “paperwork” implied encourages a view of Roman “government” less minimalist than that advanced above.

However, this method suffers from major limitations, wholly acknowledged by its proponents. Because sources rarely do more than fleetingly mention administrative documents or processes, the nature or use of any archived material remains largely obscure. One could also suggest that Roman imperial “government” may still have been limited in its activities, though “paperwork” may have supported those activities to a much greater degree than has been thought.

Thus, even taking into account the possibility of the employment of substantial archived material in administration, many features of modern “government” will be wholly absent from any thorough analysis of the Roman empire. We shall see later how this conception may apply to the figure of the Emperor as benefactor, and the “management” of the *annona*. It is perhaps under such a “government” that imperial organics had the space to evolve, or indeed were required to.

⁹⁰¹ See Millar (1977); Saller (1982) for the role of patronage in determining access to office; Purcell (1986); Garnsey and Saller (1987) 20-40; Ando (2006) 192; Lendon (2006) 55; Bang (2013) 438.

⁹⁰² Moatti (1998) 2. See esp. Demougin ed. (1994); Moatti ed. (1998); cf. Brosius ed. (2003). Note also Burton (2002), arguing that our unrepresentative evidence underplays the ‘normative’ regulations found in, for example, imperial *mandata*.

⁹⁰³ Bats (1994); Coudry (1994).

To find evidence for these organics, and their relationship to the Italian *classes*, I shall re-examine three examples of functions performed by the *classes* as pools of manpower, often in ‘high-level’ contexts, but in whose backgrounds lurk less visible dynamics. First, I shall consider the role of the Italian *classis* manpower pool in systems of military mobilisation and redeployment, analysing evidence for the transfer of servicemen to land service, and their apparent replacement with fresh recruits. I shall scrutinise the civil wars of AD 68-70, the Bar Kokhba war of AD 132-5, alongside discussion of the *cohortes classicae*, and the civil strife beginning in AD 193. Although scholars have typically connected such redeployments with emergencies and even with grand strategy, I shall hypothesise that they may have occurred more frequently, and were encouraged by the convenience of a large manpower pool in Italy. I shall contend that the degree to which that manpower pool could be maintained, alongside its general exploitation, can be understood as among the organics of empire.

I shall then argue that the *classis* manpower pool supported imperial communications on water and land. There is some debate over whether and how frequently the *classes* transported members of the imperial family and people conducting business on behalf of the Emperor. I shall review the primarily literary evidence, arguing that we can regard the *classis* role as habitual. Moreover, in studying a passage of Tacitus suggesting that the *classes* transported people from Brundisium to Greece in the Tiberian period, I shall argue that this can be considered evidence for business as usual at the port, and for the role of the *classes* in conveying imperial news and representatives. However, we cannot necessarily generalise from the specific circumstances of Brundisium.

Subsequently, I shall consider the regional role of the *classes* in monitoring communications at Misenum and Ravenna, and in serving as part of an informal communications network which relied on rumour and general news reports passing through major hubs. Regarding Misenum, I shall build on previous arguments concerning the role of Puteoli as a communications hub, and place it alongside a passage of Suetonius indicating *classis* servicemen carried information overland from Puteoli and Ostia to Rome. While we do not have such evidence for the *classis Ravennas*, I shall tentatively propose that the proximity of its base to Aquileia, and the heavy traffic along the *via Flaminia*, would have made a similar arrangement in the north Adriatic not unlikely. I shall suggest that we may perceive imperial organics in the placement of the *classes* in their particular regions, and in the apparent reliance on informal information networks accessible at major hubs.

Finally, I shall consider the relationship between the *classis* manpower pool on the Tyrrhenian coast of Italy and the *annona*. Previous work has conjectured on the activities which *classis* servicemen performed in this relationship, given their presence at harbours frequented by grain ships. However, direct evidence is elusive. Therefore, I shall approach the manpower pool as part of a system which emerged on the western coast of Italy to the benefit of the security of the grain supply, engineered in part by imperial activity. This activity, partly encouraged by the perceived responsibility of Emperors for the *annona*, included the construction of imperial infrastructural projects. I shall suggest that, whatever motivated these projects, they could have been perceived as imperial benefactions, and in turn the imperial character of the 'port system' of Rome deserves emphasis. The ideological place of *classis* servicemen, some stationed at harbours possibly constructed at imperial estates, will be analysed. I shall end by considering how this system, not necessarily the product

of considered design, but rather an evolution based on particular attitudes to benefaction and property, might be regarded as evidence for imperial organics.

2. The Italian *classes*, mobilisation and redeployment

Flavius Josephus praised Roman readiness, believing it had given Rome success in wars and world power: their armies were always prepared, never idly waiting for problems to arise (οὐδὲ ἀναμένουσιν τοὺς καιρούς).⁹⁰⁴ Their promptness and energy were laudable.⁹⁰⁵ Rapid manpower deployment in response to trouble would have been integral to this readiness.

Vegetius later applied this idea of readiness to the *classes*:⁹⁰⁶

Romanus autem populus pro decore et utilitate magnitudinis suae non propter necessitatem tumultus alicuius classem parabat ex tempore sed ne quando necessitatem sustineret semper habuit praeparatam. nemo enim bello lacessere aut facere audet iniuriam ei regno vel populo quem expeditum et promptum ad resistendum vindicandumque cognoscit.

He followed this with a schematic division of the Mediterranean into two zones, east and west, one for each Italian *classis*. This division has been attacked because of epigraphic evidence for the *classes* outside their zones.⁹⁰⁷ Yet, as Courtois noted in criticising Vegetius, it identifies a concern with rapid reaction to trouble.⁹⁰⁸ Vegetius himself stated that the partition allowed *directa navigatio*, useful because *in rebus*

⁹⁰⁴ Jos. *BJ* 3.72.

⁹⁰⁵ Jos. *BJ* 3.106: ὅθεν δρᾶσαι μὲν ἀεὶ ταχεῖς...; 3.107: οἷς οὖν βουλή μὲν ἄρχει παρατάξεως, ἔπεται δὲ τοῖς βεβουλεμένοις στρατὸς οὕτω δραστήριος.

⁹⁰⁶ Veg. *Mil.* 4.31.1-3.

⁹⁰⁷ E.g. Chapot (1896) 44; Courtois (1939) 19-20; Starr (1960²) 24-5; cf. Reddé (1986) 206, more sympathetic to Vegetius.

⁹⁰⁸ Courtois (1939) 19; cf. Fiebiger (1894) 320.

*bellicis celeritas amplius solet prodesse quam virtus.*⁹⁰⁹ Thus, the *classes* as war fleets were a rapid reaction force.

The passage has rarely been directly engaged with, though it underlies views of the *classes* as a final insurance, ‘designed for unpredictable emergencies’.⁹¹⁰ Somewhat in this vein, Reddé argued that Vegetius considered the *classes* a deterrent, an insurance against the outbreak of further wars.⁹¹¹

It is perhaps unsurprising that Vegetius, writing in a more troubled era, would concentrate on responses to outbreaks of conflict, even employing language recognisable to the modern reader familiar with “military deterrents”. The apparent conception of the *classes* as primarily war fleets is also wholly to be expected, in a period of potential maritime conflict. However, despite its alluring rationality, this anachronistic sketch cannot be uncritically used to understand the *classes* in our period.

Returning to Josephus, the movement of *milites* from one part of the empire to another, especially but not only in crises, relied on well-developed systems of mobilisation. Here, I shall argue that the Italian *classes* had a particular place in these systems by considering the literary evidence for the civil wars of AD 68-70, *diplomata* and papyri revealing possible redeployments in the Bar Kokhba war, and finally literature relevant to the strife of AD 193. This evidence indicates that because their recruitment needs were apparently so well met, the *classes* could serve as manpower pools, their *milites* rapidly redeployed as land forces.

⁹⁰⁹ Veg. *Mil.* 4.31.6.

⁹¹⁰ Starr (1960²) 170.

⁹¹¹ Reddé (1986) 332-3.

Starr understood such examples as forced by ‘imperial exigencies’, indicating that the *classes* were a final insurance for land campaigns.⁹¹² This is implied elsewhere, as when Kienast described *classis* manpower as ‘die einzige militärische Reserve in Italien, auf die der Kaiser bei Notfällen zurückgreifen konnte’.⁹¹³ Le Bohec has even understood the *classes* as the ‘ultimate reserve of soldiers’ and part of the ‘active defence’ of the empire’.⁹¹⁴ This draws on concepts of grand strategy, alongside the argument of Reddé that the *classes* were embedded in military logistics.⁹¹⁵ While I agree that *classes* were a useful manpower pool, it is another thing entirely to characterise their role in terms of grand strategy. In examining the evidence, I shall suggest that the crisis narrative has been over-emphasised, and that the troop transfers may reflect low-level systems about which we have little information, tentatively hinting at imperial organics.

2.1 The *classes* and AD 68-70

We have already encountered our first examples of the redeployment of *classis* servicemen for terrestrial combat. During the civil strife that began in AD 68 and ended with Vespasian becoming Emperor, Nero formed what became the *legio I Adiutrix* from members of the *classis Misensis*, while the Flavian forces created the *legio II Adiutrix* from men of the *classis Ravennas*.⁹¹⁶

⁹¹² Starr (1960²) 188.

⁹¹³ Kienast (1966) 48.

⁹¹⁴ Le Bohec (1994) 164-5.

⁹¹⁵ For grand strategy and the Roman empire, see esp. Luttwak (1976) with the considered criticism of J. Mann in *JRS* 69 (1979), 175-83.

⁹¹⁶ On the *legio I* see Tac. *Hist.* 1.31, 36-8, 87; Suet. *Galb.* 12.2; Plut. *Galb.* 15.3-4; Cass. Dio 64.3; Ritterling in *RE* XII (1925), s.v. *legio I Adiutrix*, 1380-1404; Lőrincz (2000a). For the *legio II* see Tac. *Hist.* 3.50 and Ritterling in *RE* XII (1925), s.v. *legio II Adiutrix*, 1437-56; Lőrincz (2000b). See also above pp. 92-5 for further discussion and bibliography.

One would not deny that these transfers took place in unusual circumstances. Yet modern accounts can imply that the transfers themselves were somehow unconventional.⁹¹⁷ Starr described the presence of the servicemen at the Mulvian Bridge and their attitude to Galba as ‘somewhat importunate and violent’.⁹¹⁸ Miller considered the action of Nero as ‘extremely logical, if unorthodox’.⁹¹⁹

If we accept that the men who encountered Galba outside Rome were part of what became the *legio I Adiutrix*, sources describing their confrontation with the Emperor do not really indicate that their demands were unreasonable, or that Nero had done anything especially ‘unorthodox’.⁹²⁰ Suetonius states that, having been made *iusti milites*, they refused to return to their old status, obstinately demanding an eagle and standards.⁹²¹ Plutarch says that the former *classis* servicemen wanted to enforce their rights as soldiers, demanding standards and a camp.⁹²² Dio records that they approached Galba to be retained in their service, and were unhappy when refused.⁹²³

I am tempted to read these accounts as suggesting that the *classis milites* expected that their status would be confirmed perhaps because their redeployment was not unprecedented, other than potentially in its scale. Evidence to come for other transfers will make this suggestion more persuasive.

⁹¹⁷ Though some accounts offer little real evaluation e.g. de la Berge (1886) 212-13; Kienast (1966) 61; Reddé (1986) 509-10.

⁹¹⁸ Starr (1960²) 180.

⁹¹⁹ Miller (1981) 75.

⁹²⁰ On these men see above p. 92 n.390.

⁹²¹ Suet. *Galb.* 12.2: *nam cum classarios, quos Nero ex remigibus iustos milites fecerat, redire ad pristinum statum cogeret, recusantis atque insuper aquilam et signa pertinacius flagitantis.*

⁹²² Plut. *Galb.* 15.3-4: οὗτοι δὲ ἦσαν οὐς εἰς ἓν τάγμα ὁ Νέρων συλλοχίσας ἀπέφηνε στρατιώτας· καὶ τότε παρόντες ἐκβεβαιώσασθαι τὴν στρατείαν οὐτ’ ὀφθῆναι τοῖς ἀπαντῶσιν οὐτ’ ἀκουσθῆναι παρίεσαν τὸν αὐτοκράτορα, ἀλλ’ ἐθορύβουν βοῆ σημεία τῷ τάγματι καὶ χώραν αἰτοῦντες.

⁹²³ Cass. Dio 64.3.1-2: καὶ ἠξίουσαν ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ στρατείᾳ φυλαχθῆναι. καὶ ὅς τὰ μὲν πρῶτα ἀνεβάλετο ὡς καὶ σκεπτόμενος περὶ τούτου, ὡς δ’ οὐκ ἐπέιθοντο ἀλλ’ ἐθορύβουν, ἐφήκε σφισι τὸ στρατεύμα...

However, the reaction of Galba could suggest that he considered their demands unacceptable. Suetonius claims that he decimated the men: *non modo immisso equite disiecit, sed decimavit etiam*.⁹²⁴ Dio elaborates: καὶ οἱ μὲν παραχρῆμα ἐς ἑπτακισχιλίους ἀπέθανον, οἱ δὲ καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο δεκατευθέντες.⁹²⁵ Yet our sources use this affair to criticise Galba: in particular, Suetonius groups this action under symptoms of his *saevitia* and *avaritia*. Galba, not the *militēs*, is in the wrong.⁹²⁶

Plutarch does not mention a decimation and, although recounting the deaths of servicemen, may partially blame the *militēs*, though not for their demands: ἐνίων δὲ καὶ τὰς μαχαίρας σπασαμένων, ἐκέλευσε τοὺς ἰππεῖς ἐμβαλεῖν αὐτοῖς ὁ Γάλβας. ὑπέστη δὲ οὐδεὶς ἐκείνων, ἀλλ' οἱ μὲν εὐθὺς ἀνατραπέντες, οἱ δὲ φεύγοντες διεφθάρησαν.⁹²⁷ This version should be set alongside the suggestion by Miller that a tradition hostile to Galba exaggerated accounts of the Mulvian Bridge.⁹²⁸ Notably, *diplomata* of AD 68 demonstrate that Galba eventually discharged some of these men as legionaries.⁹²⁹ Thus, whether he reacted with quite so much bloodshed is questioned, though I would not dispute that some kind of fractious confrontation occurred outside Rome.

The sources on the meeting between Galba and the new legionaries do not demonstrate that there was anything particularly ‘unorthodox’ about their transfer from the *classes*. One can derive similar conclusions from the Tacitean account of the formation of the *legio II Adiutrix*. The servicemen are perhaps portrayed somewhat negatively in their demands to be made legionaries (*ad has copias e classicis*

⁹²⁴ Suet. *Galb.* 12.2.

⁹²⁵ Cass. Dio 64.3.2; cf. Tac. *Hist.* 1.6: *introitus in urbem trucidatis tot milibus inermium militum*.

⁹²⁶ Suet. *Galb.* 12.1: *praecesserat de eo fama saevitiae simul atque avaritiae*.

⁹²⁷ Plut. *Galb.* 15.4.

⁹²⁸ Miller (1981) 75.

⁹²⁹ *CIL* XVI 7-9.

Ravennatibus, legionariam militiam poscentibus).⁹³⁰ Starr speaks of the ‘sailors who had forced Primus to enrol them in a *legio classica*’.⁹³¹ I would emphasise that Antonius Primus partly assented, selecting only the best men (*optimus quisque adsciti*), perhaps following an established practice when shifting *classis* servicemen to legionary service.⁹³²

Fresh recruits were immediately drafted into the *classis Ravennas* to replace those transferred, a practice we may see repeated. Their origins are important: Tacitus states that Dalmatians were brought in (*classem Dalmatae supplevere*).⁹³³ As we have seen, these people were a typical source of *classis Ravennas* recruits.⁹³⁴ Therefore even in unusual circumstances normal sources could be tapped to replace transferred *milites*.

While we have no evidence for fresh recruitment to the *classis Misenensis*, its effective employment by Otho suggests its otherwise excellent manpower resources even when deprived of transferred members. Otho used the *classis Misenensis* against the Vitellian forces at Forum Iulii, though it is not clear whether this city possessed a naval force at this date.⁹³⁵ Moreover, according to Tacitus, the *fama victricis classis (Misenensis)* kept Corsica, Sardinia and nearby islands loyal to Otho.⁹³⁶ Its deployment for combat reminds us that the *classes could* be used as war fleets, or to support land campaigns, emphasising the flexibility of these *milites* who could row.

In sum, the formation of the *legiones Adiutrices* suggests that the Italian *classes* could serve as manpower sources for new land forces. The circumstances of

⁹³⁰ Tac. *Hist.* 3.50.

⁹³¹ Starr (1960²) 185.

⁹³² Tac. *Hist.* 3.50.

⁹³³ *Ibid.* 3.50.

⁹³⁴ See above pp. 59-60.

⁹³⁵ Tac. *Hist.* 1.87; 2.12-14; cf. Tac. *Agric.* 7 for the murder of the mother of Agricola by the *classis Othoniana* in Liguria.

⁹³⁶ Tac. *Hist.* 2.16.

AD 68-70 were highly particular, but the evidence does not clearly suggest that ancient authorities regarded the formation of the legions as ‘unorthodox’, at least to the degree of some modern works. I cautiously suggest, but for now will not press the point, that this could imply that the movement of *classis* servicemen to land forces, encouraged by the depth of their manpower resources, was not wholly restricted to special circumstances.

2.2 The Bar Kokhba Revolt

Several scholars have argued that many *classis* servicemen were transferred to land forces during the Jewish Bar Kokhba uprising of AD 132-5, which engulfed Judaea and surrounding territories.⁹³⁷ The evidence cited is rather compelling: up to fifteen *classis diplomata* are known dating to AD 160.⁹³⁸ Given that at this time servicemen were normally discharged after twenty six years, the recipients most likely enlisted during the revolt in AD 134. This is an extraordinary number of finds for one year: five *diplomata* date to AD 142, while the special circumstances of AD 71 produced nine.⁹³⁹ This large number could be down to chance, but following Roxan I am tempted to regard this as evidence for a *classis* ‘recruitment drive’, specifically the *classis Misenensis*, arguably in response to the war.⁹⁴⁰

⁹³⁷ E.g. Starr (1960²) 188; Roxan (1995) 110; Eck (1999) 79-80 and (2010a) 95-100 and see below p. 224 n.943. Much about the uprising is disputed, including its scale and geographical extent: see e.g. Bowersock (1979); Schäfer (1981) and (1990); Eck (1999) and (2007); Goodman (2000) 671-4. I am inclined to side with “maximalists” such as Eck, or at least believe that the Roman response to the uprising involved major troop deployments.

⁹³⁸ AE 1975 245 (= RMD II 105); AE 1992 1507 (= RMD III 172); AE 1995 1822 (= RMD IV 277); AE 1997 1769 (= RMD V 425); AE 2002 1758 (=RMD V 426); AE 2002 1760 (= 2006 1854 = RMD V 427); RMM 39; AE 2006 1855-60; AE 2007 1789; Eck (2010a) 96 for an unpublished document. Around half are extremely fragmentary.

⁹³⁹ See below p. 229 n.964 for AD 142; for AD 71 see above pp. 40 and 62-3.

⁹⁴⁰ Roxan (1995) 110.

The conflict did not involve major Mediterranean naval engagements, so such mass recruitment was probably not conducted to support a war fleet. The petition of 22 January AD 150 by members of the *legio X Fretensis* to the governor of Judaea, discussed earlier when considering enlistment, could provide an explanation.⁹⁴¹ Twenty two men were recruited into the *classis praetoria Misenensis* in AD 124/5 (consular dating).⁹⁴² At some intervening point, they were transferred to the *legio X Fretensis* in Judaea. Vitelli, who published the petition, proposed that the most likely time for the transfer was AD 132/3, portraying this as a response to possibly heavy losses in the reinforced legion during the Bar Kokhba revolt.⁹⁴³

Vitelli noted that the legionaries had completed over twenty years of service, which would place their transfer at the latest in AD 130, assuming discharge in 150.⁹⁴⁴ However, he thought that it most probably occurred in the crisis of the Bar Kokhba war, and therefore suggested either a rounding of nineteen or eighteen years of service, or that the twenty years mentioned was a shorthand for their twenty six total years of service.⁹⁴⁵ This interpretation has recently been echoed by Eck, who claimed that such a transfer could have happened ‘nur in einer Notsituation’.⁹⁴⁶

Yet Degrassi, disputing the posited AD 132/3 transfer, suggested that such movements did not demand a dire situation, though he gave only one other tenuous

⁹⁴¹ *PSI* IX 1026 (= *CIL* XVI p. 146 no.13 = *CPL* 117 = Smallwood (1966) no.330 = *ChLA* XXV 784); cf. above p. 123.

⁹⁴² Following Degrassi (1952) 37; note that several publications (e.g. G. Vitelli in *PSI* IX (1929), p.36; Degrassi (1929) 243; Mann (2000) 156) mistakenly date the recruitment to AD 125-6.

⁹⁴³ Vitelli in *PSI* XI (1929), pp. 38-9; followed by Starr (1960²) 81,188; Forni (1953) 105 (‘forse’); Kienast (1966) 96; Campbell (1994) 202; Roxan (1995) 110 (suggesting AD 133/4); Birley (1997) 274; Eck (2010a) 97-8.

⁹⁴⁴ Vitelli in *PSI* IX (1929), p. 37; *ChLA* XXV 784: A.5-6: *ex indulgentia divi Hadriani in leg(ionem) Fr(etensem) translatis [s]uper XX omnia nobis uti bonis militibus constiterint*; B.4: *t[ra]nsl[ati anno]s [sup]er XX o[mnia n]obis uti bonis mil(itibus) constiterint*. Rendered in the composite text of Vitelli as *annos super XX*.

⁹⁴⁵ Vitelli in *PSI* XI (1929), pp. 38-9.

⁹⁴⁶ Eck (2010a) 97.

example.⁹⁴⁷ Smallwood, disagreeing with Vitelli, argued that we should take the text at face value on the date, but did suggest that a disturbed situation prior to the conflict could have prompted the transfer.⁹⁴⁸ Mann suggested the aftermath of the war, leaving the dating problem unconflicted.⁹⁴⁹

There is nothing demonstrably wrong with the solution of Vitelli, but his argument depends on special pleading. Perhaps Smallwood was correct to propose trouble just before the war. Yet it is possible that we have been misled by a fascination with major events, and that the men were transferred in AD 129/30 for reasons mundane and irrecoverable. Thus, this document demonstrates the transfer of *classis milites* to the land army, perhaps in response to a particular problem, though it cannot be conclusively connected with the Bar Kokhba war, and may be rare evidence for day-to-day manpower redistribution mechanisms.

Whatever the precise solution, the mass *classis* recruitment of AD 134 should perhaps be understood in a similar way: men from the *classis Misensis* were transferred to Judaea, in this case surely because of the effects of the Bar Kokhba war, and were replaced by fresh recruits, recipients of the *diplomata* of AD 160.

2.3 The *cohortes classicae*

An examination of the imperial *cohortes classicae* supports the transfer theory. The earliest two *cohortes* are generally considered Augustan in origin.⁹⁵⁰ Evidence includes two early first century AD epitaphs for members of the *cohors I classica*

⁹⁴⁷ Degraffi (1929) 252-3. He cites *W.Chr.* 463 (= *CPL* 104), a Domitianic edict from Philadelphia (AD 94) concerning the privileges of veterans of the *legio X Fretensis*. Lesquier (1918) 316-17 speculated without basis that these men had originally been *classis* members.

⁹⁴⁸ Smallwood (1981) 437 and n.36; cf. Reddé (1986) 525.

⁹⁴⁹ Mann (2000) 156.

⁹⁵⁰ For a full collection of the evidence, see Spaul (2000) 477-8, 485.

found at Villeneuve-sur-Lot, for *Sex(tus) Valerius Sex(ti) f(ilius) Aniensis Maxsumus*, whose home was Forum Iulii, and *Valerius Gal(?) Vol(tinia) Tutus*, from Luco.⁹⁵¹ A veteran of the cohort, *C(aius) Lucceius L(uci) f(ilius) Ani(ensis)*, probably settled in and died at Forum Iulii in the first half of the first century AD.⁹⁵² We also know of at least one member of the same cohort, *Sex(tus) Nonius L(uci) f(ilius) / Vot(uria) Severus*, who was deducted to Antium in the first century, probably by Nero.⁹⁵³

Based partly on the Villeneuve-sur-Lot epitaphs, Kraft argued that the *cohortes* were formed from the naval force stationed at Forum Iulii after Actium, and were initially employed in the Aquitanian campaign of Valerius Messalla in 28 BC.⁹⁵⁴ The details of this hypothesis cannot be verified, though the findspots, the probably early dating of the Villeneuve-sur-Lot inscriptions, and cohort members coming from Forum Iulii makes the broad argument attractive.

The above evidence concerns only the *cohors I classica*, though many assume that the *cohors II* was created alongside it.⁹⁵⁵ But this unit appears at the earliest datable instance in an inscription from Berytus in Syria mentioning Q. Aemilius Secundus, who served under P. Sulpicius Quirinius (legate of Syria from AD 6-12) as *praefectus cohortis II classicae*.⁹⁵⁶ Spaul has suggested that the unit may have been raised separately from the *cohors I*, either from Forum Iulii manpower, or from a

⁹⁵¹ *CIL* XIII 923 (= *ILA Nitiobroges* no.20), 924 (= *ILA Nitiobroges* no.21). The text of the latter is poorly transmitted, thus it is uncertain what *Gal(...)* is doing, and one cannot tell whether Valerius was adopted as a *praenomen*, or if the *praenomen* was not copied down. Saddington (1982) 142 dated the epitaphs to before a withdrawal of troops instigated by Tiberius; cf. Cichorius in *RE* IV (1900), s.v. *cohors I Classica*, 272: 'ziemlich frühe'.

⁹⁵² *AE* 1904 7 (= *ILS* 9158).

⁹⁵³ *CIL* X 6672 (= *ILS* 2574); cf. *CIL* X 6674 (= *ILS* 2020) commemorating a *veteranus* originally from Forum Iulii, buried at Antium. Starr (1960²) 204 n.76 conjectured that he belonged to a *cohors classica*. On the Neronian *colonia* see Keppie (1984a) 87-8.

⁹⁵⁴ Kraft (1951) 95-9; similarly Fiebiger in *RE* III (1899), s.v. *classis*, 2636; Starr (1960²) 188; Reddé (1986) 351; Le Bohec (1994) 98.

⁹⁵⁵ See the bibliography in the above note.

⁹⁵⁶ *CIL* III 6687 (= *ILS* 2683 = *AE* 2006 1579). Aemilius: *PIR*² A 406; Sulpicius: *PIR*² S 1018.

classis presence in Syria.⁹⁵⁷ The evidence allows no certainty. But importantly, this inscription confirms an Augustan date for the *cohors I*, presumably created before the *cohors II*.

The above seems to indicate that men were drawn off from *classis* forces to form permanent land units in the Augustan period. One cannot decisively characterise their formation as crisis responses, though unknown requirements of the Aquitanian campaign may have been significant. If the *cohortes* had any maritime functions initially, they probably quickly lost them. *Diplomata* show that the *cohors I* was in Germany by AD 80.⁹⁵⁸ Other *diplomata* demonstrate that the *cohors II* remained in Syria and became a unit of archers.⁹⁵⁹

The second century produced *cohortes classicae Aeliae* and *Aureliae*. A *diploma* recording units in the province of Arabia in AD 142, published by Weiss and Speidel, mentions a *cohors I Aelia classica* and a *cohors II Aurelia classica*.⁹⁶⁰ They attractively propose that this *cohors Aelia* was formed in response to heavy Roman losses during the Bar Kokhba uprising. They considered the possibility that it was formed from a vexillation of the better known British *cohors I Aelia classica* transferred east in response to the war, though discounted this because of the distances involved.⁹⁶¹

⁹⁵⁷ Spaul (2000) 485; cf. Cichorius in *RE* IV (1900), s.v. *cohors II Classica*, 273; Saddington (1982) 142.

⁹⁵⁸ *CIL* XVI 158 (AD 80); *AE* 1968 400 (AD 158); *AE* 1997 1314 (AD 127); *RMM* 4 (AD 80), 24 (AD 127), 35 (AD 153-4).

⁹⁵⁹ *CIL* XVI 106, from the reign of Antoninus Pius. Previously they were not called *sagittaria* e.g. *CIL* XVI 35; *AE* 1939 126; *AE* 2006 1838 (all AD 88).

⁹⁶⁰ *AE* 2004 1925.

⁹⁶¹ Weiss and Speidel (2004) 260. For the British cohort see the *diplomata* *CIL* XVI 93 (= III p. 1982= *RIB* II 1.2401,1) and *AE* 1997 1001 (= *RMD* V 420), from AD 145/6, and 27 February AD 158 respectively. On its formation see Starr (1960²) 188; Holder (1998) 254-5. Spaul (2000) 477-8 uniquely argues that this is the same unit as the German *cohors I classica*, but the latter is never called *Aelia*, so I am inclined to disagree.

Instead, they argue that the cohort was formed from servicemen of the *classes Alexandrina* and *Syriaca*.⁹⁶² They suggested that these men were put into an auxiliary cohort because of the “lower” status of provincial *classes*, while members of the *classis Misenensis* were sent to a legion. While possible, nothing proves this strict demarcation. Presumably the most advantageous course was adopted. In any case, the unit stayed in Arabia after the conflict, part of the new military settlement. They propose that that the *cohors II Aurelia classica* was created in this context by Antoninus Pius, possibly from further *classis* servicemen brought into the region.⁹⁶³

The above scenario is wholly possible, though lacks conclusive proof. The designation of units as *classica* certainly implies a *classis* origin, and perhaps the most likely point for the redeployment of members of any *classis* at around this time in this region was the Bar Kokhba war or its aftermath, and new troop distributions, which at a stretch could include the *cohors II Aurelia classica*.

The Bar Kokhba war caused high manpower demands, partly because of combat losses, and partly because of the decisive Roman reaction. *Diplomata* indicate that at this time there were high levels of recruitment into the Italian *classes*, the *classis Misenensis* in particular, and following earlier work I have attributed this to members of the *classes* being transferred to the warzone during or just following the conflict. This may also explain the *cohortes classicae* in Arabia in the 140s AD.

However, the discussion has also pointed out the pitfalls of assuming that major events must explain all such redeployments. The circumstances behind the transfer to the *legio X Fretensis* of the authors of the petition of AD 150 are unclear, while similar uncertainty surrounds the creation of the comparative examples of the

⁹⁶² Weiss and Speidel (2004) 262.

⁹⁶³ See also Weiss and Speidel (2004) 259 for an unpublished Arabian *diploma* of AD 145, also mentioning a *cohors I Aurelia*, perhaps *classica*.

Augustan *cohortes classicae*. It is even possible that Bar Kokhba had nothing to do with the creation of the Hadrianic and Antonine *cohortes classicae*. These examples suggest that the *classes* could form manpower pools to be redeployed in different environments, but not necessarily that they were the ‘ultimate reserve’ for a crisis.⁹⁶⁴ Instead, we might view them as part of a low-level system of manpower mobilisation which relied on access to a large manpower pool in Italy, facilitating everyday transfers across the empire.

2.4. The *classes* and AD 193

Our final example concerns *classis* activity in the civil conflict beginning in AD 193. According to the *Historia Augusta*, Septimius Severus seized the *classis* at Ravenna on his march to Rome (*Severus classem Ravennatem occupat*), preempting the attempt by the praetorian prefect, Tullius Crispinus, to take control on behalf of Julianus (*Tullius Crispinus, praefectus praetorio, contra Severum missus ut classem produceret, repulsus Romam rediit*).⁹⁶⁵

Previously, Julianus had brought troops into Rome, including servicemen from Misenum, to prepare for defending the city against Severus. According to Dio, they were inept: καὶ οἱ ἐκ τοῦ ναυτικοῦ τοῦ ἐν τῷ Μισσηνῷ ναυλοχοῦντος

⁹⁶⁴ Other potential examples of this practice are the five *diplomata* of AD 142, possibly attesting high recruitment levels in AD 116: *AE* 1995 1824 (= *RMD* IV 264); *AE* 1997 1781 (= *RMD* V 393); *RMD* II 106 with *AE* 2001 1725; *AE* 2001 2164 (= *RMD* V 395); *AE* 2004 1921 (= *RMD* V 392). Roxan and Holder (2004) 273 connected this with the Parthian campaigns, but one wonders whether the Jewish uprising of AD 115-17 (Cass. Dio 68.32; Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* 4.2; cf. Goodman (2000) 669-71) should be considered. Seider (1978) has argued that *ChLA* XI 500, a fragmentary early second century papyrus of unknown origin listing various units including the *classes Misensis* and *Ravennas*, is a mobilisation order, and could tentatively record the redeployment of *classis* units to land service in Egypt. But the the papyrus is too fragmentary for this to be more than a cautious conjecture.

⁹⁶⁵ SHA. *Did. Iul.* 6.3-4; cf. Cass. Dio 73.17.1.

μεταπεμφθέντες οὐδ' ὅπως γυμνάσονται ἦδεσαν.⁹⁶⁶ This could argue against the *classis* servicemen being ready for redeployment on land.

It may only reflect conditions of the later second century: Starr believed that it was symptomatic of a lethargic decline in discipline.⁹⁶⁷ But, as Millar noted, Dio is consistently hostile to Julianus, and I suggest that this episode could derive from that.⁹⁶⁸ Moreover, Reddé argued that we should not give too much weight to the remark, given that epigraphy indicates a well organised and structured *classis* even at this stage.⁹⁶⁹ I am inclined to agree with Reddé, or at least do not think that this situation was typical of our period. If the *classes* comprised such incompetents, why did Severus and Julianus bother to secure the *classis Ravennas*, and why did Julianus bring men from Misenum to Rome in the first place?

This example differs from the others because the *classis Misenensis* servicemen were not demonstrably placed in permanent land units: they presumably retained their status, but were expected to contribute to the defence of Rome. Nonetheless, it again demonstrates that servicemen could be redeployed on land. In this instance the circumstances can reasonably be termed a crisis, at least for Julianus.

2.5 Conclusion

The examples considered indicate that considerable numbers of men would occasionally be moved from the Italian *classes* to perform military duties on land, sometimes to supplement existing units but at other times forming new ones, the *cohorts classicae*. The creation of the *legiones Adiutrices*, the transfers probably

⁹⁶⁶ Cass. Dio 73.16.3.

⁹⁶⁷ Starr (1960²) 190; cf. Courtois (1939) 43.

⁹⁶⁸ Millar (1964) 136-8.

⁹⁶⁹ Reddé (1986) 572, mistakenly attributing their summoning to Albinus.

connected with the Bar Kokhba war and the use of *classis* servicemen by Julianus could all be regarded as responses to crises. We might also place the command of Valerius Maximianus, discussed in the Prologue, in this category. In other instances, such as the formation of the Augustan *cohortes classicae* (and perhaps the second century *cohortes*) or the supplementing of the *legio X Fretensis* in the second century, the connection to an emergency is less evident, and need not be assumed. It is impossible to judge how common such transfers were, but because they may have been so mundane our lack of evidence should not uncritically be regarded a counter to this argument.

In any case, one can suggest that the *classes* performed a useful role as a manpower pool from the time of Augustus. This role would seem to have supported the security of the Roman empire by allowing the swift movement of trained men to theatres of operation.

Considering the recruitment of Dalmatians into the *classis Ravennas* in AD 69, and the supplementing of the *classis Misensis* in AD 134, it would appear that the efficient recruitment of *classis* replacements, probably from commonly exploited regions, was rapidly undertaken to replace redeployed men. This could suggest that the Romans were prepared to use the Italian *classes* as a manpower pool, and to draw up replacements. Their capacity to quickly replace these men indicates that conditions existed in at least parts of the Roman empire facilitating the mobilisation of large numbers of people, some of which were discussed in Chapter Two.

The glimpse of mobilisation systems which this study provides could have partly underpinned the readiness so admired by Josephus. Assuming that the examples considered are preserved reflections of a more constant and dynamic system of mobilisation, rather than the only times when *classis* manpower was ever

redeployed, to what extent can we perceive the organics of empire? The concentration of *classis* manpower in Campania and the north Adriatic, not forgetting those servicemen based at Rome, provided easy access to *milites* stationed in regions with particularly good connections, facilitating redeployment across the empire, whether by land or sea. We have seen in the previous chapter that the placement of the *classes* at Misenum and Ravenna was determined by several factors, including possibly the location of imperial property. There is no evidence for the conscious creation of this system, or that it should be regarded as part of imperial grand strategy.

This system of manpower redistribution was in some circumstances maintained by recruitment arrangements which, as I argued in Chapter Two, were partly self-sustaining and which themselves may be understood as imperial organics. I discussed the possible relationship between movement of recruits from Egypt along the grain route to Puteoli, and similar interdependencies may have encouraged travel from the Danubian provinces to Aquileia and Ravenna, providing the excellent supply of recruits needed to reinforce the *classis* manpower pools. Decisions were taken by individuals to redeploy the *classis* servicemen in each instance, but these decisions were made possible by an easily accessible, well-supplied manpower pool.

3. Communications

Vitellius, briefly Emperor and renowned gourmand, dedicated an enormous platter called the *clipeus Minervae* πολιούχου.⁹⁷⁰ On it, he served a remarkable range of delicacies: wrasse livers, the brains of pheasants and peacocks, the tongues of

⁹⁷⁰ Suet. *Vit.*13.2.

flamingos and the milk of the murena.⁹⁷¹ The story implies that he obtained these through the imperial *classes*, doubtless because of the distances they could cover: *a Parthia usque fretoque Hispanico per nauarchos ac triremes petitarum commiscuit.*⁹⁷²

This can be read as an eccentric demonstration of the role of the *classes* in connecting distant parts of the empire. Although the passage emphasises the exotic, it is usually thought that communications were critical to the functioning of the empire: the sending of letters between Emperors, provincial governors and communities is a vital element to the reactive “government” constructed by Millar.⁹⁷³ Despite his belief that there was no structured and effective communications system spanning the empire, the above passage encourages an examination of the Italian *classes* in this context.⁹⁷⁴

Communications can cover a range of meanings, but here I shall focus on transporting people important to the imperial house, and information monitoring and transmission. To provide context, I shall first refer to the *cursus publicus* and other imperial couriers. I shall then turn to transport. Scholars have previously proposed that the *classes*, especially the *classis Misensis*, conveyed Emperors, members of their households and imperial officials. Having examined some of the literary evidence supporting this, I shall consider a Tacitean passage concerning Brundisium, alongside *classis* epitaphs, arguing that here *classis* vessels were regularly used to support imperial communications between particular ports, but that we cannot necessarily extend this across the empire.

⁹⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷² *Ibid.*

⁹⁷³ Millar (1977) 213-28, (1982) 7-11 and (2000); note also Ando (2000) 120-2; Hopkins (2009) 186-7; see above pp. 213-14.

⁹⁷⁴ For the absence of a system see Millar (1982) 9-11 and (2000) 364-5 and below p. 235. Note also Duncan-Jones (1990) 7-29.

I shall then propose that the *classes* monitored communications passing through the regions in which they were based, especially at Misenum and Ravenna, though not necessarily because they were directly instructed to do so. This argument is based partly on the apparently informal nature of many communications networks in the Roman empire, and the sometime reliance on rumour. At least occasionally *classis* servicemen were entrusted with carrying information gathered at port to Rome, as a passage from Suetonius indicates. There is no comparable evidence for Ravenna, but I shall emphasise its situational advantages for monitoring communications passing across the north Adriatic and into Italy, perhaps along the *via Flaminia*.

Having discussed the the uses of the *classis* manpower pool in a communications context, I shall examine whether we can perceive imperial organics, especially in the informal information monitoring and transmission systems identified around Misenum and Ravenna.

3.1 The *cursus publicus* and other couriers

The *cursus publicus*, perhaps established by Augustus though only designated as such as late as the fourth century, is the system most commonly associated with imperial communications.⁹⁷⁵ While it has been understood as a ‘postal service’, with couriers included, Kolb has argued that this is incorrect: the *cursus publicus* was the infrastructure of transportation (e.g. animals, way stations) provided for officials in

⁹⁷⁵ Suet. *Aug.* 49.3. For the sake of simplicity I shall refer to the *cursus publicus*, even when earlier systems are meant.

public service and granted the use of that infrastructure.⁹⁷⁶ Millar has emphasised that the infrastructure was created by a set of obligations on communities to provide items for requisitioning.⁹⁷⁷ Therefore, concentrating on the *cursus* provides only a narrow take on communications, and it must be studied alongside, for instance, imperial couriers, sometimes granted permission to use the *cursus*.

I shall give several examples of these couriers, but the following is nowhere near comprehensive. Soldiers were frequently used as *ad hoc* couriers.⁹⁷⁸ This is implied by Tacitus, who recounts the interception of letters by the Helvetii in AD 68, and the detention of the soldiers carrying them: *aegre id passi Helvetii, interceptis epistulis, quae nomine Germanici exercitus ad Pannonicas legiones ferebantur, centurionem et quosdam militum in custodia retinebant*.⁹⁷⁹ Josephus records that Titus sent a cavalryman to announce the capture of Galilean Tarichaeae to Vespasian (Τίτος δ' ἐκπέμψας τινὰ τῶν ἰππέων εὐαγγελίζεται τῷ πατρὶ τὸ ἔργον).⁹⁸⁰ Finally, M. P. Speidel has discussed a Trajanic papyrus letter written by a soldier called Saturnilus to his mother in Karanis, in which he expressed hopes for courier missions.⁹⁸¹

Some military groups had more permanent courier duties. These included the legionary *frumentarii*, *officiales* attached to the staff of a governor in a province.⁹⁸² They also had a base in Rome at the *castra peregrina*, and were sent on missions by

⁹⁷⁶ Kolb (2000) and (2001); cf. Seeck in *RE* IV (1901), s.v. *cursus publicus*, 1846-63; Holmberg (1933); Pflaum (1940); Millar (2000) 365.

⁹⁷⁷ Millar (2000) 365.

⁹⁷⁸ Kolb (2000) 286-9.

⁹⁷⁹ Tac. *Hist.* 1.67.

⁹⁸⁰ Jos. *BJ* 3.503.

⁹⁸¹ *P. Mich.* III 203 (= *SB* IV 7356) with Speidel (1985) 291-3.

⁹⁸² Fiebiger in *RE* VII (1910), s.v. *frumentarii*, 122-5; Baillie Reynolds (1923); Sinnigen (1962); Clauss (1973a) 82-117; Paschoud (1979-81) 215-32; Rankov (1990); Kolb (2000) 290-4.

the Emperor.⁹⁸³ While some older scholarship, seduced by the *Historia Augusta*, saw the *frumentarii* primarily as “secret police”, more recent work has emphasised their communications role.⁹⁸⁴

These can be complemented by examples of civilian messengers, including the *tabellarii*, typically imperial freedmen couriers.⁹⁸⁵ Epigraphy, largely from Rome, provides most of the evidence. They appear to have been assigned to specific subjects of imperial interest, as suggested by *tabellarii* of the *officium rationum*, those of the *officium annonae*, and of the *st(atio) XX her(editatium)*.⁹⁸⁶ Texts rarely document them performing services for Emperors, though Marcus Aurelius as an imperial family member refers to one (*tandem tabellarius proficiscitur*) in a letter from AD 144-5.⁹⁸⁷ However, they are mentioned several times by Pliny the Younger, confirming their courier functions.⁹⁸⁸

Comparable are the *cursores*, though there is relatively little evidence for them before the fourth century.⁹⁸⁹ They too were primarily imperial slaves or freedmen.⁹⁹⁰ Kolb has argued that, like *tabellarii*, the *cursores* were seconded to

⁹⁸³ Sinnigen (1962) 220-3 persuasively argues for a Domitianic date for the castra; *ILTun* 778-9 give the Trajanic period as the *terminus ante quem*.

⁹⁸⁴ “Secret police”: SHA. *Hadr.* 11.4; *Comm.* 4.5; *Macrinus* 12.4; with e.g. Pflaum (1940) 332; Clauss (1973a) 90-4, 119; Austin and Rankov (1995) 136-7. For courier activities see e.g. SHA *Max. et Balb.* 10.3; *Claud.* 17.1 and e.g. Clauss (1973a) 86-90; Rankov (1990) 180; Eck (1995b) 69. See also Kolb (2000) 290-4. Another example of military couriers are the *speculatores* e.g. Suet. *Calig.* 44.2; Tac. *Hist.* 2.73 and Pflaum (1940) 329-32; Clauss (1973a) 46-81; Austin and Rankov (1995) 153; Kolb (2000) 286-7.

⁹⁸⁵ Kolb (2000) 275-8; cf. Desjardins (1878); Hirschfeld (1905²) 200-3; Pflaum (1940) 316ff.

⁹⁸⁶ *CIL* VI 8424a (= *ILS* 1706), 8473 (= *ILS* 1705), 8445 (= *ILS* 1553); cf. see Kolb (2000) 276.

⁹⁸⁷ Fronto *ad M. Caes.* 4.7. (Haines I p. 184 = Naber p. 70).

⁹⁸⁸ E.g. Plin. *Ep.* 2.12.6; 3.17.2; 8.3.3.

⁹⁸⁹ Kolb (2000) 278-80.

⁹⁹⁰ From the late second or early third century see *CIL* VI 8800: *L(uci) Sep(timi) Aug(usti) lib(erti) Zibl[---] / praep(ositi) cursorum...*; cf. *CIL* VI 241. For some literary documentation see e.g. Suet. *Ner.* 49.2.

specific imperial concerns. Epigraphy implies their presence on the staff of imperial procurators, but the case is not proven.⁹⁹¹

It is difficult to establish whether each group carried distinct message types. Perhaps *tabellarii* delivered news relating to the imperial concern they were attached to, alongside general messages, while the *cursores* were more general purpose couriers. The same uncertainty holds for the following discussion of *classis* servicemen. However, the proposed association of the *classes* with particular ports and imperial estates may indicate that, while no particular types of communications were assigned to them, communications passing through particular places were.

3.2 Conveying the Emperor

Scholars have argued that the *classes* supported imperial maritime communications, often *ad hoc*, primarily by transporting imperial family members or agents, the latter sometimes bearing messages or imperial orders. Starr observed that ‘the Italian fleets might also transport officials, and in times of peace they often had the honour of carrying the Emperor’.⁹⁹² Thus, as war fleets, the *classes* only performed this task when lacking more important duties. Later, he proposed that the ‘real utility’ of the *classes* was their employment as maritime couriers.⁹⁹³ Wickert conjectured that particular ships were assigned to certain members of the imperial house.⁹⁹⁴ Kienast

⁹⁹¹ Kolb (2000) 279. Epitaphs (*CIL* VIII 12622, 12904, 12905) found in Carthage, probably third century, have been linked to service for imperial *procuratores*, though none are explicit.

⁹⁹² Starr (1960²) 177-8; note also Courtois (1939) 26; *cf.* Starr (1989) 74-5.

⁹⁹³ Starr (1989) 75.

⁹⁹⁴ Wickert (1949-50) 108 and above pp. 47-8.

argued that the *classis Misenensis* helped the Emperor travel between estates on the Tyrrhennian coast of Italy.⁹⁹⁵

Diverging somewhat from the standard position, Reddé proposed that warships may have been used to transport important messages, but that couriers normally travelled on commercial vessels.⁹⁹⁶ He also argued that there was no maritime equivalent to the *cursus publicus*, partly because of limited evidence and because regulation of the *cursus* in the *Codex Theodosianus* only appears to have applied to land journeys.⁹⁹⁷

Kolb has disagreed, presenting a few debatable examples of maritime transport which could be linked to the *cursus*.⁹⁹⁸ She rejects the argument of Reddé that the lack of evidence for regulation of a maritime *cursus* means that it did not exist, but does accept that it was probably less used than the land *cursus*.⁹⁹⁹ As we shall see from the example of Brundisium, probably the best instance considered by Kolb, while there are examples of official travel by warship which could be interpreted as part of the *cursus*, that interpretation is unnecessary. I am thus partly inclined to side with Reddé, though disagree with him on the regularity with which the *classes* carried imperial family members at least, and will add nuance to previous arguments on the transport of imperial agents or messages.

(Primarily) literary evidence informs the position that that the *classes* transported members of the imperial house or imperial officials. For example, Tiberius once travelled in a trireme from Capri to the *horti* near the *naumachia* of Rome (*bis omnino toto secessus tempore Romam redire conatus, semel triremi usque*

⁹⁹⁵ Kienast (1966) 48-9.

⁹⁹⁶ Reddé (1986) 447-51.

⁹⁹⁷ *Ibid.* 449-50. For regulation see *Cod. Theod.* 8.5.

⁹⁹⁸ Kolb (2000) 198-205; cf. Hirschfeld (1905²) 202-3; Holmberg (1933) 68-71.

⁹⁹⁹ Kolb (2000) 198 n.6.

ad proximos naumachiae hortos subvectus est...).¹⁰⁰⁰ Pliny recorded that the Emperor Gaius travelled between Astura and Antium with a *classis*, the *Princeps* himself journeying on a quinquereme, surely of the *classis Misenensis*.¹⁰⁰¹ Additionally, when at the start of his reign Gaius collected the ashes of his mother and brother, he made the journey on a bireme (*nec minore scaena Ostiam praefixo in biremis puppe vexillo*).¹⁰⁰² We cannot prove that this was a *classis* bireme, but it would not be unlikely. One might note that Suetonius drew attention to the theatricality of the affair, recalling our earlier discussion about how the *classes* could support imperial display.

According to Tacitus, Agrippina was accustomed to travelling in a trireme crewed by *classiarii* (*sueverat triremi et classiariorum remigio vehi*).¹⁰⁰³ It should be pointed out that this is the only clear example of an imperial woman using such transport, so we should be cautious in presuming that *classis* ships carried anyone other than Emperors and perhaps senior male members of the *domus Augusta*.¹⁰⁰⁴

The context of imperial travel may elucidate the construction of a canal from the Tiber to the *sinus Baianus* by Nero, as Suetonius tells us that it was to be large enough to allow quinqueremes to use it (*qua contrariae quinqueremes commearent*).¹⁰⁰⁵ Tacitus recorded that in AD 64, the freedwoman Epicharis tried to

¹⁰⁰⁰ Suet. *Tib.* 72.1 *cf.* 72.2-3. Note also Suet. *Aug.* 97.3-98.1 for a maritime journey by Augustus from Astura along the Campanian coastline to his villa on Capri.

¹⁰⁰¹ Plin. *NH* 32.4: see also below p. 270.

¹⁰⁰² Suet. *Calig.* 15.1.

¹⁰⁰³ Tac. *Ann.* 14.4.

¹⁰⁰⁴ The comment allows Tacitus to explain the *navis ornatio*, which Nero had drawn up at Bauli, purportedly to honour Agrippina (*honori matris daretur*). That Tacitus mentions the habit of Agrippina may indicate that it was unusual for imperial women to travel with *classis* servicemen. However, the observation could contribute to the presentation of Agrippina by Tacitus as possessing transgressive qualities or engaging in traditionally “male” activities, especially political or military: for other examples see e.g. Tac. *Ann.* 12.27, 37 with Ginsburg (2006) 23, 28, 112-16, 127-32. The use of triremes by imperial women could therefore have been more common than Tacitus may imply.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Suet. *Ner.* 31.3; Henderson (1903) 247 and Frederiksen (1984) 336 note imperial transport possibilities.

subvert the *classis Misenensis* because *Nero multo apud Puteolos et Misenum maris usu laetabatur*.¹⁰⁰⁶ Although this could imply that Epicharis saw the *classis* as useful simply because it was based in an area familiar to Nero, I am tempted to understand this as indicating a connection between the enjoyment of the sea and the *classis*.

A *diploma* was granted in AD 114 to *ii qui naviga[verunt]*, who are argued to have carried Trajan on his Parthian expedition.¹⁰⁰⁷ In a piece for Marcus Aurelius from AD 162, Fronto imagines the Emperor putting to sea from his estate at Alsium in *aliqua navis* and taking delight at the sight and sound of the rowers (*remigum visu audituque te oblectares*).¹⁰⁰⁸ Starr and Kienast have suggested that this could imply travel on a *classis* vessel, and I am tempted to accept this hypothesis because of our other examples.¹⁰⁰⁹ Moreover, an epitaph of the late first or second century AD is known from Alsium: *D(is) M(anibus) / Ti(beri) Claudi Maximi / triarchi classis / [---] /*.¹⁰¹⁰ While potentially a coincidence, the epitaph could be further evidence for a *classis* presence at Alsium. Fronto could imply that Emperors, or at least Marcus Aurelius, would habitually take to the sea from their coastal estates in *classis* ships.

Our examples suggest that Emperors and possibly family members undertook journeys on *classis* vessels. The selection is not vast, and we must admit uncertainty over its representativeness. Yet the passages do not imply that *classis* vessels were only used exceptionally: indeed, the plan of Nero to construct a canal for quinqueremes and the assumption by Fronto that Marcus Aurelius could put to sea in an oared vessel hint that they were frequently used thus.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 15.51.

¹⁰⁰⁷ *CIL* XVI 60 (= *AE* 1927 3); see above p. 98 n.413.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Fronto *De Fer. Als.* 3.1 (Haines II p. 4 = Naber p. 224).

¹⁰⁰⁹ Starr (1960²) 178; Kienast (1966) 49.

¹⁰¹⁰ *CIL* XI 3719.

Moreover, the literary sources describe imperial travel on the Tyrrhenian coast of Italy: one could extrapolate to the north Adriatic and *classis Ravennas*, especially given similarities between Campania and that region, but only with caution. We should recall the second century AD epitaph from Tergeste mentioning as many as three *classis* servicemen who served on a quadrireme. Larger ships could be used to transport Emperors, so it is plausible, but cannot be proven, that they were performing such a duty.

3.3 *Commeantes* at Brundisium

From the examples covered, one could suppose that the use of the *classes* for transportation was restricted to certain imperial family members. Indeed, we lack good direct references to governors or other officials travelling by warship, despite assertions by Starr.¹⁰¹¹ However, by considering an incident at Brundisium, we may be able to suggest that at particular places the *classes* habitually transported imperial agents.

Brundisium was an important harbour from the Republican period, used both by commercial and military vessels, and a major arrival point for travellers coming to and from Italy, especially those heading across the Adriatic to travel the *via Egnatia*. Strabo strikingly states: ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἀπὸ τῆς Ἑλλάδος καὶ τῆς Ἀσίας διαίρουσιν εὐθύπλοια μᾶλλον ἐστὶν ἐπὶ τὸ Βρεντέσιον, καὶ δὴ καὶ δεῦρο πάντες καταίρουσιν οἷς εἰς τὴν Ῥώμην πρόκειται ὁδός.¹⁰¹² Of interest in this context, epigraphy confirms the

¹⁰¹¹ Note perhaps Tacitus (*Ann.* 2.78) on Domitius Celer, sent by Gn. Piso in a trireme to stir up trouble in Syria in AD 19; cf. Starr (1960²) 178, 201 n.34, for other examples, though none explicitly mention warships or the imperial *classes*.

¹⁰¹² Str. 6.3.7; cf. e.g. Livy 23.48.3; 24.10.4; Plin. *NH* 3.101. See also Reddé (1986) 221.

presence of members of the Italian *classes* at Brundisium, especially in the first century AD.¹⁰¹³

Tacitus may give us some idea of their purpose. In AD 24, servicemen suppressed a nascent revolt near Brundisium:¹⁰¹⁴

eadem aestate mota per Italiam servilis belli semina fors oppressit. auctor tumultus T. Curtisius, quondam praetoriae cohortis miles, primo coetibus clandestinis apud Brundisium et circumiecta oppida, mox positus propalam libellis ad libertatem vocabat agrestia per longinquos saltus et ferocia servitia, cum velut munere deum tres biremes adpulere ad usus commeantium illo mari. et erat isdem regionibus Cutius Lupus quaestor, cui provincia vetere ex more calles evenerant: is disposita classiariorum copia coeptantem cum maxime coniurationem disiecit.

Translators and commentators have usually supposed that the *tres biremes* protected merchant shipping in the Adriatic.¹⁰¹⁵ Without much discussion, Starr supposed that they transported imperial dignitaries.¹⁰¹⁶ In a detailed treatment, Eck argued that these biremes were permanently stationed at Brundisium for use by imperial officials and messengers (*ad usus commeantium illo mari*), to enable speedy travel between Italy and Dyrrachium or Apollonia.¹⁰¹⁷ He suggested that *classis* vessels were so employed at other major crossings.¹⁰¹⁸ Without evidence, we cannot simply assume the wide replication of this practice, and it may have evolved only at particular places because of particular deployments.

¹⁰¹³ Append. 8, 13, 16, 17, 28, 36; AE 1978 242 (= 1980 277): [---C]assius Longin[us] / [vet]eranus / [ex cl]asse pra[et]et(oria) Ra/[venn]ate v(ixit) a(nnis) L h(ic) s(itus). Only the last should be regarded as late first or second century. For earlier suggestions of a *classis* presence at Brundisium, at least in the early first century AD, see Mommsen in *CIL IX* (1883), p. 8 (not beyond the early Augustan age); Fiebiger (1894) 336; Starr (1960²) 23; Reddé (1986) 221.

¹⁰¹⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 4.27; see above p. 96.

¹⁰¹⁵ E.g. de la Berge (1886) 206-7; Furneaux (1896²) 522; Grant (1968) 166. Eck (1997-98b) 340-1 has further examples.

¹⁰¹⁶ Starr (1960²) 23; cf. Reddé (1986) 221, who avoids the question.

¹⁰¹⁷ Eck (1997-98b).

¹⁰¹⁸ Eck (1997-98) 344-5; followed by Kolb (2000) 200.

Eck noted that Tacitus typically used *commeo* to describe soldiers or officials on state business, often carrying messages.¹⁰¹⁹ This may confirm that, despite an absence of explicit evidence, the *classes* were not wholly restricted to the Emperor and his family, but could also conduct people working in their interests. Indeed, the particular emphasis on soldiers in the Tacitean examples tallies with the use of soldiers as couriers, reinforcing the argument that these vessels transported such men.¹⁰²⁰

Eck does not prove that these biremes were *habitually* at Brundisium to carry imperial agents. Tacitus does say that they had landed *velut munere deum*, perhaps suggesting that the ships were only irregularly used thus. Yet the phrase *ad usus commeantium* implies regular travel, and the description of the presence of the biremes as fortunate could refer to their timely docking at Brundisium, when they could otherwise have been carrying passengers. This phrase seems to refute the arguments of Crogiez, who suggests that a regular shuttle service existed for any dignitaries, and that the biremes were simply on patrol.¹⁰²¹

The description by Appian of the visit of Octavian to Brundisium in 44 BC may suggest that the above arrangement was “business as usual”, and could even reflect continuity between Republic and Empire. Appian mentioned soldiers at Brundisium, involved in the movement of items to and from Italy:¹⁰²²

¹⁰¹⁹ Eck (1997-98b) 341. Most of the nine examples found in Gerber and Greef (1903) 191 fit this description: e.g. Tac. *Ann.* 4.41 on Sejanus hoping to control access to Tiberius: *sua in manu aditus litterarumque magna ex parte se arbitrum fore, cum per milites commearent*; Tac. *Ann.* 13.38 on exchanges between Corbulo and Tiridates: *placitum dehinc, quia commeantibus in vicem nuntiis nihil in summam pacis proficiebatur*.

¹⁰²⁰ Only Tac. *Ann.* 1.46; 2.28 and *Hist.* 5.4 certainly do not feature *milites*.

¹⁰²¹ Crogiez (2001) 104-5 arguing from *Dig.* 14.1.12.

¹⁰²² App. *B Civ.* 3.11.

καὶ ἕτεροι στρατιῶται σὺν αὐτοῖς, οἱ μὲν ἀποσκευὰς ἢ χρήματα φέροντες ἐς τὴν Μακεδονίαν, οἱ δὲ ἕτερα χρήματα καὶ φόρους ἐξ ἔθνῶν ἄλλων ἐς τὸ Βρεντέσιον.

This is not an ideal parallel: the imperial *classes* are not involved, and the situation in contemporary Italy could hardly be described as stable. However, this activity is suggestive of vital men and materials being conveyed through Brundisium, and the role of *milites* in overseeing them. A *classis* detachment could have emerged as a useful successor to a previous arrangement.¹⁰²³

These *classis* ships were not demonstrably part of the *cursus publicus* or its antecedents, despite assertions to the contrary by Eck and Kolb.¹⁰²⁴ Yet it does appear that they were in place, at the latest by Tiberius, with the same general purpose: to facilitate the movement of officials and news presumably of interest to the imperial house. If correct, it is worth emphasising how early the Italian *classes* were involved in maintenance of communications. We cannot securely say that the arrangement persisted throughout our period, but traffic to and from Brundisium did not disappear, and it is likely that imperial agents continued to require assistance.

If these arguments are valid, there was a system at Brundisium, of which the Italian *classes* were a part, habitually facilitating communications between Italy and Greece. Although only one piece of literary evidence, requiring some interpretation, mentions this system, there is no need to regard the circumstances described by Tacitus as exceptional. Indeed, the rather incidental mentioning of the arrangement encourages us to regard it as constant. Thus we can partly disagree with Reddé, who does not consider this example, in his assertion that the *classes* did not normally have

¹⁰²³ Note also Kolb (2000) 199 n.3 for a similar point, and other examples.

¹⁰²⁴ Eck (1997-98) 339, 343; Kolb (2000) 198-200, 220.

a role in transporting officials or carrying communications, albeit in one particular location with a history of being so used.

3.4 Monitoring ports and *classes milites* as couriers

I have suggested that the arrangement at Brundisium lay outside the *cursus publicus*. Indeed, the limited availability of the *cursus* seems to have necessitated reliance on other communications systems, including informal arrangements and even rumours. A large number of examples could be cited, but a small selection will suffice. Firstly, Tacitus described how, when Germanicus fell ill in AD 19, reports in Rome exaggerated his condition because of distances involved (*at Romae, postquam Germanici valetudo percrebuit cunctaque ut ex longinquo aucta in deterius adferebantur*).¹⁰²⁵ News of his death then caused a suspension of business *ante edictum magistratum, ante senatus consultum*. This implies that the senate and magistrates would have responded to the same sources of information as the people, though perhaps having more thoroughly assessed its reliability.

Merchants from Syria then arrived claiming that Germanicus was alive (*forte negotiatores vivente adhuc Germanico Syria egressi laetiora de valetudine eius attulere*).¹⁰²⁶ This caused popular rejoicing, though Tacitus implies that Tiberius knew the truth of the matter by saying that he did not prevent falsehoods spreading (*nec obstitit falsis Tiberius*). While possibly indicating that the Emperor possessed better sources of information, perhaps through formal communications networks, this could be a baseless assertion by Tacitus which fits well with his portrayal of a

¹⁰²⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 2.82; cf. Suet. *Calig.* 6.

¹⁰²⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 2.82.

scheming Tiberius. In which case, the role of informal communications in relaying news from distant parts of the empire emerges.

Now a couple of less detailed examples. At the end of AD 54, there were rumours at Rome about the Parthians attacking Armenia (*turbidis rumoribus prorupisse rursus Parthos et rabi Armeniam adlatum est*), to which Nero responded with military measures.¹⁰²⁷ Where these rumours came from, and whether the Emperor had received more detailed information, is unknown. The latter seems likely, but this at least provides an example of how informal rumours could influence activity in Rome. As a final obscure example, in recounting his speech directed against Publicius Certus, who had been involved in the trial of Helvidius Priscus, Pliny mentioned that a friend had referred to a man in the east with a large army, concerning whom there were grave but unconfirmed rumours (*non sine magnis dubiisque rumoribus obtinebat*).¹⁰²⁸

Such examples should be set alongside rumours heard at Puteoli, as mentioned in Chapter Three. Much was uncertain, and even official communications might be unreliable. The news brought to Rome by travellers was clearly considered at least one basis for making decisions.

I shall now investigate whether the monitoring of certain communications hubs by the *classes*, and the conveyance of important news gained, could be considered among these informal or semi-formal measures. According to this hypothesis, *classis* servicemen, especially at Misenum and Ravenna, though also at Ostia-Portus, were not necessarily given specific instructions to convey particular messages at particular times. Nor indeed were their bases necessarily strategically

¹⁰²⁷ *Ibid.* 13.6.

¹⁰²⁸ Plin. *Ep.* 9.13.11; cf. Sherwin-White (1966) 494-5.

sited to access communications hubs. Instead, their presence at or near those hubs meant that they were the most convenient group at the disposal of the Emperor to monitor and report interesting news.

This arrangement is not irreconcilable with the views of Miller, who argued against developed structures of communications in the empire, because it does not explicitly concern ‘high-level’ elements of formal communication.¹⁰²⁹ Thus, rather than the movement of messengers carrying letters or petitions sent by or to Emperors, this section considers the idea that merchants and other travellers visiting communications hubs would bring information with them, and *classis* servicemen could react to that information. Moreover, the argument will suggest that, while Reddé may have been correct to assert that *classis* ships were rarely used to deliver messages, *classis* servicemen may have been more habitually involved in maintaining overland communications.

The *classis* bases at Misenum and Ravenna were well-placed to oversee communications passing through Puteoli and Aquileia respectively.¹⁰³⁰ Other *classis* detachments, for instance at Ostia-Portus, could potentially monitor traffic.¹⁰³¹ While much of the information may only have been of tangential significance, some was probably of direct concern to the Emperor, like news about grain harvests in Egypt, or disturbances on the frontiers. We have seen that news could travel with the grain ships from Alexandria, making traffic through the ports visited by those ships potentially a particularly rich harvest of information.¹⁰³²

¹⁰²⁹ See above pp. 232, 235.

¹⁰³⁰ Puteoli: above pp. 166-9; Aquileia: above pp. 190-3.

¹⁰³¹ Ostia-Portus: below pp. 272-7.

¹⁰³² See above p. 169.

Some evidence may suggest the monitoring of the major ports of western Italy by *classis* servicemen, and their conveyance of information to Rome. Suetonius recorded an incident demonstrating the proverbial frugality of Vespasian:¹⁰³³

classarios vero, qui ab Ostia et Puteolis Romam pedibus per vices commeant, petentes constitui aliquid sibi calciarii nomine, quasi parum esset sine responso abegisse, iussit posthac excalciatos cursitare; et ex eo ita cursitant.

Sixteen inscriptions, mostly funerary, corroborate this evidence for *classis* servicemen at Ostia-Portus. Most are relatively simple monuments and texts, set up by or for individual *milites*. None obviously date to before the Flavian period, and all probably come from the second or early third century AD.¹⁰³⁴

However, the above passage of Suetonius implies their presence in the first century AD, and one is tempted to suggest that they were installed in significant numbers by Claudius when he constructed Portus. In any case, I suggest that this presence was permanent, as most scholars have assumed.¹⁰³⁵ A range of ranks appear, indicating that we are probably not dealing with a few *milites* on special missions. Moreover, some of these men saw long service. One epitaph commemorates a *gubernator*, apparently in service for forty five years.¹⁰³⁶ A dedication from AD 186 reveals the presence of a *trierarchus*.¹⁰³⁷ That we know of two discharged servicemen, who could have served in the area for some time, may further support the

¹⁰³³ Suet. *Vesp.* 8.3.

¹⁰³⁴ *CIL* XIV 110 (=Thylander (1952) B.319 = *CCID* 440), 233 (= Thylander (1952) B.18), 234 (= Thylander (1952) B.37), 235 (= *AE* 1992 219 = Thylander (1952) B.55), 236 (= *CIL* VI 32768 = Thylander (1952) B.73), 237, 238, 239 (= Thylander (1952) B.105), 240, 241, 242 (= Thylander (1952) B.70), 243, 4496 (= *AE* 1929 140 = Thylander (1952) A.178), 4497 (= Thylander (1952) A.128); *AE* 1953 262; *AE* 1983 124.

¹⁰³⁵ See bibliography in e.g. p. 277 n.1161.

¹⁰³⁶ *CIL* XIV 238: *D(is) M(anibus) / L(ucius) Licinius Capito / nationae Pan(n)onius / vix(it) an(nos) LXIII mil(itavit) an(nos) XLV / ex classae(sic) prae(toriae) Misenie(n)si(sic) / gubernator.*

¹⁰³⁷ *CIL* XIV 110 1.5: [...]*ti Iusti tr(ierarchi)*...See below pp. 276-7.

idea of a permanent base.¹⁰³⁸ Both epitaphs mention family members, indicating that the men had settled down locally. Perhaps these servicemen originated from Ostia or its surrounds, though evidence for *classis* recruitment would indicate that they were probably not from Italy. Naturally, the majority were standard *militēs*, including L. Carisius Valens, C. Lusius Rufus and M. Marius Nepos.¹⁰³⁹

We shall return to Ostia-Portus.¹⁰⁴⁰ While probably largely monitored from Misenum, a few epitaphs confirm the presence of *classis* servicemen in Puteoli itself. These include a first century AD inscription perhaps suggesting early supervision of the port.¹⁰⁴¹ A mid-second to third century epitaph records *P(ublius) Aelius Lucius miles / cl(assis) pr(a)et(oriae) Misensium / natione Surus*.¹⁰⁴² He had performed twenty eight years of service, and so could have received discharge. Two other epitaphs explicitly attest veterans, *Ti(berius) Claudius T[i(beri) f(ilius)] / Arrianus veter(anus)* and *C(aius) Iulius Antonin(us)*, who could simply have moved to Puteoli in retirement, but may have also been stationed there.¹⁰⁴³ At least some of these men could have been employed as the runners found in Suetonius, whom Starr has asserted acted as couriers, carrying letters delivered at these ports to Rome.¹⁰⁴⁴ Although I am not so convinced that they would have been concerned solely with

¹⁰³⁸ *CIL XIV 235: C(aius) Domitius Pollio / pater veter(anus) Augusti ex / classe praetoria Misensium / fecit sibi et / Domitiae C(ai) filiae Piae et / Domitiae Spei libertae et coniugi / libertis libertabus posteris / eorum / huius monumenti intro euntib(us) / pars sinisterior ad familiam supra scriptam pertin(et) / in fr(onte) ped(um) XVI in agro ped(um) XXXVIII; CIL XIV 4497: [D(is)] M(anibus) / [---]us Her[---] / [---]ve]t(eranus) Aug(usti) ex cl(asse) pr(aetoria) Rave[nnati] / [---]ia Helpid[ia(?)] [---] fecit sibi et [---] / [---]Her]meti(?) et [---] / [---]im[ia]---*. Although rather than a *veteranus*, the latter could commemorate an *[evoca]t(us)* (thus Wickert in *CIL XIV* (1930), p.646); cf. *CIL X 3417: veter(anus) evoka(tus) ex classe*.

¹⁰³⁹ *CIL XIV 234, 239, 4496*.

¹⁰⁴⁰ See below pp. 272-7.

¹⁰⁴¹ Append. 31.

¹⁰⁴² *AE 1974 248* (= Tuck (2005) no.38).

¹⁰⁴³ *AE 1974 249* (= Tuck (2005) no.66) and *AE 1974 253* (= Tuck (2005) no.67).

¹⁰⁴⁴ Starr (1960²) 18 and (1989) 75; briefly noted already by Hirschfeld (1905²) 228 n.3; cf. Kienast (1966) 71 who described them as ‘Ordonnanzen’.

official letters, this generally seems an attractive interpretation simply because it is hard to fathom an alternative.¹⁰⁴⁵

A couple of points can be drawn from the passage, which Starr paid only cursory attention to. Given our earlier discussion of *commeo*, the use of the verb in this context could be suggestive of Roman *militēs* carrying messages.¹⁰⁴⁶ However, Suetonius did not use the verb quite like Tacitus. He employed *commeo* of Nero coming to see games in Rome early in his reign (*ad omnis etiam minimos circenses e secessu commeabat*) and for the yearly movement of labourers from Umbria to Samnium to work the land (*quae ex Umbria in Sabinos ad culturam agrorum quotannis commeare soleant*).¹⁰⁴⁷ Other examples repeat the idea of frequent travel, and none involve *militēs* or exclusively imperial functionaries.¹⁰⁴⁸

Although this anecdote refers to the Flavian period, the use of the present tenses *commeant* and *cursitant* imply that this situation persisted during the lifetime of Suetonius, and indeed that the *classis militēs* did habitually carry out this task, and were not simply visiting Vespasian for a special occasion. If correct, the *classis* couriers would have been a persistent presence for at least fifty years, and there is no reason to suppose that they were abolished later.

While it is wholly possible that Starr was correct, and that these men did specifically carry imperial letters, I am tempted to interpret their constant movement as a reaction to the tremendous amounts of information passing through Puteoli and Ostia-Portus. The major limitation to this argument is that nothing directly attests the servicemen monitoring the ports. But, as noted above, it is hard to propose a more convincing explanation for their description by Suetonius.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Reddé (1986) 200 n.157, 447 believes there is too little evidence to be certain.

¹⁰⁴⁶ See above pp. 243.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Suet. *Ner.* 22.1; *Vesp.* 1.4.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Suet. *Iul.* 27.1; *Calig.* 19.2; *Claud.* 17.3; *Ner.* 31.3.

There is no evidence for servicemen travelling as couriers from Ravenna, or any other north Adriatic port, to Rome. If news about the *annona* was the primary concern of *classis* couriers on the Tyrrhenian coast, the absence of major grain shipments to eastern Italy could have rendered such couriers unnecessary.

Yet Ravenna occupied an advantageous position near to several major communications hubs, especially Aquileia. We examined some evidence for traffic through that city, including from the Danubian provinces.¹⁰⁴⁹ News carried through there could have been relevant to the security of Italy: we might think of Virgil, presenting the *coniuratio descendens Dacus ab Histro* as a general threat to Italian countrymen.¹⁰⁵⁰

We should also take into account the connection of Ravenna through a *via Popilia* to the head of the *via Flaminia* at Ariminum.¹⁰⁵¹ The *via Flaminia* was the major public road linking the north Adriatic and the Po valley to Rome, probably constructed by C. Flaminius in his consulship in 223 BC or censorship in 220 BC.¹⁰⁵² References to its heavy use imply its significance. According to Tacitus, when the Emperor Vitellius summoned Dolabella to be executed, he told him to avoid the crowded *via Flaminia* (*vitata Flaminiae viae celebritate*).¹⁰⁵³ Martial alluded to the frequent traffic on the road by listing the wheel ruts carved into its surface (*quae Flaminiam secant salebrae*) among things often used.¹⁰⁵⁴

¹⁰⁴⁹ See above pp. 192-3.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Virg. *G.* 2.497; Mynors (1990) 170 notes other references to Dacian threats in Hor. *Sat.* 2.6.53; *Carm.* 3.6.13-14.

¹⁰⁵¹ See above p. 176 n. 730.

¹⁰⁵² Construction: Livy *Per.* 20; Festus *Gloss. Lat.* p.207; cf. Str. 5.1.11. In general see Ashby and Fell (1921); Radke in *RE Suppl.* XIII (1973), s.v. *via Flaminia*, 1539-75; Wiseman (1970) 138; Chevallier (1976) 134-5, 137 and see index p.262; Messineo and Carbonara (1993); Esch (1997) 59-90; Laurence (1999) 21-3.

¹⁰⁵³ Tac. *Hist.* 2.64.

¹⁰⁵⁴ Mart. 9.57.5.

We can assume that all kinds of travellers, including merchants, perhaps some who had come through Aquileia, ventured along it. Tacitus provides one example when describing the return of Gn. Piso to Rome after the death of Germanicus. Having reached Ancona, Piso travelled through Picenum along the *via Flaminia*, on which he encountered a legion heading from Pannonia to Rome (*per Picenum ac mox Flaminiam viam adsequitur legionem, quae e Pannonia in urbem, dein praesidio Africae ducebatur*).¹⁰⁵⁵ While Piso himself did not take the route from Aquileia to Altinum and then down to the *via Flaminia*, one could reasonably conjecture that the legion did.

This quotation indicates its military importance, which may relate to why Augustus repaired the road in 27 BC, crowning this achievement with an arch at Ariminum.¹⁰⁵⁶ Cassius Dio explicitly stated that Augustus intended to lead an army along it (τῆς δὲ δὴ Φλαμινίας αὐτόζ, ἐπειδήπερ ἐκστρατεύσειν δι' αὐτῆς ἤμελλεν, ἐπεμελήθη), and this is surely linked with his oversight of campaigns against the Pannonians and Dalmatians from Ariminum (ἴν' ἐγγύθεν καὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς Δελμάταις καὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς Παννονίοις πᾶν ὅ τι χρὴ συμβουλεύειν ἔχη, πρὸς Ἀρίμινον ἐξώρμησε).¹⁰⁵⁷ This suggests that the *via Flaminia* was considered a launching pad for operations towards the north and the Danube. Although Ravenna itself was not on the road, it has been considered by its location capable of supporting (in a wide sense) campaigns towards the same regions, particularly in the Augustan and Julio-Claudian periods, and thus can be regarded as part of a communications corridor of which the *via Flaminia* was an integral part.¹⁰⁵⁸

¹⁰⁵⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 3.9.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Aug. *RG.* 20.5; Suet. *Aug.* 30.1; Cass. Dio 53.22.1-2; *CIL* XI 365 (= *ILS* 84). For the arch see Foschi and Pasini eds. (1998).

¹⁰⁵⁷ Cass. Dio 53.22.1; 55.34.3.

¹⁰⁵⁸ See above p. 178.

Travellers coming from Aquileia and Altinum to join the *via Flaminia* would almost certainly have passed near Ravenna. As we saw in Chapter Three, if coming from Altinum they could have followed the system of inland waterways to Ravenna.¹⁰⁵⁹ I hypothesised, if inconclusively, that the *classis Ravennas* monitored communications along this route in particular, and perhaps could have gathered information from travellers while doing so.¹⁰⁶⁰

Thus, while we possess no direct evidence for *classis Ravennas* members carrying news to Rome, the sheer volume of traffic passing through a region in which, as we have seen, Ravenna held a strategic position, would render a complete absence of such activity rather surprising. As the major imperial manpower source in that region, such duties would surely have been most likely to fall to the *classis Ravennas*.

3.5 Conclusion

It is commonly argued that the receipt of messages by the Emperor was critical to imperial “governmental” activities.¹⁰⁶¹ Systems supporting this could therefore be considered fundamental. Yet the arrangement which I have hypothesised around Puteoli and Ostia, and far more tentatively in the north Adriatic, worked on a different level from the communications usually considered, relying more on interdependencies and movements established by commercial or military traffic than direct action undertaken by the Roman state. The Italian *classes* were conveniently based in places from which they could monitor traffic: they may have been there less by design than modern thought might consider, perhaps influenced by the location of

¹⁰⁵⁹ See above pp. 175-6.

¹⁰⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶¹ See above pp. 213-14.

imperial property. The backwards and forwards travel undertaken by *classis* servicemen in western Italy, barely visible except for our single passage of Suetonius, may have been vital in bringing to Rome critical news discovered from travellers passing through these regions. I suggest that in these communications systems imperial organics may again emerge.

There are clear limitations. This picture would ideally be supported by more explicit testimony, though is surely a reasonable interpretation of the limited evidence and makes a sensible attempt to understand how *classis* manpower could have reacted to being deployed near to busy communications hubs. The humdrum character of the systems proposed may be the reason for their relative obscurity, as our sources simply were not interested in them.

Moreover, these communications would not have been supported by the Italian *classes* alone: other couriers probably relayed messages between Campania or the Adriatic and Rome, while infrastructural projects, on which more will follow, facilitated the transfer of news and people. The *classes* were only one part of an imperial communications network, some of which, arguably a very limited part, operated through the specific commands of the Emperor or other Roman officials.

The movement of the Emperor must be a third limit: although Suetonius portrayed the *classis* servicemen as repeatedly travelling to Rome, we have no evidence for what would happen if the Emperor was out of the city, and whether they continued to perform their function and deliver news to magistrates or other officials.

Whether the other major communications function which I have identified for the Italian *classes*, transporting the Emperor, perhaps his family members and agents, should also be considered among the organics of empire, is less certain. I have argued that the literary evidence for this practice allows us to interpret it as common and

habitual, though not conclusively so. That *classis* servicemen were potentially on hand at imperial estates at places like Baiae, Centumcellae or Alsium to facilitate travel would fit better under the category of organics, though again the evidence is not especially good. Finally, at Brundisium *classis* ships seem to have been available for ferrying imperial agents between Italy and Greece at least in the early first century AD, though there is no reason to believe that this arrangement was cancelled during our period. Imperial organics may be seen in the constant, almost hidden motion at work, dependent on the placement of a putative *classis* detachment at Brundisium, perhaps the successor to Republican arrangements, and heavy traffic passing through the port.

4. The *classes*, the *annona* and the imperial coastal landscape

Our final case-study for the potential functions of the *classis* manpower pool in Italy will consider the relationship between the Italian *classes* and the *annona*. Although this topic concerns primarily the *classis Misensis*, epitaphs demonstrate the presence of *classis Ravennas* servicemen at Ostia-Portus, Centumcellae and Rome, hinting that both *classes* could have had some involvement in the grain supply.¹⁰⁶² The maintenance of the *annona* is presented by our sources as of upmost import to the control exercised by Emperors at Rome, and their relationship to the *plebs urbana*. We might therefore expect the manpower pool of the Italian *classes* to have been employed in its support, and possibly to perceive the organics of empire in systems supporting the *annona*.

¹⁰⁶² Ravenna servicemen at Ostia: *CIL* XIV 4496-7; possibly *CIL* XIV 233 with comments by Thylander (1952) B.18 and Starr (1960²) 85 and 102 n.68. Centumcellae: *CIL* XI 3528-30; 3531 (= *ILS* 2859), 3531a, 3536.

I shall begin by considering past scholarship on the relationship between the *classes* and the *annona*. While I agree with the common position that the *classes* did not convoy grain ships from Egypt and Africa, I shall suggest that it is very difficult to identify any particular tasks they carried out because of lack of explicit source testimony.

In light of this, I shall argue not so much for ascribing particular duties to the *classes*, but for conceptualising them as part of a system facilitating the supply of Rome, where that system had a strong connection to the Emperor and emphasised his authority and role as granter of *beneficia*, alongside, potentially, the splendour of Rome itself. Therefore, this section differs from the previous two in that it concerns not so much practical tasks performed by the *classes*, but their potential ideological impact through their presence in littoral Italy, and how Emperors benefited from this.

I shall begin by treating the perceived care of the Emperor for the *annona*, regarded among his duties as benefactor of the *plebs urbana*. By drawing on the *Panegyricus* of Pliny and the *Life of Caesar* by Plutarch, I shall suggest that by the early second century an infrastructure involving roads, canals and ports was recognised to have emerged along the Tyrrhenian coast, considered the responsibility of the Emperor and which facilitated the supply of Rome.

Subsequently I shall treat the combined literary, epigraphic and archaeological evidence for relevant infrastructure projects undertaken under imperial auspices in the first and second centuries AD, and the connection of the imperial *classes* to these. Regarding ports in particular, I shall cover Astura, Rhegium, Ostia-Portus, Antium, Centumcellae and a series of villa harbours around the Argentario peninsula. This treatment will partly respond to recent work, especially by Schörle, on the hierarchical ‘port system’ of Rome, which has underlined the significance of ports at

(imperial) *villae maritimae*, but proposed that they were developed for rational, economic reasons. Instead, I shall argue for a mixture of private motives, alongside the expectation on the Emperor as a high status Roman to provide benefactions in the form of refuges for ships, and to secure the grain supply of Rome.

Aside from providing an alternative framework for thinking about the *classes* and the *annona*, this discussion will have consequences for our view of the role of imperial estates, the evolution of the Tyrrhenian coast of Italy, and the role of Roman “government” in this.

4.1 The *classes* and the *annona*

Scholars have suspected some link between the *classes* and the *annona*, not implausible given evidence for servicemen at Portus, Puteoli and Centumcellae. Most have considered that the *classes* were strategically placed for the surveillance of the grain supply but did not escort grain ships. Fiebiger linked the stationing of detachments at Ostia with the *annona*.¹⁰⁶³ Starr concurred, also suggesting that the *classis Alexandrina* secured its end of the grain route.¹⁰⁶⁴ He explicitly stated that the *classes* did not convoy grain ships.¹⁰⁶⁵ In contrast, Kienast assumed that the *classis Alexandrina* may have escorted those vessels.¹⁰⁶⁶ Rickman stated that the Italian *classes* made conditions safe for grain shipments.¹⁰⁶⁷

¹⁰⁶³ Fiebiger (1894) 322; similarly Chapot (1896) 70; Meiggs (1973²) 304.

¹⁰⁶⁴ Starr (1960²) 17, 111-12, 177; cf. Fiebiger in *RE* III (1899), s.v. *classis*, 2641 on the *classis Alexandrina* and the *annona*.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Starr (1960²) 176.

¹⁰⁶⁶ Kienast (1966) 86.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Rickman (1980) 71-2.

Reddé argued that the *classes* had no interest in the supervision of civilian shipping, the Roman state providing only general navigational security.¹⁰⁶⁸ Although noting the *classis* servicemen at Ostia-Portus, Reddé insisted that they had nothing to do with the *annona*, but that the harbour was simply a convenient way-station.

The argument of Reddé rests on his claim that the Roman system of navigational control was based on the land, and not on the sea; because, in his opinion, the *classes* were a maritime institution, they were not employed in such activities.¹⁰⁶⁹ In support he cited the Athenian Hadrianic oil law from around AD 124.¹⁰⁷⁰ Any exporter caught avoiding the declaration of merchandise and paying their taxes risked confiscation.¹⁰⁷¹ If they escaped Athens, a suit would be filed with the home city of the shipper and the Emperor by the Athenian *demos* (ἐὰν δὲ ἐκπλεύσας φθάσῃ καὶ μηνυ/θῆ, γραφέσθω καὶ τῆ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ ὑπὸ τοῦ/ δήμου κἀμοί).¹⁰⁷² Nothing suggests the involvement of the *classes* in chasing down the offender, arguably expected for hypothetical police of maritime commerce. This point could then be extended to the supervision of imported grain.

But we have clearly seen there are limitations to understanding the Italian *classes* as purely maritime institutions. Therefore, they could have assisted the land-based navigational control identified by Reddé and found in the Hadrianic inscription. Little suggests that *classis* servicemen would have been at every port checking that merchants carried out their obligations. However, it is conceivable that where appropriate they were concerned with specific resources, especially grain for Rome, because of its value to the Emperor.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Reddé (1986) 401-2.

¹⁰⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷⁰ *IG* II² 1100 (= *SEG* XV 108); cf. Pleket (1964) for further bibliography.

¹⁰⁷¹ *IG* II² 1100 ll.43-5.

¹⁰⁷² *Ibid.* ll.45-7.

I therefore broadly support the standard position on there being some connection between the *classes* and the *annona*. However, it is virtually impossible to be more specific. I have suggested that servicemen based near Puteoli and Portus brought news to Rome, possibly relating to the grain supply, but we can say little else.¹⁰⁷³

4.2 The Emperor and the *annona*

Therefore I propose an alternative approach, considering the *classes* not just in relation to several major ports which served the *annona*, but within a wider context of the infrastructure which emerged to support it in the first two centuries AD. We shall see that various Emperors had some responsibility for this infrastructure, and that its components could be considered imperial *beneficia*.

First, to provide suggestive context for infrastructural projects, we should examine why the maintenance of the *annona* was of such import to the Emperor. Much has been written concerning the *annona*: on the administration, collection, transportation and distribution of grain, and changes in the system over time.¹⁰⁷⁴ Yet, its practical functioning is obscure, especially how grain was brought from the provinces to Rome, and by whom, leading to diverse interpretations, particularly over the involvement of “the state”. Scholars such as Harris and Temin believe that grain was largely bought and sold on the free market, while at the other extreme Erdkamp argues for a system tightly controlled by the state, with the majority of grain shipped

¹⁰⁷³ See above pp. 246-7.

¹⁰⁷⁴ Rickman (1980) remains fundamental. Also important are Pavis d’Escurac (1976); Garnsey (1988) esp. 218-43; Sirks (1991); various papers in *Le ravitaillement en blé de Rome et des centres urbains des débuts de la République jusqu’au Haut Empire: actes du Colloque internationale organisé par le Centre Jean Bérard et l’URA 994 du CNRS, Naples 12-16 février 1991*, (1994), Naples; Marin and Virlovet eds. (2003); Erdkamp (2005).

to Rome generated as taxation in kind or the produce of imperial estates.¹⁰⁷⁵ Some take a middle course, emphasising the interplay between private and state actors.¹⁰⁷⁶

I shall not enter directly into this debate for now. However, the supply of grain to Rome was unquestionably a concern of the Emperor, demonstrated by organisational and legal measures taken to secure it. These are so well-known that I shall not treat them at any length, mentioning only a couple of examples.¹⁰⁷⁷ For instance, some time between AD 8-14 Augustus appointed C. Turranius Gracilis to better manage city provisioning as the first *praefectus annonae*.¹⁰⁷⁸ Legal and financial measures incentivising transport of grain to Rome included Claudius offering exemption from the *Lex Papia Poppaea* to citizens, Roman citizenship to Latins and the privileges afforded to mothers of four children to women if they built ships of a particular size for grain conveyance.¹⁰⁷⁹

Such developments are unsurprising, when authorities indicate that keeping Rome well-supplied with grain was critical to maintaining public safety and contentment.¹⁰⁸⁰ Seneca wrote about a potential shortage of grain when the Emperor Gaius died that would have lead to hunger and destruction (*quae famem sequitur, rerum omnium ruina*).¹⁰⁸¹ Whether this shortage was real or not is immaterial.¹⁰⁸² Tacitus connected an attack by a mob on Claudius with the prospect of famine:¹⁰⁸³

¹⁰⁷⁵ Harris (2000) 716-17; Temin (2001) 177; Erdkamp (2005) esp. 240-57.

¹⁰⁷⁶ E.g. Rickman (1980) 72-3, 79-93, 120-34; Virlouvet (2003).

¹⁰⁷⁷ In general see Rickman (1980) 60-6; Garnsey (1988) 229-31.

¹⁰⁷⁸ Tac. *Ann.* 1.7 with Pavis d'Escurac (1976) 317-19.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Suet. *Claud.* 18.2-19; Gai. *Inst.* 1.32c; Ulp. 2.6. Note also the offer to guarantee any losses incurred from storms to encourage winter shipping (Suet. *Claud.* 18.2). For other legal measures see: Tac. *Ann.* 13.51 (Nero, AD 58); *Dig.* 27.1.17.6 (Trajan); *Dig.* 50.6.6.5 (Hadrian); *cf.* *Dig.* 50.5.3, 6.6.3. See also Rickman (1980) 71-93; Erdkamp (2005) 237-57.

¹⁰⁸⁰ See Garnsey (1988) 218-27 for food crises and protest, and 240-3.

¹⁰⁸¹ Sen. *Brev. Vit.* 18.5; *cf.* Cass. Dio 59.17.2.

¹⁰⁸² For suspicion about the sources, see Garnsey (1988) 222-3.

¹⁰⁸³ Tac. *Ann.* 12.43.

frugum quoque egestas et orta ex eo fames in prodigium accipiebatur. nec occulti tantum questus, sed iura reddentem Claudium circumvasere clamoribus turbidis.

Later, the overthrow of the praetorian prefect Cleander in AD 190 was associated with grain shortages.¹⁰⁸⁴ So the *annona* was of practical import.

However, the *annona* was perhaps even more important because of its ideological significance to the portrayal of an Emperor. A “good” Emperor managed the corn supply effectively, while a “bad” one neglected it, hence criticism of Gaius Caligula.¹⁰⁸⁵ We should emphasise portrayal and perception: whatever the Emperor did or did not do to secure the grain supply of Rome, it was important that he appeared to care about it.¹⁰⁸⁶

The *Panegyricus* of Pliny contains a powerful expression of this perceived responsibility, with a section dedicated to the health of the *annona* under Trajan.¹⁰⁸⁷ Pliny devotes part of this to praising Trajanic engineering works which improved communications and facilitated movement of people and goods, including grain:¹⁰⁸⁸

nec vero ille civilius quam parens noster auctoritate consilio fide reclusit vias portus patefecit, itinera terris litoribus mare litora mari reddidit, diversasque gentes ita commercio miscuit, ut, quod genitum esset usquam, id apud omnes natum esse videretur.

Pliny then lauded Trajan for his excellent management of the *annona*: there was plenty in Rome, but not at the expense of the rest of the Empire (*inde hic satietas nec*

¹⁰⁸⁴ Cass. Dio 72.13; cf. Hdn. 1.12.3-5.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Cf. Suet. *Ner.* 45.1.

¹⁰⁸⁶ Noreña (2011) 106-22.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Plin. *Pan.* 29-32. Note Tac. *Ann.* 3.54, for Tiberius on the supply of Rome: *hanc, patres conscripti, curam sustinet princeps; haec omissa funditus rem publicam trahet*; cf. Tac. *Ann.* 15.36; Suet. *Aug.* 41.5 and Noreña (2011) 112-13.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Plin. *Pan.* 29.2.

fames usquam).¹⁰⁸⁹ Supplies to Rome were so good that the Emperor could send grain to Egypt when the harvest failed.¹⁰⁹⁰

Whether the reality lived up to this celebration so early in the reign of Trajan matters less than the perspective that successful management of the *annona*, including work facilitating grain movement, would conventionally generate praise. It would then be unsurprising if imperial resources were employed to abet this endeavour.

One must emphasise that the support of the *annona* cannot be straightforwardly considered the responsibility of Roman “government”. Rather, we must take into account the position of the Emperor as as benefactor of Rome, especially towards the *plebs urbana*, acting within Greek and Roman traditions of euergetism.¹⁰⁹¹ Noreña, following Veyne, has recently contended that positive actions of the Roman state were regarded as the *beneficia* of the Emperor by his subjects, whatever the precise realities of their execution, a point indicated by our discussion of the *Panegyricus*.¹⁰⁹² Note also a letter by Pliny the Younger which contains an edict of Nerva, stating that he became Emperor *ut et nova beneficia conferrem et ante me concessa servarem*, indicating the importance of the ideology of benefaction to Emperors themselves.¹⁰⁹³ Within this context, the provision of a secure grain supply can be understood as an imperial benefaction, motivated partly by societal expectations laid upon the Emperor as a high status Roman.

¹⁰⁸⁹ *Ibid.* 29.5.

¹⁰⁹⁰ *Ibid.* 30.

¹⁰⁹¹ For benefaction and ideology, see esp. Veyne (1990) 292-482; note also Finley (1999) 201. Griffin (1991) 32-4 criticises Yavetz (1969) *passim* but e.g. 90 for portraying the Emperor as a literal *patronus* of the *plebs*, rather than a metaphorical one. On the role of *beneficia* in imperial activity see Millar (1977) e.g. 394-456, 465-594; Saller (1982) 41-78; Griffin (1991) 34-9; Lendon (1997) 149-52; Noreña (2011) 106-8. Rowe (2002) 86-7, among others, correctly argues that we cannot consider the relationship between *plebs* and *princeps* solely through *panis et circenses*. Yet we should not neglect the practical and ideological import of the grain supply.

¹⁰⁹² Noreña (2011) 107; cf. Veyne (1990) 330-34, 347-51.

¹⁰⁹³ Plin. *Ep.* 10. 58.7; cf. Saller (1982) 41.

4.3 Coastal benefactions: security and accessibility

That imperial construction work could be perceived as facilitating travel and hence the supply of Rome is implied by the *Panegyricus*, when Pliny enthusiastically proclaims: *fide reclusit vias portus patefecit, itinera terris litoribus mare litora mari reddidit*.¹⁰⁹⁴ Plutarch may allude to a system existing on the Tyrrhenian coast by the early second century AD, alongside the assumption that its development was attributed to Emperors. The biographer claimed that Julius Caesar wanted to improve access to Rome, especially maritime connections.¹⁰⁹⁵ He apparently intended to divert the Tiber and build a canal to Terracina (καὶ τὸν Τίβεριν εὐθὺς ἀπὸ τῆς πόλεως... ἐμβαλεῖν εἰς τὴν πρὸς Ταρρακίνη θάλατταν) to help merchantmen going to Rome (ἀσφάλειαν ἅμα καὶ ῥαστώνην τοῖς δι' ἐμπορίας φοιτῶσιν εἰς Ῥώμην μηχανώμενος). Furthermore, he planned moles near to Rome (τῆ δ' ἔγγιστα τῆς Ῥώμης θαλάσση κλεῖθρα διὰ χωμάτων ἐπαγαγών), to clear away the hidden and dangerous shoals off the Ostian shore (καὶ τὰ τυφλὰ καὶ δύσορμα τῆς Ὠστιανῆς ἡϊόνος ἀνακαθηράμενος) and to construct harbours and anchorages sufficient for great ships, surely including grain vessels (λιμένας ἐμποτήσασθαι καὶ ναύλοχα πρὸς τοσαύτην ἀξιόπιστα ναυτιλίαν).

Meiggs, Rickman and others have regarded these plans as the basis for Claudian Portus, perhaps supported by some Suetonian comments: *portumque Ostiensem... alterum a Divo Iulio saepius destinatum ac propter difficultatem omissum*.¹⁰⁹⁶ Yet this scheme seems narrower than that in Plutarch. Meiggs was

¹⁰⁹⁴ Plin. *Pan.* 29.2.

¹⁰⁹⁵ Plut. *Caes.* 58.8-10.

¹⁰⁹⁶ Suet. *Claud.* 20.1; Meiggs (1973²) 53; Levick (1978) 98; Rickman (1980) 75; Keay *et al.* eds. (2005) 11, 34.

suspicious of the latter, suggesting that we should interpret Plutarch “naturally” rather than “literally”, and that Caesar planned a single harbour, anticipating Portus.¹⁰⁹⁷

I am not so convinced. The comprehensive improvement of harbours leading to Rome seems to reflect steady developments from the Claudian-Neronian periods onwards, coming to a head in the early to mid-second century.¹⁰⁹⁸ Suspicion of such “last plans” leads to questioning the purported schemes of Caesar. Rather, Plutarch may show that in the early second century, the provisioning of Rome was considered as secured by, among other measures, a series of harbours and improvements along the Italian coastline, and that these improvements were the responsibility of the top man in Rome.

The following will chart the evidence for the evolution of this infrastructure, working roughly in chronological order, and paying particular attention to the imperial character of harbours and in some cases their association with imperial property, alongside the presence of *classis* servicemen. These projects will be considered, like the *annona*, through the framework of the perception of imperial activity as benefactory, partly because of the support they potentially provided to the grain supply, and partly because provision of harbours was regarded as a good thing in itself.

The value of accessibility supports the second point. Well-known is the praise of Italy by Pliny, where he stated that among its other benefits were its *accessus cunctarum gentium facilis* and *portuosa litora*.¹⁰⁹⁹ Contrastingly, Strabo had earlier stated: δεύτερον δὲ τὸ ἀλίμενον κατὰ τὸ πλεῖστον καὶ τὸ τοὺς ὄντας λιμένας

¹⁰⁹⁷ Meiggs (1973²) 53; cf. Pelling (2011) 439-40.

¹⁰⁹⁸ See below pp. 269ff.

¹⁰⁹⁹ Plin. *NH* 37.201.

μεγάλους εἶναι καὶ θαυμαστούς.¹¹⁰⁰ Horden and Purcell have perceived varying interests behind this apparent contradiction: they suggest that Strabo was concerned with ports as places of exchange, rather than general accessibility.¹¹⁰¹ Schörle perceives real change over time, and the development of the coast of Italy as already mentioned.¹¹⁰² Both points have much to recommend. In any case, the sources present its harbours as advantageous to Italy: any additions or improvements to those advantages would surely have been well received.

Indeed, we can go even further and demonstrate that the imperial provision of harbours and the resulting improvements to the accessibility of Italy could be celebrated. We can adduce the inscription from the arch commemorating the harbour constructed at Ancona by Trajan. This gives the following reason for the erection of the arch: *senatus p(opulus)q(ue) R(omanus) quod accessum / Italiae hoc etiam addito ex pecunia sua / portu tutiorem navigantibus reddiderit.*¹¹⁰³

My emphasis on imperial activity, particularly concerning imperial estate harbours, departs somewhat from recent studies on port hierarchies of the central Tyrrhenian coast.¹¹⁰⁴ These argue for a gradual development of the harbour infrastructure of that region from the second century BC to the second century AD. Portus and Puteoli emerged as primary emporia, supported by satellites, in particular Centumcellae and Antium, along with many smaller harbours, including at *villae maritimae*. These smaller harbours can be understood as ports of call for vessels sailing to the large emporia.

¹¹⁰⁰ Str. 6.4.1; note also Plin. *Ep.* 6.31.17.

¹¹⁰¹ Horden and Purcell (2000) 391-2.

¹¹⁰² Schörle (2011) 95 with n.28.

¹¹⁰³ *CIL* IX 5894 ll.5-7; see also on Ancona above p. 151 n.619.

¹¹⁰⁴ Schörle (2011); Wilson, Schörle and Rice (2012) esp. 379-85. For primary and secondary ports see Nieto (1997) 154-8.

Much of this agrees with my own analysis, as will be evident. Yet, while the imperial ownership of some estate harbours has been noted, the private and imperial role in the provision of harbour infrastructure, alongside its *ideological* impact, has been underplayed. For instance, regarding Antium and Centumcellae, Schörle has argued that, while both ports were close to imperial estates, they should not be understood as ‘imperial requests or whims’ but as ‘investments to boost the local economy and as satellite harbours of a developing maritime façade’.¹¹⁰⁵

This prompts consideration of debates on the role of imperial estates in the empire. Millar has emphasised the great difficulty of measuring their wider economic role, or even the degree to which they provided for the Emperor and his dependants, because of disparate and allusive evidence.¹¹⁰⁶ He does however note that estates were ‘a store of benefits which the emperor could confer on his subjects’.¹¹⁰⁷

Thompson argued that the extent of imperial estates was a sign of the prestige of the Emperor.¹¹⁰⁸ However, she emphasised that their most important role was economic: the Emperor as a landholder played a ‘central role’ in the imperial economy because of the ‘apparent coincidence’ between areas of concentrated imperial property and crop production to supply Rome and the armies.¹¹⁰⁹

More recently, Lo Cascio has noted the expansion of imperial estates in our period, and proposes that their produce supplied armies and urban centres, but that these developments were not due to direct imperial intervention in economic

¹¹⁰⁵ Schörle (2011) 103; *cf.* Maiuro (2012) 187-202.

¹¹⁰⁶ Millar (1977) 175-89. For older studies see Hirschfeld (1902-3); Pelham (1911); Kornemann in *RE* Suppl. IV (1924), *s.v.* *Domänen*, 227-68; Broughton (1934); Rostovtzeff (1957²): most usefully see Index 779 *s.v.* *estates, imperial*; MacMullen (1962).

¹¹⁰⁷ Millar (1977) 187: especially based on the evidence of the *Liber Pontificalis* (L. Duchesne (1955-7)², *Le Liber Pontificalis* I, 170-87); note also e.g. grants of marble by Hadrian to Smyrna (*IGRRP* IV 1431 and Millar (1977) 184); *cf.* Thompson (1987) 558, 566.

¹¹⁰⁸ Thompson (1987) 566; *cf.* earlier as Crawford (1976) 54-6, arguing that Emperors desired to increase estate production to boost taxation revenues.

¹¹⁰⁹ Thompson (1987) 566.

policy.¹¹¹⁰ At another extreme, Maiuro has contended that we can observe a rational political and economic approach to the acquisition and possession of imperial estates in Italy: he argues that most property was found in five ecologically defined regions, each producing particular goods marketed in Rome, Italy and the provinces with which ‘il governo imperiale’ was actively concerned.¹¹¹¹

Following Millar, I believe that the evidence is far too disparate for proposing any kind of rational economic use of imperial estates. Moreover, little suggests that such economic activities were within the remit of the Roman “government”, as Maiuro seems to imply. However, one should not forget the interest of high status Romans in the productive landscapes of their properties, as Purcell has examined, and thus improvement to property which had economic effects, intended or otherwise, should not be discounted.¹¹¹²

Thus, and against Schörle, we should be wary of suggesting that Emperors developed ports at or near their estates for “economic” purposes. Several motivations may instead be offered. Firstly, we can conjecture the personal: the simple desire to improve private property. Relatedly, such harbours provided security and reception points for Emperors when they travelled the coasts of Italy by ship, *classis* or otherwise.

Secondly, we can again consider the perception of the Emperor as benefactor to suggest that there could have been particular motivations for creating harbours not just anywhere along the Italian coast, but specifically at their coastal estates. The reported behaviour of the mid-second to early third century AD sophist Damianus of

¹¹¹⁰ Lo Cascio (2007) 642.

¹¹¹¹ Maiuro (2012). Note Parássoglou (1978) on the rational use of state or imperial land in Egypt; Kehoe (1988) on the promotion of land use on imperial property in the Bagradas valley in Africa Proconsularis.

¹¹¹² Purcell (1995).

Ephesus indicates that elites of the ancient Mediterranean might euergetistically develop harbours on their land.¹¹¹³ Philostratus tells us that Damianus spent his money on useful things from a young age (πλούτῳ δὲ χρῆσθαι καλῶς ἐκ μαιρακίου ἤρξατο), acting as an excellent benefactor for Ephesus.¹¹¹⁴ Among the useful ways in which this wealth was displayed (πλούτου δὲ ἐπίδειξιν τῷ ἀνδρὶ τούτῳ κάκεῖνα εἶχεν...), Damianus constructed artificial islands and moles on coastal property, securing mooring sites for cargo ships (ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἐπὶ θαλάττῃ καὶ νῆσοι χειροποίητοι καὶ λιμένων προχώσεις βεβαιοῦσαι τοὺς ὄρμους καταιρούσαις τε καὶ ἀφείσαις ὀλκάσιν). Schörle emphasises the commercial opportunities offered by these structures, but the context highlights their significance as euergetistic display pieces offering shelter, admittedly to merchant vessels.¹¹¹⁵

We have already encountered some suggestion that imperial harbour works near their estates could be considered in the realm of benefactions. Recall Pliny on the potential use of Centumcellae: *eritque vel maxime salutaris; nam per longissimum spatium litus importuosum hoc receptaculo utetur.*¹¹¹⁶

Thus, in the following an infrastructural system will emerge which I suggest could have emphasised imperial concern for the safety of mariners in general, and in particular for grain ships supplying the *annona*, for which many of the improvements would have been of practical help.¹¹¹⁷ Within the discussion, I shall note the presence of *classis* servicemen at particular ports, who I suggest could have served to reinforce the perception of this infrastructure as one formed through imperial action.

¹¹¹³ For Damianus, see Bowersock (1969) 27-8, 47.

¹¹¹⁴ Philostr. *VS* 2.23.

¹¹¹⁵ Schörle (2011) 101.

¹¹¹⁶ Plin. *Ep.* 6.31.17.

¹¹¹⁷ We must acknowledge Houston (1980) 163-6, who found no evidence for imperial *administration* of ports other than Ostia-Portus and Puteoli in epigraphy. His assumption that ports were usually administered by local officials is quite plausible. However, this would not detract from the knowledge (reinforced by inscriptions perhaps) that Emperors had provided the infrastructure.

4.4 Astura

Our first example, and one recently considered part of the Tyrrhenian port system, is Astura, modern Torre Astura, a former island and site of a grand *villa maritima* on the southernmost point of the Punta di Astura.¹¹¹⁸ Its ownership by the imperial family is implied, though not proven, by imperial visits in the first half of the first century AD. Astura was one of the stopping points Suetonius mentioned in the final journey of Augustus before his death (*atque itinere incohato Asturam perrexit*).¹¹¹⁹ The same author states that Tiberius fell ill there while travelling (*rediens ergo propere Campaniam Asturae in languorem incidit*).¹¹²⁰ Gaius Caligula is recorded by Pliny as travelling from Astura to Antium (*tenuit et nostra memoria Gai principis ab Astura Antium renavigantis*), discussed further below.¹¹²¹

Although one is wary of connecting the imperial property arguably implied by the literary authorities with the mentioned *villa maritima*, its harbour was exceptionally large, at over 7 ha., twice the size of the Cosa harbour and sufficient, as Lafon stated, for it to have a public role.¹¹²² Piccarreta argued that it could only have been so large if its primary purpose was as a ‘porto di rifugio’, suggesting that Claudius built it to provide a haven for ships bringing grain to Rome.¹¹²³ The structure is early imperial, but has even been dated to Augustus or Tiberius, rendering a Claudian connection uncertain.¹¹²⁴ Nonetheless, an early imperial date would fit with our literary references. Marzano connected the harbour with the shipment of fish

¹¹¹⁸ Schörle (2011) 96-8, 102-3; cf. Wilson, Schörle and Rice (2012) 379. Generally on Astura see Schmiedt (1972) 108-20; Piccarreta (1977); cf. Lafon (2001) 364-8 RM 97 and Maiuro (2012) 267-8 for further bibliography.

¹¹¹⁹ Suet. *Aug.* 97.3.

¹¹²⁰ Suet. *Tib.* 72.2.

¹¹²¹ Plin. *NH* 32.4.

¹¹²² Lafon (2001) 364-8; Schörle (2011) 103 on Cosa.

¹¹²³ Piccarreta (1977) 65.

¹¹²⁴ First half of the first century AD: Marzano (2007) 283; Augustus or Tiberius: Maiuro (2012) 267.

or fish products produced by the enormous *piscina* at the site.¹¹²⁵ However, following the hypothesis that it was imperial property, she noted that the harbour also provided a ‘proper place’ for the Emperor to dock.

While the above is inconclusive, the unusual size of its harbour, capable of offering shelter to grain ships and imperial traffic, makes imperial ownership of the Astura villa a tantalising possibility. But what about a *classis* presence? There is virtually no epigraphic material from the site, and none relevant to the *classes*. However, Maiuro has drawn attention to Pliny recounting how, when the Emperor Gaius was sailing from Astura to Antium, his ship was stopped by a fish getting stuck on the rudder and thus: *e tota classe quinqueremis sola non proficeret*.¹¹²⁶

This *classis* does not certainly equate with all or part of an imperial *classis*: this could be a collection of “pleasure ships”, barges, sailed vessels and so on. However, the quinquereme, a type crewed by *classis* servicemen, alongside evidence for the association between *classis* servicemen and imperial estates, encourages the identification.¹¹²⁷ We can cautiously suggest that some of the servicemen who transported Gaius from Astura were actually based there. We would therefore be dealing with a significant harbour along the routes used by grain ships, with some kind of *classis* presence.

However, this interpretation is very tentative. In addition to caveats already noted, it is critical that nothing explicitly shows that grain ships used the harbour, even if it was constructed under imperial auspices. Its very availability for their refuge is significant to my argument, but such absence of evidence does not help. In

¹¹²⁵ Marzano (2007) 48-50.

¹¹²⁶ Plin. *NH* 32.4; Maiuro (2012) 194.

¹¹²⁷ *Classis* quinqueremes: e.g. *CIL* X 3410, 3455 (= Tuck (2005) no. 37); *CIL* XI 50, 58.

sum, while Astura could represent a harbour constructed at an imperial *villa maritima* with a *classis* presence, it cannot be considered a good example.

4.5 Rhegium

We now move to the southern tip of Italy. Josephus stated that the Emperor Gaius began, though never completed, an unspecified project around Rhegium for the reception of Egyptian grain:¹¹²⁸

ἔργον δὲ μέγα ἢ βασιλείον οὐδὲν αὐτῷ πεπραγμένον εἶποι ἂν τις ἢ ἐπ’
ὠφελείᾳ τῶν συνόντων καὶ αὐθις ἀνθρώπων ἐσομένων, πλήν γε τοῦ περὶ
Ῥήγιον καὶ Σικελίαν ἐπινοηθέντος ἐν ὑποδοχῇ τῶν ἀπ’ Αἰγύπτου σιτηγῶν
πλοίων.

Josephus considered this project μέγα ἢ βασιλείον. The latter can be read as underlining how such projects, partly because of the benefits that they offered to the subjects of the benefactor (directly to the mariners, and indirectly to those in Rome who would benefit from a secure grain supply), were appropriate for a “kingly” figure.¹¹²⁹

¹¹²⁸ Jos. *AJ* 19.205. Meiggs (1973²) 57 suggested that Claudius completed it, but as Levick (1990) 109-10 notes, there is no evidence.

¹¹²⁹ Note *SupIt.* V.RI.17 (= *AE* 1975 284), an epitaph of perhaps the first century AD (Reddé (1986) 205 suggests start of the Julio-Claudian period), though nb. M. Buonocore in *SupIt.* V (1989), p.65 who proposes triumviral: *C(aio) Iulio Neoptol(emi) filio) / Evandro trierarc(ho) / C(aius) Iulius C(ai) filius) Niger / [---] trierarchus*. One could include this among the pre-Flavian epitaph types, but I have hesitated over whether this is related to the imperial *classes*. Schmiedt (1975) 100 and Linderski (1988) 184 both consider it evidence for a *classis statio*, contra Reddé (1986) 204-5, 284-5 who argues that Rhegium was simply a relay point, while noting its use by Octavian in the civil wars (App. *BC* 5.81, 84; Cass. Dio 48.18.1, 47.1). There is no direct evidence for imperial property at Rhegium, though see Tac. *Ann.* 1.53; with Linderski (1988) for the banishment of Julia the Younger there.

4.6 Ostia-Portus

We have seen that Claudius enacted legal measures encouraging grain shipment.¹¹³⁰ Perhaps most famously, he also constructed the vast artificial harbour of Portus, just to the north west of the *colonia* of Ostia. I shall break chronological sequence here to consider Portus in full. Its initial purpose appears to have been to alleviate Tiber flooding, to provide a safe mooring point for ships which would otherwise have to wait outside the Tiber mouth, and to create extra storage, especially for grain shipped to Rome.¹¹³¹ Following minor developments, as the second major stage in the life of Portus, in between AD 100 and 112 Trajan constructed a hexagonal inner harbour, alongside further improvements.¹¹³²

Recent scholarship has emphasised the specifically imperial character of Portus in contrast with Ostia. For instance, based on stamped finds, Keay *et al.* have argued that provisioning of bricks for Portus followed a ‘state pattern’, with produce of people with links to the imperial house, such as the *gens Domitia*, used.¹¹³³ This contrasts with second century Ostia, where Delaine has shown that ‘imperial bricks’ were only used in significant quantities on prestigious public buildings, such as the barracks of the *Vigiles* and the Forum Baths.¹¹³⁴ A free market operated otherwise.

The so-called Palazzo Imperiale, on the north western side of the Trajanic hexagon, also overlooking the Claudian harbour, is currently seen as the headquarters

¹¹³⁰ See above p. 260.

¹¹³¹ Plin. *NH* 9.14-15; 16.201-2; 36.70; Suet. *Claud.* 20.1, 3; Cass. Dio 60.11.1-5. See also *CIL* XIV 85 (= Thylander (1952) B.310 = *ILS* 207) for a Claudian inscription connecting Portus and flood relief measures; cf. Keay *et al.* eds. (2005) 11-12; 297ff. In general see now Keay *et al.* eds. (2005); Keay and Paroli eds. (2011); Keay ed. (2012). See also Bruun and Zevi eds. (2002). Meiggs (1973²) is still valuable. See below pp. 274-5 on its location.

¹¹³² See esp. Plin. *Ep.* 8.17.1-2; *scholia* on Juv. 12.75-6: *portum Augusti dicit sive Traiani... portum Augusti restauravit in melius et interius tutiorem nominis sui fecit*. The hexagonal harbour appears on *RIC*¹ Trajan 471; cf. Keay *et al.* eds. (2005) 321-2.

¹¹³³ Keay *et al.* eds (2005) 182-3.

¹¹³⁴ DeLaine (2002) esp. 49-57, 61-2, 75.

of an imperial official.¹¹³⁵ Lead pipes stamped with the name of Messalina may indicate that the early second century complex was preceded by an official building somewhere in its south-west sector in the mid-first century AD.¹¹³⁶ Whether this building was an imperial residence is unknown, but given its apparent scale and complexity, alongside its convenient position for monitoring both harbours, that it was used by an official, or by the Emperor when he passed through Portus, seems very possible.¹¹³⁷ In contrast, no such building has been convincingly identified at Ostia.¹¹³⁸

Such evidence should be put in the context of a tantalising suggestion by Maiuro that the position of the Claudian harbour was connected to land ownership patterns, and in particular the localisation of imperial property.¹¹³⁹ There is some evidence for the latter. Most important are later first or early second century AD epitaphs attesting a *vilicus* (*T(ito) Flavio Botrycni et / Ianuario Caes(aris) ser(vo) / vern(ae) vil(ico)*) and T. Flavius Olympicus, quite probably an imperial freedman, described as *de praetorio vilico*.¹¹⁴⁰ Any imperial property is difficult to precisely locate, with both inscriptions described vaguely as coming from Ostia. A third, commemorating *Plato Caesaris*, a *diaetarcha* ('valet-de-chambre') was erected by Olympicus, a *vilicus*, at the Portus Laurentina necropolis on the south-eastern

¹¹³⁵ Keay, Earl and Felici (2011); Keay (2012) 46.

¹¹³⁶ Thylander (1952) B.384 (= *CIL* XV 7759 = XIV 2008) with Keay, Earl and Felici (2011) 84.

¹¹³⁷ Keay, Earl and Felici (2011) 86.

¹¹³⁸ Spurza (2002) 127-30 convincingly argues that the building previously identified as the Ostian Palazzo (see Meiggs (1973²) 47) was initially a 'sumptuous bath complex' before it was transformed into a 'deluxe *insula*' in the Severan period; cf. Keay, Earl and Felici (2011) 86.

¹¹³⁹ Maiuro (2012) 170, 262-3, 266; it is generally accepted that there were imperial properties locally see e.g. Meiggs (1973²) 47, 145, 163-5 and above n.1134; cf. Spurza (2002) 132-3: the evidence is limited.

¹¹⁴⁰ *CIL* XIV 198, 199 (= *ILS* 1582). For further evidence see Maiuro (2012) 262-3.

outskirts of Ostia.¹¹⁴¹ Whether their physical distance from Portus is significant is worth pondering.

Imperial visits to Ostia, especially by Claudius, may further hint at imperial property.¹¹⁴² Prior to the fall of Messalina in AD 48, Tacitus states that Claudius went to visit Ostia (*Claudius Ostiam proficisceretur*) and stayed there for a long time (*longa apud Ostiam Caesaris mora*).¹¹⁴³ Pliny recorded that Claudius became involved with a struggle with a whale at Portus while the harbour was being built (*orca et in portu Ostiensi visa est oppugnata a Claudio principe; venerat tum exaedificante eo portum...*); as Spurza suggests, perhaps the Emperor resided at his property to oversee the building work.¹¹⁴⁴ Suetonius described how Nero would drift along the Tiber to Ostia on pleasure cruises, notably coupling it with Baiae (*quotiens Ostiam Tiberi deflueret aut Baianum sinum praeternavigaret*): it seems reasonable to suggest that the Emperor stayed somewhere when he reached his destination.¹¹⁴⁵

If we accept imperial property around Ostia-Portus, we may be able to relate this to the position of the harbour, criticized in modernity because the site was vulnerable to being choked by silt driven north from the Tiber.¹¹⁴⁶ Meiggs observed that this may not have been obvious to the Romans, and that the site provided the easiest connection with the Tiber.¹¹⁴⁷ Keay *et al.* have suggested that the position was selected as most appropriate for digging canals between the Tiber and the sea to alleviate flooding.¹¹⁴⁸

¹¹⁴¹ AE 1939 150.

¹¹⁴² Spurza (2002) 123-6 collects the evidence.

¹¹⁴³ Tac. *Ann.* 11.26, 29; cf. Cass. Dio 60.31.4.

¹¹⁴⁴ Plin. *NH* 9.14-15; Spurza (2002) 125.

¹¹⁴⁵ Suet. *Ner.* 27.3.

¹¹⁴⁶ Meiggs (1973²) 153; described as 'difficult to understand' by Keay *et al.* eds. (2005) 298; Keay (2012) 44.

¹¹⁴⁷ Meiggs (1973²) 153.

¹¹⁴⁸ Keay *et al.* eds. (2005) 298-9; cf. Keay (2012) 44.

Such hypotheses could be correct. However, it is also possible that the location of imperial land was influential; this difficult project would have been more achievable if it was carried out there, with less opposition from other landowners. The density of occupation of the coast to the south of Ostia has been noted, alongside the possible controversy that the construction of Portus aroused, as indicated by Quintilian stating that it was topic suitable for an orator to develop a position on.¹¹⁴⁹ It is therefore possible, though unproven, that Claudius constructed Portus where he did not only because the land was unoccupied, but because he already owned it.

Even if we do not accept that imperial property was influential in the location of Portus, some of its other features imply a special type of imperial harbour, of quite a different character to colonial Ostia.¹¹⁵⁰ We saw earlier that epigraphy attests *classis* servicemen at Ostia-Portus. Their relationship to the imperial harbour has usually been considered without proper attention to the differences between Ostia and Portus. Fiebiger simply discussed the *statio Ostiensis*.¹¹⁵¹ Kienast similarly spoke of a detachment in Ostia.¹¹⁵² Starr acknowledged that the two were separate: ‘one...station of the Misene fleet was situated at Ostia, or to speak more correctly, at Portus’.¹¹⁵³ However, he did not consider possible implications. Reddé is similar.¹¹⁵⁴

¹¹⁴⁹ Coastal occupation: Keay *et al.* eds. (2005) 298, citing Lauro and Claridge (1998); controversy: Quint. *Inst.* 2.21.18; 3.8.16 with Keay *et al.* eds. (2005) 36.

¹¹⁵⁰ We should also count its supervision by an imperial *procurator*, among other imperial and local officials, initially called the *procurator portus Ostiensis* (*CIL* XIV 163 (= XV 7146 = *ILS* 1533 = Thylander (1952) B.378)). The development of this administration is much debated: by the third century at least there existed a *procurator portus utriusque* (surely interpreted correctly by Bruun (2002) 166 as concerned with the Claudian and Trajanic harbours, not Portus and Ostia), but we have yet to ascertain precisely when this post was created, or understand its relationship to the *procurator annonae Ostis*. See Hirschfeld (1905²) 248-50; Boulvert (1970) 267-8; Meiggs (1973²) 298-304; Pavis d’Escurac (1976) 106-25; Houston (1980) 157-62; Bruun (2002), all offering different views.

¹¹⁵¹ Fiebiger (1894) 322-4; *cf.* Chapot (1896) 70-5.

¹¹⁵² Kienast (1966) 52.

¹¹⁵³ Starr (1960²) 17.

¹¹⁵⁴ Reddé (1986) 201-3.

We would like to more accurately place the *classis* detachment at one port or the other. However, the find-spots of the fourteen *classis* epitaphs do not allow this. Three were found on the Isola Sacra, just south of the Fossa Traiana.¹¹⁵⁵ Four were found at the Episcopium to the south of the Trajanic hexagon, while three are recorded as from the Basilica of Santa Aurea at Ostia.¹¹⁵⁶ We do not know how they reached either site, but it is easy to imagine they were not set up there originally. References for the remaining epitaphs are vague or unhelpful.

Therefore, it is impossible to locate a particular burial area for *classis* servicemen, which might give clues as to where they were based. A dedicatory inscription on half a marble plaque, found at Portus, contributes to the discussion, but does not resolve it. Mommsen restored:¹¹⁵⁷

[adnuent]e¹¹⁵⁸ Imp(eratore) Caes(are) Com-
 [modo Antonino] Pio Felice¹¹⁵⁹ sacr(um) qu-
 [od vov(erant) I(ovi) O(ptimo)] M(aximo) Dulic(heno) milit(es) cl(assis)
 [pr(aetoriae) Mis(enatis) cum es]sent¹¹⁶⁰ Ostia sub
 [cura---]ti Iusti tr(ierarchi) VII Id(us)
 [---Com]modo Aug(usto) V co(n)s(ule)
 [curam agente---] Ter(entio?) Prisco.

Based on the consulship of Commodus, the inscription has been dated to AD 186.

Bloch inferred that these *milites* were simply passing through the area, but others have probably correctly considered this further evidence for a permanent *classis*

¹¹⁵⁵ *CIL* XIV 4496-7; *AE* 1983 124.

¹¹⁵⁶ Episcopium: *CIL* XIV 233-4, 239, 242; Santa Aurea: *CIL* XIV 237, 241, 243.

¹¹⁵⁷ *CIL* XIV 110.

¹¹⁵⁸ Extremely unlikely, the use of the verb virtually without parallel in epigraphy. Garrucci (1852) 16 no.3, following de Rossi, suggested [*pro salut*]e, though that is usually followed by a genitive.

¹¹⁵⁹ Garrucci (1852) 16 no.3 stated that this was a miscarving for *Felici*. Certainty would help in determining the relationship of the imperial nomenclature to the lost first word. Unfortunately, there is none.

¹¹⁶⁰ This assumes that *Ostia* is ablative, the preposition omitted. One might expect the locative *Ostiis* (e.g. Livy 9.19.4; *CIL* XIV 4505; *AE* 1925 27). Perhaps the verb should be something that the *milites* were doing to *Ostia*, either an ablative, or accusative *Ostia(m)*?

detachment.¹¹⁶¹ While found at Portus, the inscription refers to a group at Ostia. If the imperial harbour was meant, we might expect *Portus Ostiensis* or *Portus Ostiae*, perhaps even *Portus Augusti* by this date.¹¹⁶² However, the inscription could commemorate a special visit to Ostia by a group normally based at Portus: uncertainty over reconstructing the text, especially the verb in line four, leaves lots of room for interpretation.

Despite the weak evidence, I am tempted to suggest, but cannot prove, that the servicemen would have primarily been stationed at Portus because of the particular imperial character of the site. Moreover, if they were equipped with ships, it is perhaps more likely that they would have been kept in the larger harbour afforded by Portus.¹¹⁶³ Naturally, this does not rule out their sometime presence at Ostia too.

4.7 Neronian canals, Neronian Antium

Nero too took an interest in the *annona*. Coinage struck in Rome and Lugudunum from AD 63-7 promoted the image of Nero as guarantor of the grain supply: one type, whose reverse legend reads ANNONA AUGUSTI CERES S.C., carries a draped female figure representing Annona, facing Ceres.¹¹⁶⁴ With the head of Nero on the

¹¹⁶¹ Bloch (1953) 242; *contra* e.g. Chapot (1896) 70; Starr (1960²) 17-18; Reddé (1986) 202.

¹¹⁶² Plin. *NH* 16.202: *portus Ostiensis*; Suet. *Claud.* 20.3: *portus Ostiae*; Apul. *Met.* 11.26.2: *portus Augusti*; *cf.* Keay *et al.* eds. (2005) 13-14 for the names of Portus.

¹¹⁶³ Though note Heinzelmann and Martin (2002), identifying as *navalia* a large complex occupying the space between the Ostian harbour basin and the 'Palazzo Imperiale'. Citing only Meiggs (1973²) 304, they propose that its fairly small vaulted chambers were used by warships. But we have seen that Roman *navalia* are notoriously difficult to identify, and Rankov (2013) 41-2 has urged caution, suggesting that only the western vaults of the complex could have been used as shipsheds, and even these are too small for any ships attested in Ostian epigraphy.

¹¹⁶⁴ *RIC*² Nero 98-9, 137-42, 389-91, 430-1, 493-7, 566-72; *cf.* Noreña (2011) 117-18.

obverse, imperial concern for the *annona* is suggested. Slightly less explicit is a type showing the imperial harbour of Portus on the reverse.¹¹⁶⁵

It is within this context that Neronian infrastructural projects can be interpreted. Several sources mention a canal planned to run from the Tiber to the *sinus Baianus*. Pliny blamed a decline in production of Caecuban wine around the Bay of Amyclae on this: *magis tamen fossa Neronis, quam a Baiano lacu Ostiam usque navigabilem incohaverat*.¹¹⁶⁶ Statius alluded to it in his poem on the *via Domitiana*: *nec frangit vada montibusque caesis / inducit Nero sordidas paludes*.¹¹⁶⁷ Tacitus described how the architects of the Golden House tempted Nero in AD 64: *namque ab lacu Averno navigabilem fossam usque ad ostia Tibernia depressuros promiserant*.¹¹⁶⁸ Criticising its failure, he noted that its early stages were still visible: *effodere proxima Averno iuga conisus est; manentque vestigia inritae spei*.

Finally, Suetonius also mentioned a *piscina* from Misenum to lake Avernus, perhaps part of the same project:¹¹⁶⁹

praeterea incohabat piscinam a Miseno ad Avernum lacum contectam porticibusque conclusam, quo quidquid totis Baiis calidarum aquarum esset converteretur; fossam ab Averno Ostiam usque, ut navibus nec tamen mari iretur...qua contrariae quinquereemes commearent.

We have already seen that the canal was perhaps intended for general imperial travel.¹¹⁷⁰ However, as Meiggs suggested, it could also have improved security for grain shipments from Puteoli to the Tiber if smaller transports used it.¹¹⁷¹

¹¹⁶⁵ *RIC*² Nero 178-83, 440-1, 513-14, 586-9. Rickman (1980) 257-67 contrasts the relatively limited appearance of the grain supply in pre-Claudian (if not pre-Neronian) coinage to its far greater prevalence afterwards; cf. Noreña (2011) 114-20.

¹¹⁶⁶ Plin. *NH* 14.61. Archaeological remains along the western Italian coast show that the canal was at least begun: see Johannowsky (1990); cf. Champlin (2003) 158-9.

¹¹⁶⁷ Stat. *Silv.* 4.3.7-8.

¹¹⁶⁸ Tac. *Ann.* 15.42.

¹¹⁶⁹ Suet. *Ner.* 31.3.

A second Neronian project is the harbour at Antium, which we may be able to understand as a port associated with imperial property and at which there was a *classis* presence.¹¹⁷² From Augustus, Emperors and members of their families stayed there. For instance, in 2 BC a *legatio* was sent to Antium to offer the title *pater patriae* to Augustus, implying his residence there.¹¹⁷³ In investigating the controversy over the birthplace of Gaius Caligula, Suetonius decided that Antium was the most likely because:¹¹⁷⁴

omnibus semper locis atque secessibus praelatum non aliter quam natale solum dilexerit tradaturque etiam sedem ac domicilium imperii taedio urbis transferre eo destinasse.

This also implies that Gaius owned property at Antium, probably inherited from Augustus.¹¹⁷⁵ In his *Life of Apollonius*, Philostratus refers to τὰ βασιλεία τὰ ἐν τῷ Ἀνθίῳ, οἷς μάλιστα δὴ τῶν περὶ τὴν Ἰταλίαν βασιλείων ἔχαιρεν, implying that Emperors continued to own property in and frequent Antium beyond the first century AD.¹¹⁷⁶

Nero too was born at Antium and visited there.¹¹⁷⁷ He also settled veterans at the *colonia* in AD 60 and, according to Suetonius, constructed a very expensive

¹¹⁷⁰ Above p. 239.

¹¹⁷¹ Meiggs (1973²) 57-8; Rickman (1980) 59, 76; Coleman (1988) 106; Griffin (1991) 35; Keay *et al.* eds. (2005) 37-8.

¹¹⁷² For a recent archaeological study of Antium with further bibliography, see Brandizzi Vittucci (2000); *cf.* Marzano (2007) 269. For older summaries see Mommsen in *CIL* X (1883), pp.660-1; Hülsen in *RE* I (1891), *s.v.* *Antium*, 2561-3 and for imperial property see Nissen in *Ital. Landes.* II 629; Hirschfeld (1902-3) 62-3; Miller (1977) 26; Maiuro (2012) 266-7.

¹¹⁷³ Suet. *Aug.* 58.1.

¹¹⁷⁴ Suet. *Calig.* 8.5.

¹¹⁷⁵ *Cf.* Cass. Dio 58.25.2 for Tiberius celebrating the marriage of Gaius at Antium.

¹¹⁷⁶ Philostr. *VA* 8.20.

¹¹⁷⁷ Tac. *Ann.* 15.23, 39; Suet. *Ner.* 6.1, 25.1; *cf.* Tac. *Ann.* 14.3 for Agrippina owning *horti* there.

harbour (*ubi et portum operis sumptuosissimi fecit*).¹¹⁷⁸ With an estimated area of 25-30 ha., the harbour lay to the south-east of an extensive *villa maritima*, which tellingly underwent major work in the Neronian period.¹¹⁷⁹ As Brandizzi Vittucci notes, the villa has traditionally been designated imperial because of its sheer scale.¹¹⁸⁰ Lead pipes naming Gaius Caligula (*C(ai) Caesar(is) Aug(usti) Germanici*) and Domitian (*Imp(eratoris) Caes(aris) Domitiani Au[g(usti)]...*) come from Antium, but the precise provenance of the first is unknown, while the latter was found during works on the railway line in the late nineteenth century, perhaps at the margins of the villa estate.¹¹⁸¹

Thus we might reasonably question the imperial identification, though the apparent contemporaneity of work at the villa and the harbour, clearly attested as the built by Nero, is rather suggestive. At the very least, ownership of estates at Antium seems irrefutable, and one suspects a relationship between this and the Neronian harbour.

Thus at Antium we do have a large harbour which could offer shelter to grain ships and which was perhaps connected to imperial property, or was certainly constructed by an Emperor. Moreover, from limited epigraphic evidence we can tentatively locate *classis* servicemen there. A funerary monument was erected in the second century to L. Lucretius, *miles* of a *classis*.¹¹⁸² Unfortunately we do not know whether he was still serving at death, or whether those who commemorated him were *classis* members.

¹¹⁷⁸ Suet. *Ner.* 9; Tac. *Ann.* 14.27; cf. Keppie (1984a) 86-8. See Brandizzi Vittucci (2000) 30-1 for Hadrianic and Antonine work on the port; cf. Felici (2001).

¹¹⁷⁹ Brandizzi Vittucci (2000) 53-9; Lafon (2001) 364.

¹¹⁸⁰ Brandizzi Vittucci (2000) 57; see also e.g. Lugli (1940) 177-81; Scrinari and Matini (1975) 10-14; Maiuro (2012) 267.

¹¹⁸¹ *AE* 1903 120; *CIL* XV 7791 (= *EE* VIII 654); for provenance of the latter see Lanciani in *NSA* (1883), 245.

¹¹⁸² *EE* VIII 658: *D(is) [M(anibus)] / L(ucius) Lucretius [---] / mil(es) classi[s--- III Ti(?)]/berino nat(ione) [---vi]/xit ann(os) XX[--- mil(itavit)] / ann(os) [---] / C(aius) Brinni[---] / et Civi[---]*.

Keppie has hypothesised that another epitaph, to M. Antonius Fronto, a *veteranus Augusti* of Syrian origin, attests a *classis* serviceman buried in the later first to mid-second century AD.¹¹⁸³ Given that Syrians served in the *classes*, this suggestion is not unreasonable.¹¹⁸⁴ While Syrians are known elsewhere in the Roman army, the use of the origin formula *natione* plus ethnic is particularly common to the *classes*.¹¹⁸⁵ There are virtually no examples of non-*classis milites* recorded as *natione Syrus* earlier than the very late second or third century.¹¹⁸⁶ Furthermore, the only other epitaph from Antium to feature *natione* was that of the above-mentioned L. Lucretius. Therefore, I am inclined to accept that Antonius was a *classis* veteran.

Keppie discussed Antonius in the context of the Neronian colonial deduction, but it is perhaps equally likely that, as a *classis* member, he had been at Antium in connection with imperial property and the possibly associated port. Indeed, Keppie noted that the inscription appeared rather late for the Neronian settlement.¹¹⁸⁷ Placed alongside the description of Gaius travelling between Astura and Antium with a *classis*, we can tentatively propose that *classis* servicemen frequented this harbour and nearby imperial estate, and were thus part of a system suggestive of imperial concern for shipping security along a route used by grain ships.

¹¹⁸³ *CIL* X 6669: *Dis Man(ibus) / M(arcus) Antonius / Fronto veter(anus) / Aug(usti) nat(ione) Syr(us) mil(itavit) / ann(os) XXXV sib(i) et lib(ertis) e[t] / libertabusque suis fecit; cf. Keppie (1984a) 87-8.*

¹¹⁸⁴ E.g. *CIL* VI 3114, 3138, 32776; *CIL* X 3407 (= *ILS* 2885), 3414 (= *ILS* 2871), 3450; *CIL* XI 43 (= *ILS* 2863), 352; Mansuelli (1967) no. 148.

¹¹⁸⁵ See above pp. 64-5.

¹¹⁸⁶ Possibly *CIL* XIII 11962a; for later examples, see *CIL* III 3301; *CIL* VI 3197, 26883.

¹¹⁸⁷ Keppie (1984) 88.

4.8 The *via Domitiana*

Perhaps as an alternative to the Neronian canal, Domitian shortened the land journey between Puteoli and Rome by constructing the *via Domitiana*, completed in AD 95, which joined Puteoli to the *via Appia* at Sinuessa.¹¹⁸⁸ While it is uncertain whether much grain was sent along it, the road could have indirectly supported the *annona*.¹¹⁸⁹ For instance, it could have decreased journey times for the *classis* servicemen who I have argued acted as couriers between Puteoli and Rome, quickening the transfer of information concerning the *annona*.

4.9 Trajan and Centumcellae

Trajan undertook a range of infrastructural projects, including the renewal of the Italian road system, with the repair of the *via Appia* and the construction in AD 109 of the *via Traiana* from Beneventum to Brundisium.¹¹⁹⁰ Of course, Trajan did not limit himself to Italian roads, and some harbour works are of direct relevance to our discussion.¹¹⁹¹ We have already covered Portus, and noted his construction of

¹¹⁸⁸ Stat. *Silv.* 4.3 (esp. ll.7-8); Cass. Dio 67.14.1. For the route see Mommsen in *CIL* X (1883), p.58 no.6. For an erased inscription commemorating the road see *AE* 1973 137 with Flower (2001). See also D'Arms (1970) 102-3; Frederiksen (1984) 18, 336; Laurence (1999) 47.

¹¹⁸⁹ D'Arms (1970) 102, without providing details, suggested that the road served commercial traffic.

¹¹⁹⁰ For the *via Appia*, see milestones e.g. *CIL* X 6926-7, 6928 (= *ILS* 285); for further evidence and discussion see Laurence (1999) 47-52; Boatwright (2002) 265-6. Nearly fifty milestones refer to the *via Traiana* e.g. *CIL* IX 6003 (= *ILS* 291), 6004-5; cf. *RIC*¹ Trajan 636-41. See Ashby and Gardner (1916) and more recently Volpe (1990) 86-9 for further bibliography.

¹¹⁹¹ See above p. 151 n.619. A local tradition has led some (e.g. Laurence (1999) 47; Bennett (2001²) 143; Schörle (2011) 99; cf. Paribeni (1927) 116-17) to claim that Trajan reconstructed the harbour at Tarracina. There is no evidence: two inscriptions, *CIL* X 6310 (= *ILS* 282 = *AE* 1980 203) and Coppola (1989) 86 no.114 suggest work at or near the city by Trajan, but neither mentions the harbour, in contrast with the Ancona arch: *CIL* IX 5894 (= *ILS* 298) ll.5-7: *quod accessum / Italiae hoc etiam addito ex pecunia sua / portu tutiorem navigantibus reddiderit*; cf. Coarelli (1982) 323 and (1996a); Zevi (2000b) 509 n.1; Boatwright (2002) 267.

Centumcellae.¹¹⁹² Scholarship has suggested its function as an outlying port of Rome.¹¹⁹³ Meiggs characterised Centumcellae as part of a ‘comprehensive plan’, which provided shelter for ships going to and from Ostia.¹¹⁹⁴ More recent work continues to emphasise the importance of Centumcellae as a port of call and satellite for Rome, including for African grain ships.¹¹⁹⁵

It must be admitted that direct evidence in our period seems limited. Bastianelli did identify remains in the port area as *horrea*.¹¹⁹⁶ Moreover, it is suggestive that Pliny believed that it would serve as a port of call and refuge for mariners.¹¹⁹⁷ This allows us to consider Centumcellae an example of an imperial port, constructed at an imperial estate, which *could* provide refuge to grain ships and at which *classis* servicemen were present.

4.10 Argentario, Giannutri, Giglio and Tagliata

A system of Trajanic ports of call may extend further north of Centumcellae. Several *villae maritimae* with harbours are known on the coast and islands between modern Orbetello and Centumcellae, to which “commercial” purposes have been attributed.¹¹⁹⁸ Maiuro, developing a position taken by Ciampoltrini and Rendini, has argued that Trajan developed these harbours as refuges for grain ships.¹¹⁹⁹ Specifically, he is concerned with estates at Telamon, S. Liberata on the Argentario peninsula, *villae* on the islands of Giglio and Giannutri and Tagliata at Cosa. Grain

¹¹⁹² See above pp. 148-51.

¹¹⁹³ E.g. Bastianelli (1954) 14-15; Caruso (1991) 16; Quilici (1993) 63.

¹¹⁹⁴ Meiggs (1973²) 59-60.

¹¹⁹⁵ Rickman (1991) 109; Schörle (2011) 98-9; Keay (2012) 52-4, cautiously.

¹¹⁹⁶ NSA (1940), 186-7; discussed by Reddé (1986) 199-200; Caruso (1991) 38.

¹¹⁹⁷ See above pp. 149-50.

¹¹⁹⁸ Schörle (2011) 100-3.

¹¹⁹⁹ Maiuro (2012) 197-8; Ciampoltrini and Rendini (2004); cf. Marzano (2007) 25-6.

from Africa could be brought from Carthage, Utica, or ports even further west, to Caralis in Sardinia.¹²⁰⁰ Ships would then coast along to Corsica, cross the sea to Elba and Italy, before sailing down to Argentario and Rome.¹²⁰¹ He presents this as part of a rational economic plan to support the feeding of Rome.

We must dispute this last point, because of our earlier discussion of the potential uses of imperial estates within a wider economic context. If the scheme is correct, we could posit several alternative reasons for the development of these ports, as catalogued above. But we must test its validity.

This argument relies on several premises. Firstly, that this was a route plausibly used by African grain ships. We lack direct evidence for the proposed route followed *in toto*. However, as Maiuro indicates, the *Itinerarium Maritimum*, a ‘miscellany’ of routes recorded with the *Itinerarium Antonini* in the MSS, mentions a route between Thabraca, west of Carthage, and Caralis.¹²⁰² There is also limited evidence for journeys along the Sardinian coast. In 46 BC, having crossed from Utica to Caralis, Caesar appears to have coasted northwards before crossing to Rome, though whether this was purely because of bad weather is unclear.¹²⁰³ Furthermore, routes are attested along the eastern coast of Corsica, as well as crossings from both north and south Corsica to Elba and Populonia or Vada Volterrana in Italy.¹²⁰⁴ Therefore, one can reconstruct a route from North Africa to Rome along the lines proposed by Maiuro. That the whole route was not recorded is not necessarily

¹²⁰⁰ Maiuro (2012) 198-9.

¹²⁰¹ For others arguing for this or a similar route, see e.g. Celuzza and Rendini eds. (1992²) 70-3 with figs.50, 52; Ciampoltrini and Rendini (2004) 86; Marzano (2007) 26.

¹²⁰² Cuntz (1929) p. 82 514.3-9; cf. Arnaud (2005) 160. For a recent discussion of the *Itinerarium* see Salway (2004) 77-85.

¹²⁰³ *B Afr.* 98: *navis conscendit et a Caralibus secundum terram provectus duodetricesimo die, ideo quod tempestatibus in portibus cohibebatur, ad urbem Romam venit.*

¹²⁰⁴ Corsica: Plin. *NH* 3.80 with Arnaud (2005) 170-1; Corsica to Italy: Ps-Scylax 6; Str. 5.2.6; Plin. *NH* 3.80-1 and Arnaud (2005) 164.

surprising: the Mediterranean offers a vast array of possible routes, and ‘routes within routes’, many unrecorded.¹²⁰⁵

Although there is no direct evidence for African grain ships following this route, its probable exploitation by other African vessels makes this a reasonable possibility. We cannot guess at the proportion of ships which used this route, as opposed to travelling to Sardinia and then crossing straight over to Rome, or those which sailed via Sicily. But it is enough to have shown that this journey was available.

The other premises on which the argument of Maiuro rests are that the *villae maritimae* were in imperial hands by the Trajanic period, and that they were developed at that time. At virtually none of the *villae* is either premise proven. For example, the imperial ownership of five *villae*, S. Liberata, S. Stefano, Giglio, Giannutri and Porto Ercole is based on the possibility that they belonged originally to the Domitii Ahenobarbi, passing to the imperial *patrimonium* under Nero.¹²⁰⁶ Caesar recorded that in 49 BC, L. Domitius Ahenobarbus raised an “army” from the residents of his possessions around Cosa and Giglio.¹²⁰⁷ Moreover, a *Domitiana positio* is located in this area by the *Itinerarium Maritimum*.¹²⁰⁸ This is all well and good, but we simply do not know if these are the properties in question.

While some of the sites mentioned *could* have been imperial estates, only one has produced hints of the *classes*. This is the villa of Telamon, around 1 km north

¹²⁰⁵ Horden and Purcell (2000) 137-45; Arnaud (2005). See also Shepherd (1992²) for a possible African wreck at Giannutri and Rendini (1992²) and Dell’Amico and Rendini (1995) for another wreck from Giglio Porto, both early third century AD.

¹²⁰⁶ Manacorda (1980) 174; followed by Marzano (2007) 26, who includes S. Stefano and Porto Ercole, not mentioned by Maiuro.

¹²⁰⁷ Caes. *B Civ.* 1.34.

¹²⁰⁸ Cuntz (1929) p.79 499.8.

of modern coastal Talamone.¹²⁰⁹ Dating to the later first century and early second century AD, the majority of the structural remains belong to cisterns, perhaps associated with a thermal complex attached to the villa. A lead pipe was found stamped with the name of Trajan and mentioning an imperial *procurator*: *Imp(eratoris) Caesaris Nervae Traiani Aug(usti) Germ(anici) Dacici / sub cura Hebri Aug(usti) lib(erti) pr(ocuratoris) Tuendus ser(vus) fec(it)*.¹²¹⁰ In a detailed study of Roman water supply, Bruun argues that this stamp does point to imperial ownership, with the genitive of the name of Trajan signifying his ownership of the pipe, and thus the property which it supplied.¹²¹¹ While not absolutely conclusive, this evidence may indicate that the property had passed into imperial ownership by the time of Trajan, if not before.¹²¹²

Further remains suggest that the villa extended to the south-east, down towards the modern port.¹²¹³ It has therefore been connected with the *portus Telamonis* of the *Itinerarium*.¹²¹⁴ The broken tombstone of a *classis* serviceman, dating probably to the second or early third century AD, was found in the cemetery area of Talamone in the 1970s.¹²¹⁵ The cemetery lies around 0.6 km north east from the town, near the shore. Although we cannot know precisely how the tombstone ended up in the cemetery, one is struck by the position of the latter, sloping down

¹²⁰⁹ Campanile (1919); Galli (1927); Carandini ed. (1985) 155-7; Von Vacano (1985) 189-95; Lafon (2001) 339 GR 2; Carandini and Cambi eds. (2002) 154-8; Marzano (2007) 174-5, 705; Maiuro (2012) 259.

¹²¹⁰ *AE* 1920 102.

¹²¹¹ Bruun (1991) 273-4; *cf.* 20-6 for the standard interpretation of stamped *fistulae*, though see also 87-95 where the interpretation of the genitive as the owner is shown to be sometimes unsafe.

¹²¹² E.g. Carandini ed. (1985) 157 for the possibility that Nero took possession of the estate, assuming original ownership by the Domitii Ahenobarbi (see above p. 285); *cf.* Marzano (2007) 705.

¹²¹³ See Von Vacano (1985) 190 and 194-5 for details.

¹²¹⁴ Cuntz (1929) p.79 500.3-6; connection made by e.g. Ciampoltrini (1994) 179; Marzano (2007) 705. A link between villa and port was made in e.g. Carandini ed. (1985) 157; Von Vacano (1985) 194, but without reference to *portus Telamonis*.

¹²¹⁵ *AE* 1978 311: *L(ucius) Lucretius / Firmus mil(es) / ex classe praetoria / Miseniensis(sic) ex lib(urna) / Iustitia / (centuria) C(ai) Minuci / Auxiliari(s) vixit an(nis) [---]*; *cf.* Manacorda (1979) 97 no.29; Von Vacano (1985) 194. Maiuro (2012) 259 provides the incorrect reference.

from the villa remains above. I cautiously suggest that Telamon may match our ideal of an imperial *villa maritima* with a harbour and, although the evidence is slight, an imperial *classis* presence.

The scheme proposed by Maiuro is enticing because works at these northern *villae maritimae* would fit well in the context of other Trajanic infrastructural and port projects, and would be neatly paralleled by earlier developments to the south. Yet the evidence is simply not conclusive enough to declare that all the *villae* mentioned underwent systematic development, or even that they were imperial properties. Only perhaps Talamone, which underwent major Trajanic developments, was potentially an imperial estate with a harbour sufficient to provide moorings to grain ships. The small amount of evidence for a *classis* presence allows us to tentatively include it within our broader scheme.

4.11 The imperial coastal landscape and ἐπίνειοι φρουραί

The above has delineated a series of roads, canals and ports constructed under the auspices of several Emperors down to Trajan. The early second century AD can be seen as a culmination of a series of individual projects, though probably not a unified scheme pursued by several Emperors. Later projects are less well documented, but nonetheless visible. Pausanias states that Hadrian constructed a harbour at Lupiae (Λουπίας... ὁ δὲ ὄρμος ταῖς ναυσὶ χειροποίητος καὶ Ἀδριανοῦ βασιλέως ἐστὶν ἔργον).¹²¹⁶ The *Historia Augusta* attributes a number of harbour projects to Antoninus

¹²¹⁶ Paus. 6.19.9.

Pius, including at Caieta and Tarracina (*Caietae portus, Tarracinensis portus restitutio*).¹²¹⁷ Two inscriptions attest his work on the harbour at Puteoli.¹²¹⁸

I suggest that we could regard the above system as providing increasing navigational security along the western coast of Italy, in particular aiding ships transporting grain to Rome, especially important for how the Emperor was perceived. We have identified a series of imperial harbours at Rhegium, Antium, Portus and Centumcellae, alongside the more tentative examples of Astura and Talamone, some of which were strongly associated with imperial property dispositions.¹²¹⁹ Their imperial character could have promoted their being perceived as benefactions of the Emperor, a viewpoint encouraged by some of the comments made by Pliny the Younger and Plutarch, though also by Philostratus on Damianus.

I have identified possible *classis* detachments at several of these harbours, particularly at Ostia-Portus and Centumcellae, whose very presence could have contributed to a consciousness of this infrastructure as the gift of the Emperor. Nor should we forget their presence at or near Puteoli, admittedly a municipal harbour, but critical to the grain supply, and a port which received imperial investment.¹²²⁰

There are several major caveats. The connection between some of the ports and imperial property is fairly conjectural, and in some cases the presence of *classis*

¹²¹⁷ SHA. *Ant. Pius* 8.3.

¹²¹⁸ CIL X 1640 (= ILS 336), 1641; cf. Noreña (2011) 120-1.

¹²¹⁹ One could also potentially include imperial property at Formiae and Caieta, its port. Imperial ownership here is attested from the Claudian or Neronian period (CIL VI 8583 (= ILS 1578) commemorates an imperial freedman *procurator Formis Fundis Caietae*), and there are later literary references to it (Fronto *ad M. Aur.* 5.19 index (Haines I p. 191 = Naber p. 76), 20 (Haines I. p. 192 = Naber p. 78); SHA *Marc.* 19.7; *Avid. Cass.* 10.6-7). Monuments commemorating imperial slaves and freedmen are known from Formiae and Caieta: for a recent collection see Arnaldi, Cassieri and Gregori (2013). See also Mommsen in CIL X (1883), p. 671; Hirschfeld (1902-3) 65; Millar (1977) 26; Maiuro (2012) 272-4. No *classis* inscriptions have been found at either site, which could suggest that *classis* servicemen were not present all maritime imperial properties (assuming a coastal imperial villa with harbour at Formiae or Caietae, for which there is no evidence).

¹²²⁰ Note also the Neronian refoundation of the *colonia* at Puteoli: see Tac. *Ann.* 14.27; ILS 6326 (= CIL IV 2152); CIL X 5369 (= ILS 6327 = AE 1973 172) and Keppie (1984a) 82; cf. Frederiksen (1984) 337.

servicemen cannot be conclusively demonstrated. Regarding the second point, we can note the more visible connection between *classis* servicemen and imperial harbours and property at Misenum and Ravenna, and indeed at inland imperial properties, suggestive of a pattern. Moreover, although I have talked of *classis* detachments, for my system to be plausible the presence of *classis* servicemen at several harbours did not have to be permanent. Occasional visits could have been enough to further suggest the imperial character of places like Antium.

There is at least one other major limitation to my general hypothesis. Although one can reasonably argue for an infrastructural system based on ports, canals and so forth which provided navigational security for grain ships, and which is at least imagined by some literary sources, *classis* servicemen are never specifically mentioned as part of this system. This critical point should be set against the certain presence of *classis* servicemen, themselves associated with the imperial house and often employed to support imperial activity, at or around the ports, when such ports could be considered benefactions.

Moreover, there is perhaps one hint at a port system of which the *classis* servicemen were a part. In his preface, Appian summarises the contents of his historical opus. Of the concluding book, unfortunately lost to us, he says:¹²²¹

ἡ δὲ τελευταία καὶ τὴν στρατιὰν αὐτῶν ὅσῃν ἔχουσιν, ἢ πρόσοδον ἦν καρποῦνται καθ' ἕκαστον ἔθνος, ἢ εἴ τι προσαναλίσκουσιν εἰς τὰς ἐπινείους φρουράς, ὅσα τε τοιούτοτροπα ἄλλα, ἐπιδείξει.

Most of the above can be paralleled in other descriptions of the *ratio imperii*: the size of the army, the revenues from the different peoples of the empire, and

¹²²¹ App. *Pr.*15.

expenditures.¹²²² The unexpected interest in the ἐπίναιοι φρουραὶ stands out. Horace White unsatisfactorily translated this as “naval service”.¹²²³ Appian used φρουρά for abstracts like garrison or guard duty, and the word commonly means men who serve in this role.¹²²⁴ The adjective ἐπίναιος describes, as one would expect from a word derived from the substantive ἐπίναιον, something “of the port”.

This unique phrase therefore suggests something like a coastal or port watch. Are these, in fact, the *classis milites*? This view is perhaps encouraged by the *ratio* recorded by Tacitus, which mentioned the *classes (opes publicae continebantur...quot classes...)*.¹²²⁵ When White translated the term as “naval service”, one suspects that he was thinking of the *classes* but understanding them as generic Mediterranean war fleets. Yet ἐπίναιοι φρουραὶ implies something rather more static, and perhaps more like our *classis* manpower pools, deployed at particular ports in Italy, and beyond.

Understanding Appian is not helped by a dearth of comparisons. There are no precise parallels for the phrase. However, Appian himself uses something similar in his *Libyca*. In 149 BC, the consuls Censorinus and Manilius attacked Carthage without much success. Censorinus returned to Rome to hold the elections, leaving Manilius with the Roman army in North Africa. After a Carthaginian attack, Manilius decided to improve camp defences:¹²²⁶

ὁ δὲ Μανίλιος τὸ μὲν στρατόπεδον ἔτι μᾶλλον ὠχύρου, τεῖχος τε ἀντὶ
χάρακος αὐτῷ περιτιθεὶς καὶ ἐπίναιον φρούριον ἐγείρων ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης
διὰ τὴν καταπλέουσιν ἀγοράν·

¹²²² E.g. Tac. *Ann.* 1.11; Suet. *Aug.* 101.4; Cass. Dio 56.33.2.

¹²²³ White (1912) [1972] 23.

¹²²⁴ For the word meaning watch or garrison in Appian see e.g. *B Civ.* 2.56; 5.48; *Sam.* 12.1. For clear examples of it being used for a group of men see e.g. *Hann.* 34; *B Civ.* 3.5.

¹²²⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 1.11.

¹²²⁶ App. *Pun.* 100.

Alongside strengthening the perimeter, Manilius built a ἐπίνειον φρούριον by the sea. This was presumably to ensure safety for Roman supply ships. A φρούριον was a fort or citadel, a defensive structure. This is a typical use of the word by Appian, though occasionally, especially in the plural, the term can be ambiguous, and mean garrison.¹²²⁷ Presumably the ἐπίνειοι φρουραὶ considered above could occupy an ἐπίνειον φρούριον. Elsewhere we see Sulla demand that Mithridates must remove his φρουραὶ from his φρούρια (ἐξαγάγη δὲ καὶ τὰς φρουρὰς ἐκ πάντων φρουρίων).¹²²⁸ If this parallel has any validity, the ἐπίνειοι φρουραὶ could have been charged with overseeing shipping, primarily in places where supplies were meant to come in.

Clearly, these passages present their problems. But one wonders if Appian was talking about *classis* servicemen based at φρούρια, and to what extent these can be connected with the imperial harbours discussed above. With caution, one is tempted to regard the passage as perhaps suggestive of the place of *classis* servicemen within an imperial system which supported grain shipments to Rome and which, surprisingly, hints at some of their roles.

We should return to some wider debates. The discussion suggests that imperial estates could have indirectly supported the representation of imperial power, because harbours constructed at them had the potential to serve as ports of call, including for grain ships. This appears to be attested for Centumcellae, acknowledging the debate over whether it did serve the *annona*, and can be suggested for other sites considered. If their harbours were used thus, as that of Damianus of Ephesus supposedly was, they could also have contributed indirectly to the commercial health of the empire. One cannot quantify such effects, nor easily

¹²²⁷ There are many examples of a φρούριον as a physical structure in Appian e.g. App. *Hisp.* 81; *Pun.* 102; *Mith.* 84. In the plural, it can be used for forts or towers, for instance *Hisp.* 90-2; *Pun.* 101; *B Civ.* 4.107. Other instances are more ambiguous, e.g. *Hisp.* 12, 38; *Syr.* 41; *Mith.* 66.

¹²²⁸ App. *Mith.* 55.

measure any ideological impact. However, in keeping with the view of Millar, that they can be perceived as ‘stores of benefits’, we could regard the coastal imperial properties of the Tyrrhenian as significant props for the power of an Emperor, and for his self-representation.

This does not mean that they were rationally exploited to facilitate rulership or to develop coastal economies, or even that any harbours constructed at them were primarily intended to be used as ports of call. Other possibilities include Emperors desiring appropriate landing and departure places at their *villae*. This must be true for other imperial harbours along the Tyrrhenian coast. For another possible motivation, we can recall the comments of Josephus on Emperors at Baiae building *villae* in competition with each other.¹²²⁹

Moreover, we must be cautious in drawing wider conclusions from this tentative picture. Our survey is far from comprehensive: we have concentrated on coastal estates in the west of Italy with which harbours of some size were associated, and at which *classis* servicemen could be present. The degree to which, for instance, Centumcellae or Antium can be considered “typical” of imperial estates in Italy, let alone the rest of the empire, is debatable. Each estate should ideally be studied in its own context, to see how it could support imperial activity, ideologically or practically.

That said, the *villae maritimae* of Tyrrhenian Italy should not be studied in isolation. My account proposes that over time a sort of imperial coastal landscape facilitating access to Rome emerged. The imperial *villae maritimae* were but one part of this, alongside imperial ports, infrastructure projects, and the human

¹²²⁹ See above p. 159. Note also above p. 272 n.1131 on Portus being constructed to counter Tiber flooding.

representatives of imperial power, among whom I would include the praetorian *classes*. This landscape could have promoted the idea of the Emperor as a benefactor, or even his power in a wider sense, while potentially contributing to maritime safety. We should set this within the context, observed by Purcell, of the perception and promotion of Rome as the ‘world-capital’.¹²³⁰ We should bear in mind its grand physical appearance, at least by the mid-point of our period, and literary encomia, such as those of Pliny and Aristides.¹²³¹ The grand development of maritime approaches to the city, particularly focused on Portus, could be regarded as integral to the representation of Rome.

But, as already intimated, we cannot easily regard the creation of this landscape as a deliberate, rational act of Roman “government”. Instead, we could perhaps perceive the organics of empire. Ideologies of benefaction, the ways in which high status Romans could exploit their property, and routes which were already taken by trading vessels appear to have combined in the evolution of a coastal system which, as one result, facilitated the supply of Rome with grain, hopefully ensuring social stability and demonstrating, for the most part, that the Emperor was a competent benefactor. I have cautiously proposed that the manpower pool of the Italian *classes* was part of this system, not by design, but because they were based at or frequented imperial harbours which either offered shelter or mooring to grain vessels, or were able to monitor them, as Misenum could Puteoli.

¹²³⁰ Purcell (2000) 409-11; *cf.* Purcell (1996) on the evolution of the Roman ‘façade maritime’. See Griffin (1991) on the place of Rome in the empire.

¹²³¹ Plin. *NH* 36.101-25; Arsitid. *Or.* 26.

5. Conclusion

This chapter has examined three case-studies for the functions of *classis* manpower based primarily in Italy. I have posited that the *classis milites* could perform a range of maritime and terrestrial functions, including ideological ones, which given earlier arguments might reasonably be termed *militia*. These roles should be considered as among their major functions, not be marginalised as make-work tasks given to war fleets with nothing better to do. Instead, the *classes* were used, just like the legionaries and *auxilia*, for tasks to the benefit of the Emperor or his representatives, and could arguably be perceived as demonstrations of imperial authority.

First, I have contended that the *classes* were integrated into a manpower mobilisation system which facilitated quick responses to crises and potentially supported more day-to-day troop movements, barely visible in the sources. The redeployments of *classis* manpower attested by literature and *diplomata* in AD 68-9, potentially in the Bar Kokhba war and in AD 193, can be understood as reactions to emergencies. But this is not necessarily so for the formation of the *cohortes classicae* recorded in documentary material, or the transfer of men from the *classis Misenensis* to the *legio X Fretensis* in the first half of the second century AD. We cannot pronounce on the frequency of such transfers, though the apparent flexibility of *classis* manpower, its convenient location at the heart of the Mediterranean alongside its possession of ships, and its apparently good access to fresh recruits could have made it particularly suitable for redeployment.

Secondly, I have proposed that the manpower of the Italian *classes* were among many groups at the disposal of the Emperor to facilitate imperial communications. This is not a new claim, but I have emphasised what I perceive as

the habitual character of the place of the *classes* in communications, alongside their land roles. Literary evidence indicates that Italian *classis* ships could be responsible for conveying the Emperor, and possibly imperial family members, at least along the western coast of Italy, but potentially also along its eastern littoral. Additionally, drawing on Starr and Eck, I have advanced that *classis* servicemen were ready at Brundisium to support the movement of imperial agents between Italy and Greece. Unlike Eck, I am not convinced that this represents a wider pattern, proposing that particular circumstances at Brundisium fostered this arrangement.

On the land, I proposed that *classis milites* had some responsibility for conveying information from Puteoli and Ostia-Portus at least, and from the Claudian period at the latest. While it is possible that they carried letters and thereby supported a formal imperial communications network, I have contended that they could also have reported general news and rumours picked up through monitoring the heavy traffic passing through Puteoli and Ostia-Portus. This argument has its limitations: it is based on a somewhat obscure passage of Suetonius, and leans heavily on the presence of *classis* servicemen at these ports, and the apparent significance of rumour or informal news to Roman activity. However, given the well attested role of *milites* in carrying news around the empire, that they were used in such a manner would not be surprising. Nothing directly attests a comparable arrangement at Ravenna. However, given its situational relationship to Aquileia, the *via Flaminia* and the routes over the north Adriatic, it was conveniently placed to monitor communications, and therefore the possibility cannot be ruled out.

Finally, I have suggested that the *classis* manpower pool was part of a system which developed on the Tyrrhenian coast of Italy and which facilitated the supply of Rome with grain, intentionally or otherwise. In contrast with previous scholars, who

have tried to identify the activities which the *classes* performed in relation to the *annona*, or Reddé, who denied any link whatsoever, I have contended that the *classes* could have served among several markers of imperial power or activity, alongside imperial infrastructure projects including harbours. Some of these, for instance Centumcellae, Antium, Astura (very tentatively) and Talamone, were perhaps closely associated with imperial property. This contributed to the creation of an imperial coastal landscape, which could have been interpreted as an imperial benefaction for all mariners, and in particular for grain ships when the security of the *annona* was apparently of such import to the relationship between the Emperor and the *plebs urbana*. There is no good direct evidence in literature for the appreciation of the place of the *classes* in any such system, though it is possible that Appian alludes to them when mentioning the ἐπίνειοι φρουραί. However, the presence of *classis* servicemen could be considered as suggestive of imperial activity or power, as several literary sources make clear when describing their roles in, say, the death of Agrippina or the populating of the Tyrrhenian with fish, and even in more mundane imperial transport activities.

Partly because of the apparent significance of these functions, by studying them I have argued that we may be able to perceive what I have termed imperial organics: low-level dynamics, possibly engendered by imperial activity, often based on the movement and deployment of people, and which seem to largely grow and function of their own accord, or at least without the direct intentions of the central authority. Thus the basing of the *classes* at Misenum and Ravenna, which I argued in the previous chapter could partly have depended on natural, historical and strategic influences, but which may also have been determined by the presence of property held by Octavian, concentrated large manpower pools at sites in Italy through which

heavy volumes of traffic passed and from which men could be relatively easily moved about the empire.

These points arguably helped the Italian *classes* to serve as manpower pools for redeployment. Furthermore, as we saw in Chapter Two, the replacement of any men reassigned may have been partly facilitated by processes which can also be regarded as imperial organics. In that case regional interdependencies between Campania and Egypt, particularly focused around the grain trade, could have encouraged movement to Misenum. Moreover, we have observed similar interdependencies between the Danube provinces and the north Adriatic, especially seen in the Aquileian evidence, which may have had some role in encouraging recruitment to the *classis Ravennas*.

In addition, and acknowledging the limitations to the argument mentioned just above, the placement of servicemen near to communications hubs allowed them to support imperial communications formally and informally. The traffic running through Puteoli and Ostia-Portus arguably provided an excellent source of information, even if some of it was far from accurate, which *classis* servicemen could have repeatedly conveyed to Rome, without evidence for close management.

Finally, the development of the imperial coastal landscape relied on several independent factors. Firstly, the attitude of Emperors as high status Romans to the *annona* and to how their property could be used, alongside the potential for imperial coastal building projects being regarded as benefactions which improved the accessibility of Italy. Secondly, the fact that the western Italian coast was already travelled by grain ships bringing supplies to Rome, largely via Puetoli. Thirdly, and concentrating on the potential role of the *classes* in this system, their deployment at imperial property or harbours, which could, for instance, have had as much to do with

providing transport for the Emperor as anything else. The combination of these elements, which contributed to the impression and actualities of imperial “government”, could be conveniently understood as imperial organics.

I stress that my study of imperial organics, their definition and their precise characteristics are at a very preliminary stage. Further questions will be considered in the Conclusion. However, the identification of these low-level systems as heuristic tools could offer a useful way to approach how the Roman empire worked, worrying less about the bureaucracy of Roman administration, for which there discouragingly little evidence and the study of which is so affected by modernist approaches, and trying to understand some day-to-day processes through which the empire functioned and evolved.

Conclusion

This thesis has attempted to understand the nature and functions of war fleets maintained by an empire without maritime rivals. Scholars have offered various solutions: that the Italian *classes* were kept simply because the Romans liked tradition; that they policed piracy; that they were an insurance policy against military threats that never materialised; that they were a military institution employed primarily to support military logistics. All assume that the imperial *classes* were like other Mediterranean war fleets, and should be understood primarily through the prism of naval history. Thus, scholars have viewed any attested non-naval tasks as secondary duties performed during long periods of peace, or, as Reddé, in between transporting soldiers and military supplies.

The Introduction presented several problems with equating the imperial Italian *classes* with other Mediterranean war fleets, including the political conditions in which they operated, and their professional, permanent character. I also noted that the Latin term *classis* never only meant war fleet, but suggested broader organisational terminology. Therefore, I have approached the *classes* without preconceptions of their nature and duties.

Hence, I have argued that we should consider the *classes* as a manpower pool at the disposal of the Emperor, particularly in Italy. This manpower pool *was* equipped with ships and could be entrusted with tasks suited to a war fleet, as the employment of the *classis Misenensis* by Otho in AD 69 demonstrates. However, it also performed various terrestrial functions beyond the usual remit of naval organisations.

My argument rests firstly on the identification of *classis* servicemen as a category of *milites* available to the Emperor to perform *militia*, but whose stationing in Italy and rowing training suited them for particular tasks. Where documentary evidence suggests change in the first century AD, I have argued that this can be understood as formalisation comparable to processes commonly proposed to have affected the contemporary *auxilia*, rather than militarisation.

By examining primarily *classis* epitaphs and *diplomata*, Chapter One suggested that these servicemen were a mixture of peregrines, imperial freedmen and Roman citizens, the first group seemingly much in the majority. The nature of the evidence for their origins imposes considerable limitations on detailed recruitment studies. However, there is little evidence for recruitment primarily from the *gens de mer*, implying that the servicemen were not expected to perform exclusively maritime duties, but a range of tasks in support of imperial activity.

Epitaphs and *diplomata*, alongside some often obscure literary evidence, indicate that *classis* servicemen were regarded as *milites* responsible for *militia* comparable to that of the legionaries and *auxilia*. Although the servicemen appear to have been officially categorised as *remiges*, at least in the first century AD, I have argued that this made them no less *milites* than the *pedites* or *equites* of the *auxilia*. Nothing in literary evidence disputes this interpretation, and the flexibility demonstrated by accounts of servicemen acting on land seems to support it.

Chapter Two supplemented the above arguments by analysing processes of recruitment relevant to the second century AD Fayoum. By examining a dossier of papyri, including letters - in particular those of Apion and Apollinarius - wills, contracts and more, I argued that recruitment could be voluntary, affected by the seasons, and partly dependent on the presence or movements of soldiers and veterans.

Thus, despite some evidence for regulation of army enlistment in the *Gnomon of the Idios Logos*, elements beyond the control of Roman authorities should arguably be considered important to recruitment. The evidence is *not* conclusive, but it seems difficult to dispute the point that the sailing seasons had some impact over when recruitment could occur. The complex interplay between the movement of soldiers and veterans and commercial relationships between Egypt and the Bay of Naples, and how these may have affected recruitment of Egyptians into the *classis Misenensis* in particular, offers our first example of imperial organics.

More conclusively, that at least some *classis milites* came from the Fayoum reinforces the argument that the *gens de mer* were not the particular focus of *classis* recruitment. This adds further support to my contention that the Italian *classes* were not purely institutions of the sea. In this context, the Romans appear to have overcome the maritime manpower shortages which Fernand Braudel identified for Mediterranean powers across history. The nature of the *classes*, alongside the political unity of the Mediterranean, may be regarded as partly responsible on an initial analysis.

In Chapter Three, I argued for conceptualising the *classis* installations at Misenum and Ravenna not as “naval bases”, but as sites concentrating imperial resources (*classis* manpower) available to support imperial activity in regions of interest to the Emperor. I presented the limitations of applying the heuristic category of the “naval base” to our Roman imperial installations. Instead, the proximity of the ports at Misenum and Ravenna to imperial property should be taken into account.

Literary and archaeological evidence suggests that imperial interest in the region around Misenum was primarily concentrated in leisure and luxurious display. This is particularly true for Baiae, though the port of Misenum itself was overlooked

by a *villa maritima*, possibly under imperial ownership from the reigns of Augustus or Tiberius. However, we can set this alongside limited direct evidence, alongside comparative examples, for production at Baian *villae maritimae*. I also adduced Puteoli to demonstrate commercial aspects of the region, and emphasise that Misenum lay in close proximity to one of the major communications hubs of the Tyrrhenian coast, through which traffic potentially of interest to the Emperor passed. A handful of literary examples demonstrate that imperial activity here could be supported by the *classis Misenensis*.

At Ravenna, documentary evidence suggests imperial interests lay mainly in productive estates, perhaps centred around the *regio Ravennatium* attested in the second to third centuries AD, though with ceramics produced at imperial workshops from the Tiberian period at the latest. However, by drawing on the *sinus Baianus*, where leisure and production could be mixed, and by collecting examples of imperial visits to Ravenna and Aquileia, especially in the first century AD, one can argue that imperial properties in the region may also have had leisure and luxury aspects. When we take praise of Altinum by Martial into account, and some known luxury estates of Histria (whose imperial ownership is admittedly speculative), it is possible that the *classis Ravennas* could have been available to support similar imperial activities to those attested around Misenum. In this connection, one must also note the role of Aquileia as a major commercial and communications hub. Despite the similarities, it would be going too far to say that the regions were identical: a greater emphasis on imperial military activity, especially under Augustus and in the latter half of the second century AD, may be seen around Ravenna than Misenum.

At both Misenum and Ravenna, I have argued that property ownership by Octavian may have partly encouraged the deployment of the *classes*, though we must

not neglect geographical, historical and strategic factors. Property ownership by Caesar is directly attested near Misenum, while it is possible that the villa of Lucullus had fallen into Caesarian hands before the creation of the *classis*. The evidence for Ravenna is less explicit, and the situation harder to unravel because the *classis* port remains elusive, but residence by Caesar at the city, alongside plans to build a gladiator school make his ownership of land a tempting possibility. If correct, this has potentially significant implications for why imperial resources were located at particular sites, in Italy at least.

Building on some major arguments in the previous sections, Chapter Four contended that the Italian *classis* manpower pools were involved in several systems of significance to the functioning of the empire. Thus, in an analysis of literary evidence and diplomata typically associated with the civil wars of AD 68-70 and AD 193, alongside the Bar Kokhba war, I proposed that the Italian *classis* servicemen were part of the manpower mobilisation and redeployment system of the empire. They appear to have been redeployed to land duties in emergencies, but there is some evidence that they were considered a manpower pool to be drawn on in more usual circumstances.

Secondly, I argued that the *classes* supported several types of imperial communications. Literary evidence suggests that they transported Emperors, and possibly imperial family members, along the Tyrrhenian coast of Italy; it is plausible, though nowhere shown, that the *classis Ravennas* performed a similar function in the east. A *classis* detachment appears to have carried imperial agents between Italy and Greece at Brundisium, though we cannot say whether this arrangement was found elsewhere. Lastly, I contended that servicemen acted as couriers between Puteoli and Ostia-Portus and Rome, possibly carrying imperial correspondence, but arguably

bringing informal reports based on information passing through those ports. There is no evidence for a similar system operating around Ravenna, but its position in relation to major communications routes renders such an arrangement at least plausible.

Thirdly, I proposed that the Italian *classes* were part of a imperial coastal landscape which developed across our period on the western shores of Italy leading to Rome. This function is different from the other two discussed, exploring the possible ideological effects of *classis milites* being present in particular places, rather than tasks entrusted to them. The harbours and other infrastructural elements of this system functioned practically to support the grain supply of Rome, by providing docking facilities and potentially ports of call offering safe havens. Based on evidence for the importance of the perception of the Emperor as a benefactor guaranteeing the grain supply, and for similar attitudes towards imperial provision of harbour facilities, I suggested that this system could have had an ideological function of emphasising the role of the Emperor in these areas. Because of their particular association with the imperial house and with supporting imperial activity, *classis* servicemen associated with imperial harbours, near to imperial properties or otherwise, could be considered one element in this expression of imperial authority and benefaction. The lack of direct testimony for this function, aside from a possible allusion by Appian, is problematic, but it seems difficult to assert that *classis* servicemen had no ideological impact as human representatives of imperial power.

In the above examples, I have suggested that we can perceive low-level systems, which I have defined as imperial organics, often revolving around the relationship of the placement of imperial agents or resources and movement of people, which largely functioned without too much interference from any central

authority. These imperial organics may be a useful tool for investigating how the Roman empire formed, functioned and evolved from an almost bottom-up perspective, and could offer an alternative to traditional thinking about Roman “government” and administration.

Aside from their implications for the Italian *classes*, my arguments suggest alternative approaches to their provincial counterparts. As mentioned in the Introduction, the rather different human and environmental conditions in which they operated would have potentially engendered in them different characters. I have emphasised, at least around Italy, the apparently significant connection between the Italian *classes* and imperial activity. One might expect the link to be weaker in the provinces. On the other hand, certain fundamentals, such as their conception as *milites*, could well have been similar.

Moreover, the arguments of this thesis could affect how we think about Roman *classes* of earlier and later periods. Courtois and Starr proposed that Roman naval power in the Mediterranean collapsed in the third century AD.¹²³² Evidence cited includes several inscriptions honouring men apparently entrusted with special commands against piracy, implying that the imperial *classes* no longer suppressed this menace, alongside a simple absence of literary references.¹²³³

Departing completely from this narrative, Reddé argued that the Italian *classes* remained important in the third century and the Mediterranean largely peaceful, citing examples of men with *classis* commands who he argues ran logistics operations.¹²³⁴ These included C. Sulgius Caecilianus, *praepositus reliquationi classis*

¹²³² Courtois (1939) 42-7, 225-38; Starr (1960²) 191-2.

¹²³³ E.g. *CIG* 2509 from Cos, dated to AD 232/3, honouring P. Sallustius Sempronius Victor because: τῆς ἐπὶ πᾶσαν θάλασσαν ἡγησάμενον εἰρήνης μετ’ ἐξουσίας σιδήρου; cf. Reddé (1986) 607. See also *AE* 1948 201; *ILS* 8870 (= *IGRRP* III 481).

¹²³⁴ Reddé (1986) 605-18. Note also Starr (1960²) 191.

praetoriae Misenatium Piae Vindicis under Severus Alexander.¹²³⁵ Thus, for Reddé, the character of the *classes* remained essentially unchanged. However, given that I have contested his view that the Italian *classes* were primarily responsible for military logistics, such examples should be reconsidered.

Looking back to the Republican period, the relationship of the Italian *classes* to what went before has drawn interest. The last century of the Republic and especially the civil wars are typically seen as the main influence in determining the formation and character of the permanent Italian *classes*, because they demonstrated to Octavian the importance of sea power as represented by Hellenistic war fleets.¹²³⁶ Picking up on earlier work, Starr saw potential models in the forces raised by Pompey in 67 BC, and the fleets in Asia and Italy, which he argued were maintained in 62-1 BC.¹²³⁷ Reddé identified two major Republican naval fallibilities, their improvisational character, and the weakness of western naval resources, arguing that the imperial *classes* were designed as a response them.¹²³⁸

Certainly, the civil wars resulted in Octavian commanding a large number of ships and crews, and something had to be done with them after the deaths of Antony and Cleopatra. However, given the observable differences between the Italian *classes* and typical war fleets, we might question the supposed influence of these civil maritime conflicts on their character.

Perhaps we should not ignore the influence of the real or imagined Republican past. Roman elites of the Late Republic and imperial period possessed a respect for

¹²³⁵ *CIL* VIII 14854 (= VIII 1322 = *ILS* 2764 = *ILTun* 1287 = *AE* 1956 11). For further examples, see Reddé (1986) 605-7.

¹²³⁶ E.g. De La Berge (1886) 67; Fiebiger (1894) 280-1; Starr (1960²) 4-8; Reddé (1986) 463-72.

¹²³⁷ Starr (1960²) 3-4; see also De La Berge (1886) 66-7; Fiebiger (1894) 279-80; Chapot (1896) 40-2. Regarding 62-1 BC see Cic. *Flac.* 26-33. Cicero (*Flac.* 30) does speak of money spent on the Tyrrhenian and Adriatic in 62 BC, but this must be interpreted in the specific context of the aftermath of the campaigns of Pompey.

¹²³⁸ Reddé (1986) 486.

the past and claimed to desire to emulate the actions of their ancestors, as visible in the recent examination by Van der Blom of how Cicero used *exempla*.¹²³⁹

Turning to how the Romans are supposed to have managed the coasts of Italy from the fourth century BC, one encounters the phenomenon of *coloniae maritimae*. Defining them as coastal citizen *coloniae* in his classic study of Republican colonisation, Salmon argued that they were created to protect littoral Italy.¹²⁴⁰ This view has been criticised by Galsterer, who has argued that the populations of the *coloniae* were insufficient to serve as coastal fortifications.¹²⁴¹

This debate is not fundamental here, because I am concerned with what the Romans of the Late Republic and Empire *thought* about their past. More recently, Bispham has argued that traditions concerned with colonisation before the second century BC cannot be taken at face value, and were probably constructed in light of later practices.¹²⁴² We must therefore be extremely cautious in accepting the *colonia maritima* as a genuine Mid-Republican concept. Nonetheless, our evidence conveys what later writers thought about early colonisation, relevant when considering how the Republican past might have informed decisions taken in the imperial present.

Some traditions suggest that many early *coloniae* were founded to expand and control Roman territory and conquered peoples. Appian connected Republican *coloniae* with garrisons:¹²⁴³

¹²³⁹ Van der Blom (2010) esp. 1-17, including a thorough collection of previous bibliography. Note also Peachin (2007), arguing that *exempla* were considered a major constitutional principle for the 'imperial regime', and p. 76 n.6 for bibliography.

¹²⁴⁰ Salmon (1969) 71-81; cf. Sherwin-White (1973²) 77.

¹²⁴¹ Galsterer (1976) 41-6.

¹²⁴² Bispham (2006). Note also Crawford (1995); Torelli (1999) 15.

¹²⁴³ App. *B Civ.* 1.7.

Ῥωμαῖοι τὴν Ἰταλίαν πολέμῳ κατὰ μέρη χειρούμενοι γῆς μέρος ἐλάμβανον καὶ πόλεις ἐνώκιζον ἢ ἐς τὰς πρότερον οὔσας κληρούχους ἀπὸ σφῶν κατέλεγον. καὶ τάδε μὲν ἀντὶ φρουρίων ἐπενόουν...

These ideas are found in Augustan reconstructions of the past. Thus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus recorded that Romulus established *coloniae* at Caenina and Antemnae to prevent their inhabitants from attacking Rome again.¹²⁴⁴ Livy mentioned that Tarquinius Superbus sent out settlers to Signia and Circei to be *praesidia* for Rome.¹²⁴⁵ In 63 BC, Cicero had described *coloniae* as *propugnacula imperi*, though this was perhaps primarily to stress the nefarious consequences of the *lex agraria* of P. Servilius Rullus, whom he accused of scheming to develop colonies as a threat to Rome.¹²⁴⁶

Siculus Flaccus, a land surveyor considered to have written during the second century AD, connected *coloniae maritimae* with defence.¹²⁴⁷ He stated that most people believed (*quod pluribus placet, maritimas appellari existimant ideo*) that they were called *coloniae maritimae* because all of the shores of Italy faced opponents.¹²⁴⁸ Thus, colonists were sent out to guard Italian shores: *in his ergo litoribus Romani colonos miserunt, ut supra diximus, qui ora<s> Italiae tuerentur.*¹²⁴⁹

Livy refers to these *coloniae* indirectly when he mentions their inhabitants as *coloni maritimi* asserting their rights to their *sacrosancta vacatio* from military service in 207 and 191 BC.¹²⁵⁰ In total ten sites are named: Ostia, Antium, Tarracina (Anxur), Alsium, Minturnae, Sinuessa, Sena, Fregenae, Castrum Novum and Pyrgi.

¹²⁴⁴ Dion. Hal. *Ant Rom.* 2.35; cf. Livy 1.11.4.

¹²⁴⁵ Livy 1.56.3; for other examples see e.g. Livy 2.34.6; Dion. Hal. *Ant Rom.* 3.49.

¹²⁴⁶ Cic. *Leg. agr.* 2.73. Bispham (2006) 133 n.67 emphasises the context; cf. a literal reading by Badian (1958) 29.

¹²⁴⁷ Campbell (2000) xxxvii-xxxviii.

¹²⁴⁸ *Ibid.* p. 102 ll.23-7.

¹²⁴⁹ *Ibid.* p. 102 ll.27-8.

¹²⁵⁰ Livy 27.38.3-4; 36.3.4. Salmon (1969) 90, 97-9 argues that this *vacatio* was based on the inhabitants having to reside in their *coloniae* and guard the shores.

Regarding the deductions at Minturnae and Sinuessa in 296 BC, Livy stated that the Romans were considering the protection of a region laid waste by the Samnites (*de praesidio regionis depopulatae ab Samnitibus agitari coeptum*).¹²⁵¹ That these sites were regarded by Livy as watch-posts is underlined by the unwillingness of citizens to move to them, because they would have to settle *stationes perpetuae* in an *infesta regio*.¹²⁵² Unfortunately, this is the only direct statement on why any *coloniae maritimae* were founded.¹²⁵³

There are critical differences between these *coloniae* and the imperial Italian *classes*: the former were citizen settlements, and, if Salmon was correct, were not considered bases from which to launch naval expeditions. The mostly non-citizen Italian *classes* were demonstrably equipped with ships and had maritime duties. But, in their association in certain places with imperial *villae maritimae* (thus particular locations which themselves had some history as defensive structures), bearing in mind that some of their duties were carried out on land, and recalling the possible perception of the *classes* by Appian as ἐπίγειοι φρουραὶ (noting that Appian himself considered *coloniae* as substitutes for φρούρια), certain echoes of the *coloniae maritimae* come to mind. The arguments presented here should at least encourage debate of how the Romans viewed and “managed” coastal regions, re-examining in detail the *ora maritima*.

This opens up further discussion on how “governmental” decisions were made during our period, and how the Roman empire “worked”. This thesis has suggested that one approach to such difficult questions may be through the identification of the

¹²⁵¹ Livy 10.21.7.

¹²⁵² *Ibid.* 10.21.10.

¹²⁵³ The archaeology of known sites points to small fortifications in their earliest phases: see esp. for Ostia Calza ed. (1953) 63-77; Meiggs (1973²) 20-3; Von Hesberg (1985) 129-37; Pavolini (2006) 22-3, 26-30. For collected evidence from some other sites see Von Hesberg (1985).

low-end dynamics which I have categorised as imperial organics. Such an approach would appear to offer an alternative to traditional debates over the nature of Roman administration, and could usefully integrate various fields of social, economic, cultural etc. history.

As one possible field of inquiry, we could examine what part local or regional interdependencies and imperial activity had in processes of recruitment of other categories of Roman *milites*. The Batavians, discussed several times in this thesis, and for whom we have evidence of recruitment for a continuous period, could be a valuable case-study. Alternatively, the question remains of why northern Italy appears to have been so significant for praetorian recruitment in the first two centuries AD.¹²⁵⁴ Indeed, the place of *regio X* as among the major sources is rather striking: one wonders about the role of communications networks and, for example, traffic along the *via Flaminia* in encouraging movement to Rome.¹²⁵⁵ Bringing together the epigraphic evidence for praetorian origins with material concerning particular cities and their connections with Rome, alongside any imperial activity in their territories, could point the way forward in a study of these patterns.

As another example, the concept of imperial organics could be applied to mining and quarrying operations in our period. Alfred Hirt has done much to elucidate how imperial mines and quarries were organised and administered, while the work of Ben Russell sets stone quarrying in a wider economic context, and emphasises the significance of local and regional patterns of production and demand, alongside the influence which imperial demand exercised on the stone trade.¹²⁵⁶ The administration at arm's length which both of these scholars have proposed for

¹²⁵⁴ Durry (1938) 239-47; Passerini (1939) 148-71.

¹²⁵⁵ For collected evidence for recruitment from *regio X*, see Passerini (1939) 154-4. Etruria was also apparently important: see Passerini (1939) 151-2.

¹²⁵⁶ Hirt (2010); Russell (2013).

imperial interests may fit well with elements of imperial organics. But one also wonders, for instance, how imperial exploitation of a particular resource, and the deployment of imperial representatives at some sites, affected or was affected by patterns of movement possibly already established. We could ask whether the exploitation of the Egyptian Red Sea quarries encouraged movement along routes which extracted stone followed to Rome.¹²⁵⁷ Again, one might see in this the potential for better understanding how imperial activity, intentional or otherwise, encouraged the mobilisation of manpower resources.

We can briefly catalogue some other areas on which the arguments of this thesis could have influence. One is the status and roles of the Roman imperial *miles*. I have argued that *classis* servicemen were regarded as *milites* who performed *militia*. Their placement within that group suggests a broader understanding of the term than sometimes supposed. We saw that a “paramilitary” group such as the *Vigiles* were also regarded and organised as *milites*. Additionally, we know that quasi-military terminology could be extended to certain groups of freedmen who can barely be regarded as performing “military” tasks: for instance, while the *tabellarii* do not seem to have been called *milites*, they did have *optiones* and *praepositi*, whose precise functions are unclear.¹²⁵⁸

The latter in particular suggests an interesting blurring between the status and functions of *milites* and slaves. In a recent study of Roman military service, Sara Phang has pointed to the similarities, at least from an elite and legalistic perspective,

¹²⁵⁷ For the Egyptian quarries see above p. 19 n.89.

¹²⁵⁸ *Optiones*: *CIL* VI 8424a (= *ILS* 1706); *AE* 1930 93; *praepositi*: *CIL* VI 746 (= *ILS* 4202), 8445 (= *ILS* 1553), 37766. Note Weaver (1972) 228 for ‘the military lines along which the great slave *familiae* were normally organised in Rome’.

between *militia* and servile existence, especially in punishment and menial labour.¹²⁵⁹

This problem may deserve a more in-depth examination, also taking into account the debate over the relationship between soldier and civilian in Roman society.¹²⁶⁰ It may be helpful to approach *milites* as an organisational category, attempting to put aside their associations with modern soldiers and military service. Moreover, the development of *militia* between Republic and Empire deserves further close examination, to see if we can better understand the transition between a system in which all Roman citizens could be expected to perform *militia*, and one in which such services were confined to one group, and performed for the sake of the Emperor.

Secondly, Chapter One underlined some of the difficulties the epigraphic evidence presents for traditional recruitment studies, but encouraged alternative approaches. On *diplomata*, Richard Talbert has recently offered some very preliminary comments on how these documents could be used for researching Roman worldview.¹²⁶¹ His approach appears to be supported by the observable developments in *classis diplomata*, which indicate the increasing importance of geographical identity in the second century AD. A fuller study of all *diplomata*, placed alongside other evidence for changing views of the empire, would therefore appear worthwhile. If Talbert is correct in the assumption that these documents represent non-elite perceptions of the Roman world, a comparison with elite ideas could be instructive.

¹²⁵⁹ Phang (2008) 130, 227-39; cf. Campbell (1984) 303-14. For similarities between attitudes to slave and soldierly punishment see e.g. Arrius Menander at *Dig.* 49.16.4.14: *levius itaque delictum emansionis habetur, ut erroris in servis, desertionis gravior, ut in fugitivis*; cf. Tac. *Ann.* 14.44 and Phang (2008) 229-30. As a counterbalance (pp. 242-6), Phang notes that *labor* and *virtus* were associated. The picture is more complicated than a simple *militia* = *servitium* equation, but the parallelisms are worth considering.

¹²⁶⁰ See e.g. Shaw (1983) who examined the army as a 'total institution.' Supported with modifications by Pollard (1996). See also MacMullen (1963) and (1988). Alston (1995) sees much greater integration between soldier and civilian, though note the cautious review by Bagnall in *JRA* 10 (1997), 504-12; see also Alston (1999). Haynes (1999) adopts a position somewhere in the middle; cf. Speidel (2009b).

¹²⁶¹ Talbert (2013).

One could add that Chapter Three urges further work on the character of Roman ports, or even ports in Antiquity. Having argued that the bases at Misenum and Ravenna could be regarded as support bases for regional imperial activity, we could compare them to other Mediterranean “naval bases” at other times, to see if there were evolutions in the uses of “state-controlled” ports, and the sort of economic or social relations which they had within a local or regional context. Some steps have been taken recently by Baika, at least in an urban context, though in that case the work often relies on some uncertain reconstructions of archaeological data.¹²⁶²

Acknowledging the great difficulties of the evidence, this thesis has attempted to provide an alternative framework for examining the Italian *classes*. In doing so, it has suggested that in the first two centuries AD the *classes* were a significant manpower resource for the Emperors in Italy, but one which could potentially act across the Mediterranean. Returning to the themes of the introductory section, the *classes* seem to have emerged, perhaps surprisingly given the pessimism of so much scholarship, as a rather eloquent demonstration of imperial power over land and sea.

¹²⁶² Baika (2013c).

Appendix

Freedman type

1. *CIL X 3357* (= *ILS 2817*), Misenum.

C(aio) Iulio Caesaris
l(iberto) Automato trierar(cho)
Iulia C(ai) l(iberta) Plusia soror
fecit et sibi et suis.

2. *CIL X 3358* (= *ILS 2818*), Misenum.

Ti(berius) Iulius Aug(usti) et
August(ae) l(ibertus) Diogenes tr(ierarchus)
sibi et Nigidiae Eutychia
coniugi et suis Nigidia Eutychia
S[ta]beriae C(ai) l(ibertae) Margaritae amicae
suae h(oc) m(onumentum) h(eredem) n(on) s(equetur).

3. *CIL VI 8927* (= *ILS 2823*), Rome.

Ti(berio) Iulio Aug(usti) l(iberto) Hilario
nauarcho Tiberiano
Claudia Basilea
viro suo.

4. *CIL XIII 3542*, Bononia (Boulogne-sur-Mer).

Ti(berius) Claudius
Aug(usti) l(ibertus) Seleucus
tr(ierarchus) monument(um)
fecit Claudiae
Primae l(ibertae) suae.

5. *AE 1995 254*, Ciampino.

C(aius) Iulius Aug(usti) l(ibertus)
Hilarus
nauarchus
sibi et
Iuliae Nice
coniugi suae
posterisque suis.

Freedmen / Peregrines

6. *CIL VI 8928* (= *ILS 2821*), Rome.

Caspius
trierarchus
Ti(beri) Caesaris hic
situs est.

7. *CIL VI 8929* (= *ILS 2820*), Rome

Helios Caesaris trierarchus.

8. *CIL IX 41* (= *ILS 2819*), Brundisium.

Iulia Cleo-
patra quae et
Lezbia C(ai) Iuli Men-
oetis f(ilia)¹²⁶³ Antiochensis
Syriae ad Daphnem
uxor Malchionis
Caesaris trierarchi de
triere Triptolemo.

9. *CIL XII 257* (= *ILS 2822*), Forum Iulii.

Antho Caesaris
trierarcho Liviano
C(aius) Iulius Iaso f(aciendum) c(uravit).

10. *CIL XI 30* (= *ILS 2876* = Mansuelli (1967) 132 no.21), Ravenna.

Athenio de
III Danae coro-
narius Quartae
Aufidiae uxori suae
benevolentis eius et
honoris causa
fecit h(ic) s(itus) e(st).

¹²⁶³ Mommsen omits *f* in *CIL IX*, but Dessau includes it without comment.

11. *InscrAq* II 2821 (= *CIL* V 1048; cf. Panciera (2006c) 1288-9), Aquileia.

Sestia
Lini tr(ierarchi)
[d]e lib(urna) Aug(usta)
[---].

12. *AE* 1889 158 (= *EE* VIII 734), Olbia, Sardinia.

Aurelio¹²⁶⁴
ex l(iburna) Sal(via)
Augusta
an(norum) LX st(ipendiorum)
XXX h(ic) e(st) s(itus).

13. *AE* 1966 97 (= Sciarra (1963) no.84), Brundisium.

Marcinus¹²⁶⁵
centurio(*sic*) de [...] ¹²⁶⁶
Trioletmo [---]

Peregrines – serving

14. *CIL* III 2034, Salona.

Idiopantus Ale-
xandri f(ilius)
d(e) liburna Mur-
ena vixit an(n)o-
s XXXVIII militavi-
t an(n)os XVI
h(ic) s(itus).

¹²⁶⁴ *EE* VIII 734 follows the suggested readings of Mommsen (based on copies made by M. Tamponi), as presented by Fiorelli in *NSA* (1888), p. 402, leaving the first line unrestored, possibly as *A[...]/C[...]/O* (see Le Bohec (1990) 116). Haverfield in *CR* 3 (1889), p. 228, also drawing on Tamponi's copies, proposed *Aurelio*, but this cannot be verified. Moreover, the texts presented in *NSA* and *CR* both read *XXX* in line five. However, Ihm in *EE* prints *XX*, though notes Mommsen on the text: '*an(norum) LX st(ipendiorum) XXX*'. Le Bohec (1990) 116 took this as showing Mommsen restored the service length, i.e. *XX[X]*, though one wonders whether Ihm's *XX* is simply an error. Le Bohec further proposed *augusta(lis)* for *Augusta* in line three, but this does not seem especially likely.

¹²⁶⁵ Note *CIL* XIII (= *ILS* 2559 = Bauchhenß (1978) no.40), considered Neronian: *Marcinus Sur/conis f(ilius) Breucus(s) / mil(es) ex coh(orte) VIII / Breucorum...* This Marcinus was of the Illyrian Breuci, from Pannonia Inferior. Given the number of Pannonians and Dalmatians in the Italian *classes*, perhaps our Marcinus was also Illyrian.

¹²⁶⁶ The presentation of the text by J. Gagé, *et al.* in *AE* 1966 does not make clear that the line *may* not end here: the stone is broken, with potentially space for a few letters.

15. CIL V 1956 (= ILLConcordia I 25), Portus Liguentiae.

Batola[e] Dionis f(ilio)
de libur[na] Cluqueo
t(estamento) [f(ieri)] i(ussit)
Paius Ve[r]zonis f(ilius)
de Mārte
bic[r]ota
v(ivus) f(ecit) s[ibi] et suis
lib(ertis) lib(ertabus)q(ue).

16. ILS 2826 (= CIL IX 42), Brundisium.

Scaeva Liccai
mil(es) de lib(urna) Triton(e)
|(centurio) M(arci) Vetti vixi[t] an(nos)
XXXV mil(itavit) an(nos) [---]
h(ic) s(itus).

17. CIL IX 43 (= ILS 2874), Brundisium.

[---]ilo Pinthisi
f(ilio) de triere
Quadrig(a) vixit
an(nos) XXXV h(ic) s(itus)
Symphonia-
cus.

18. CIL IX 3892 (= ILS 2825), Lucus (Luco).

Vero Misai f(ilius)
miles ex clas(se)
Raven(nate)
stip(endiorum) XII vix(it)
a(nnos) XXX h(ic) s(itus) e(st).

19. CIL XI 45, Ravenna.

Basus Virti
f(ilius) an(nos) XVIII d(e)
Neptuno IIII
dis P(enatibus?) hic sit(us)
est.

20. CIL XI 88 (= ILS 2829), Ravenna.

Phallaeus
Dioclis f(ilius) guber(nator)
de Galeat(a)¹²⁶⁷ Pieris
et Nice l(ibertae) p(atrono) f(ecerunt)
in fr(onte) p(edes) VI in agr(o)
p(edes) XV.

21. CIL XI 111, Ravenna.

Ulcia M(arci) l(iberta) Glap(h)yr(a)
ob meritis eius
posuerunt T(itus) Alfius
Labeo et Murcius
Zanatis f(ilius) et Suavis
di(sic) liburna Diana.

22. AE 1967 114, Classis.

Velageno
Caroni f(ilius)
Gralis d(e) vico
Clablo dol-
ator d(e) libu/rna Saturā
et tu.

23. AE 1972 196, Aquileia.

Daza Pane-
tis f(ilius) an(nos)
vix(it) XXX mi-
lit(avit) XVI III
Corcodi-
lo(sic) f(ecit) Plusia
lib(erta) patro(no)
suo et sibi
in fron(te) p(edes) IV.

24. AE 1972 197, Aquileia.

Liccaeus
Verzonis f(ilius) |(centurio)
testament(o)
fieri iussit.

¹²⁶⁷ Probably the name of the ship, as Bormann in *CIL XI* (1888), p.22 suggests.

25. AE 1972 198, Aquileia.

Cleo Lucce[i(?) f(ilius)]¹²⁶⁸
trierarchus
Didymo Lucc[ei(?) f(ilio)]
fratri |(centurioni)
sibi et suis
l(ocus) m(onumenti) q(uo)q(uo) v(ersus) p(edes) X[VI?].

26. AE 1979 248, Ravenna.

Clemens
Caprari |(centurionis)
f(ilius) de lib(urna) Pinn(ata)
h(ic) s(itus) e(st).

27. AE 1980 689, Opsorus.

Liccaeus Vei f(ilius)
|(centurio) de liburna
Lucusta
testamento
fieri iussit arbit(ratu)
Dabali Triti
heredis
a(mico) mer(ito) an(norum) XXX
loc(us) publ(ice) dat(us).

28. AE 1990 205, Brundisium.

Verzo
Themi f(ilius)
de libur(na)
Tritone
militavit annos XX
vix(it) ann(os) XXXX
h(ic) s(itus) e(st).

29. Bollini (1968) pp.98-9 fig.25, Ravenna.

Apella Socratis
fil(ius)
guber(nator) de Neptu(no)
Eros et Aneros l(iberti)
de suo.

¹²⁶⁸ Brusin (1970) 572 restored *Cleo Lucce[ius]*, and *Didymo Lucc[eio]*. However, given the context of naming patterns within the *classis* in the earlier first century, a filiation is possible.

30. *TitAq* II 609, Aquincum.¹²⁶⁹

Eburo Milio-
nis fil(ius) miles
in classe
an(norum) LII
h(ic) s(itus) e(st).

31. Tuck (2005) no.62 (= *AE* 1974 261), Puteoli.

[.....]us Dabali f(ilius)
[.....]o de lib(urna) Margarita
[sibi et (?)] Q(uinto) Valerio Apro et Valeriae
[.....]ae contubernali suae et
[liberti]s libertabusque suis
[posteri]sque omnibus testament(o)
[---].

32. *ILN* I 23 (= *CIL* XII 5736 = *ILS* 2830), Forum Iulii.¹²⁷⁰

[---P]οστύμω[---]
[---A]ristonis[---]
[---c]eleustae[---].

Peregrines – Veterans.

33. *CIL* V 910 (= *AE* 1972 195), Aquileia.

L(ucio) Decimio
Scavae
Dercelonis
f(ilio)
missicius ex
classe Monus.

34. *CIL* X 3361 (= *ILS* 2844), Misenum.

C(aius) Marcius Volson(is)
f(ilius) Serg(ia) Maximus tr(iearchus)
de lib(urna) Aquila sibi et
Siliae Eutythiae uxori
et libertis libertab(usque) posterisq(ue)
eorum omnib(us) t(estamento) f(ieri) i(ussit) ex HS X(milibus) adiecit eo
Silia Eutythia coniunx HS VIII(milibus) CCC.

¹²⁶⁹ Mócsy (1968) 305 and more recently M. Németh in *TitAq* II (2010), p.93 proposed that this man had served in an Italian *classis*. This is plausible given *classis* recruitment from this region, though alternatively he *could* have belonged to a provincial *classis*.

¹²⁷⁰ A very uncertain case, with a peregrine name formula only a possibility: see J. Gasco and M. Janon in *ILN* I (1985), p.60.

35. CIL XI 28 (= IDRE I 136), Ravenna.

P(ublius) Arrius P(ubli) f(ilius) Montanus
Mocazia Helpis uxor
P(ublius) Arrius Polux
Q(uintus) Decimius Dacus opt(io) de III
Pinnata Mocazia Iucunda uxo[r]
P(ublius) Arrius P(ubli) l(ibertus) Primigenius
P(ublius) Arrius P(ubli) l(ibertus) Castor.

36. ILS 9218 (= AE 1900 185), Brundisium.

L(ucius) Boionius Zeno
veteranus de Phryge
triere nauta v(ixit) a(nnos) XCV
h(ic) s(itus).

Roman Citizens

37. CIL VI 2491, Rome.

[---]us M(arci) f(ilius) Ani[e(nsi)] Crispus
[mil(es)] coh(ortis) III pr(aetoriae) fecit
[---]nio M(arci) f(ilio) An(iensi) Silvano
[fratr]i suo mil(iti) coh(ortis) III pr(aetoriae)
[mil(itavit) an]n(os) VII vix(it) ann(os) XXVII m(ensem) I
[M(arco)---]nio C(ai) [f(ilio)] A[n(iensi)] Silvano pat[r]i
[veter]ano ex classe Misen(ense)
[---]nio Abascanto lib(erto)
[---]niae Chr[y]sidi lib(ertae)
[liber]tis libertabus
[poste]risq[ue] eorum
[in] f(ronte) p(edes) XXII in agr(ro) p(edes) XX
[Abasc]antus ad[i]ecit ad
monument(um)
[in f(ronte)] p(edes) VIII s(emissem) in agr(o) p(edes) XXV.

38. AE 1968 471, Athens.

G(aio) Mucio G(ai) f(ilio) Cla-
udio Gemenelo
mathe(matico) tr(ierarchi) ex
classe Ravenn-
ate curavit
M(arcus) Aemilius
Fuscus optio.

39. *InscrAq* II 2823 (= *CIL* V 938 = *ILS* 2905 = *AE* 1972 194), Aquileia.

L(ucius) Trebius T(iti) f(ilius)

pater //

L(ucius) Trebius L(uci) f(ilius) Ruso

fieri iussit //

natus sum summa in pauperie merui post classicus miles

ad latus Augusti annos septemque decemque

nullo odio sine offensa missus quoq(ue) honesta

l(ocus) p(edum) q(uadratorum) XVI.

40. *AE* 2006 430 (= *AE* 1961 153), Sarsina.

[hoc monimen(tum)---] Appaeus A(uli) f(ilius) Agricola

[vet(eranus)? ex cl]asse sexvir Aug(ustalis)

[test(amento) fieri iussit si]bi et Aufidiae Q(uinti) f(iliae) uxori

[heredes fec(erunt) arb]itr(atu) Aufidiae Q(uinti) f(iliae) Secund(ae)

[sor(or)is] uxor(is)] et Suavis l(iberti?).

41. *IG IX* 1.4.1548 (= *AE* 2001 1789b), Sami.

Ditius Pa[---]

faber nava[li]s

militavit a(nnos) XXXV

domo Savona

have viator

estis bibitis

moriendu(m) (e)st.

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