Hadrian’s *Adlocutio* at Lambaesis, AD 128
Outline

• Overview
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  – The Army in Africa
  – Training in the Army

• Inscription
  – Geographical Location
  – The Monument

• Meaning
  – Units
  – Terminology
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Hadrian
(76-138)
(r.117-138)
The Roman empire in the second century AD
“The Traveling Emperor”
“The Traveling Emperor”
“The Traveling Emperor”
“The Traveling Emperor”

AD 124
AD 123
AD 122
AD 121
AD 123
"The Traveling Emperor"
“The Traveling Emperor”

128
AD
127
AD
124
AD
123
AD
122
AD
121
Lambaesis, AD 128
(c) 2004 Jani Niemenmaa
“The Traveling Emperor”

Lambaesis, AD 128

AD 122
AD 121
AD 127
AD 124
AD 123
AD 123
Lambaesis, AD 128
AD 130

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“The Traveling Emperor”

Lambaesis, AD 128

AD 122

AD 121

AD 127

AD 124

AD 123

Lambaesis, AD 128

AD 130
The Army in Africa

- **Legio III Augusta** formed ~40 BC by Octavian
- AD 40 Caligula changed from proconsul to legate command
- ~AD 120 moved from Thevesta to Lambaesis
- 6000 legionaries in main fortress; 10,000+ auxiliaries nearby
- AD 238-252 disbanded for supporting a usurper
- Mentioned as late as early 5th century; unknown date of disbandment
- Long history of putting down revolt, maintaining order and stability in Africa, and building roads, aqueducts, etc.
Training in the Roman Army

• Limited, but useful, primary sources allow us to reconstruct ideas about Roman Army discipline and training:
  – Josephus
  – Frontinus
  – Arrian
  – Vegetius

• Archaeological evidence continues to fill in the gaps.
72: “For they do not wait until war breaks out before beginning weapons training, nor do they go idly through peace time...they never take a holiday from training and do not wait for crises to appear.”

73: “Their training maneuvers lack none of the rigor of genuine warfare and each soldier practices battle drill every day with great enthusiasm just as if he were in battle.”

75: “Indeed, no one would be wrong in saying that their training maneuvers are battles without bloodshed, and their battles maneuvers with bloodshed.”

102: “Through their military exercises the Romans give their soldiers not only strong bodies but also mental courage, and fear also plays a part in training.”
Frontinus, *Stratagems*

- Prominent senator with military experience (Civilis revolt, AD 70; governor of Britain, AD 73-77)
- *Stratagems* gives hundreds of anecdotes of past Greek and Roman commanders
- Themes are: Before battle, During the battle, Seige and town defense, and General military science (including training and discipline)
Arrian (86-160)

- Greek from Nicomedia in Bithynia
- Close friend of Hadrian
- Possibly witnessed maneuvers at Lambaesis with the Emperor
- While governor of Cappadocia (AD 131-137), wrote *Tactics, Order of Battle against the Alans*, and *Circumnavigation of the Black Sea*, all written with Hadrian in mind
Arrian’s Tactica, AD 136

- Five Phases to Roman cavalry maneuvers (hippika gymnasia):
  - Games of skill (dextratio; Cantabricus), performed in colorful dress using light hastae.
  - Shooting exercises by individuals wearing cuirasses, using heavy lanceae.
  - Maneuvers with special weapons such as cross-bows, javelins, rocks, slings, contus-lances, and swords.
  - Exercises of jumping onto horses.
  - Maneuvers newly learned from foreigners like Persians, Sarmatians, and Germans (Keltoi).
Vegetius, *Epitome of Military Science*

- Active in the time of Theodosius I (383-95)
- Summarized ancient authors in order to use old military practices as a guide for improving the current army
- Value of military training
- Roman training (marching, swimming, jumping)
- Weapons training (heavier than real battle)
- Throwing missiles, vaulting onto horses
- Training in battle maneuvers
Archaeological Evidence

- Excavations of permanent Roman camps allow us to understand more about daily army life.
- Some forts still preserve the outer parade ground (e.g. Lambaesis, Caerleon, Hardknott).
- At least two forts in Scotland may have possibly been used only for training (Woden Law and Burnswark).
- Ox skull at Vindolanda used for ballista target practice.
Inscription: Geographical Location

• Lambaesis was at the center of Rome’s African Army, housing the main force of the *Legio III Augusta*

• *Auxilia* were stationed in smaller, scattered camps along the frontier

• Parade ground at Lambaesis is 2 km west of the fortress, on level ground 200 m², with a short perimeter wall

• In the middle was a viewing platform (tribunal) from which Hadrian observed the maneuvers
Inscription: The Monument

- Square base 2 meters high, 4.5 meters long
- Topped by Corinthian column crowned with statue of Hadrian
- Fell into ruin after Arab invasion (7th century)
- Rediscovered and reported to the world in 1851 by the French
- 4 of 16 blocks survive mostly intact, as well as over 100 small fragments
- Out of 32 possible fields of inscription from the 16 blocks, we have near complete portions of Fields 1, 2, 6, 10, 22, 26, 29, and 30
Inscription: The Monument

• Speeches to the legion comprise fields 1-16, and the auxilia fields 17-32
• Hadrian observed and addressed separate groups of the legion at Lambaesis on July 1st (probably over the course of 3 days):
  – Pili (1-2)
  – Equites Legionis (6-7)
  – Principes (9-10)
  – Hastati (13-16)
• For the auxilia, inscriptions appear to be recorded in the order Hadrian observed and addressed them:
  – Some units (Cohors II Hamiorom, 21) were seen at the end of June on the way from Carthage to Lambaesis, prior to the legion
  – Other small camps were visited later: unknown cohort at Zarai, near Mauretania, July 7th (26-27); Ala I Pannoniorum and Cohors VI Commagenorum in southern Numidia on July 12th or 13th (29-30)
Units: *Legio III Augusta*

- **To the *pili***: Hadrian shows his knowledge of detailed troop movements within the legion and loaned to another legion, and the building of new fortresses. He praises them for continuing their training at a high standard despite these hindrances.

- **To the *equites legionis***: He states how they threw spears while wearing the cuirass, a most difficult task which sacrifices gracefulness for utility.

- **To the *principes***: He praises how they built, much more quickly than normal and at a high standard, a stone wall and a straight ditch, followed by good camp procedures.

- Hadrian specifically praises the legate, Catullinus, as a noble and distinguished man (*vir clarissimus*) who is responsible for the high level of training of the Legion as well as the *auxilia*.

- Catullinus became *consul ordinarius* 2 years later.
Units: Auxilia -- Field 29

“The third day before the Ides of July (the 13th) Ala I Pannoniorum

You did everything according to the book: you filled the training ground with your wheelings, you threw spears (hastae) not ungracefully, though with short and stiff shafts. Several of you hurled lancea spears with skill. Your jumping onto the horses here was lively and yesterday swift. Had anything been lacking, I would note it; had anything stood out, I would mention it. You pleased equally throughout the whole maneuver. Noble Catullinus, my deputy, gives the same care to all ---”
Terminology

• *Ala I Pannonicorum*
  – 512 horsemen, the elite of the Roman cavalry

• Wheelings

• *Hastae*

• *Lancea* spears

• Jumping onto the horses
  – Demonstrate all the ways a horse can be mounted, wearing full armor onto galloping horse
What is Happening

• Phase 1 -- games of skill (*dextratio*; *Cantabricus*) using *hastae*:
  – “You filled the training ground with your wheelings, you threw spears (*hastae*) not ungracefully, though with short and stiff shafts.”

• Phase 2 -- shooting exercises by individuals wearing cuirasses, using *lancea*:
  – “Several of you hurled *lancea* spears with skill.”

• Phase 4 -- exercises of jumping onto horses:
  – “Your jumping onto the horses here was lively and yesterday swift.”
Units: Auxilia -- Field 30

“Equites cohortis VI Commagenorum

It is hard for horsemen of a cohort to please, even as they are, and harder still not to displease after a show by horsemen of an ala: the training field differs in size, spear throwers are fewer, the right-wheel is tight, the Cantabrian formation is cramped, the condition of the horses and the maintenance of the equipment in keeping with the pay level. But you have banished weariness by your eagerness, by doing briskly what had to be done. Moreover, you shot stones from slings and fought with javelins; everywhere you jumped nimbly onto your horses. The outstanding manhood of noble Catullinus, my legate, shows itself in that under this man you are such men.”
Terminology

- **Equites VI Cohortis Commagenorum**
  - Probable ratio of 128 horsemen, 480 infantry

- Training field differs in size, spear throwers are fewer

- Right-wheel is tight, Cantabrian formation is cramped

- Condition of the horses
  - Breeding and uniformity of gait and appearance inferior, not training and skill

- In keeping with the pay level
  - Rare evidence suggests that *coh. equit.* were paid less than *equit. alares*, but more than infantry

- Shot stones from slings and fought with javelins
  - It appears that slinging was part of the general *auxilia* training as a secondary (or tertiary) skill

- Jumped nimbly onto your horses
What is Happening

• Phase 1 -- games of skill (*dextratio*; *Cantabricus*) using *hastae*:
  – “the right-wheel is tight, the Cantabrian formation is cramped”

• Phase 2 -- shooting exercises by individuals wearing cuirasses, using *lancea*:
  – “spear throwers are fewer”

• Phase 3 -- maneuvers with special weapons (cross-bows, javelins, rocks, slings, *contus*-lances, and swords):
  – “you shot stones from slings and fought with javelins”

• Phase 4 -- exercises of jumping onto horses:
  – “everywhere you jumped nimbly onto your horses”
Why is this important?

• Sole surviving *Adlocutio* of a Roman emperor to soldiers.
• Helps us understand Hadrian better as emperor and man:
  – military expertise/horsemanship
  – attention to detail/personal knowledge of each unit
  – speaking style (forceful and direct to soldiers)
  – example of empire-wide agenda for military training/readiness
• Details revealed about Roman army and its camps we would not otherwise know:
  – Slinging apparently was part of the general training of all *auxilia* (Field 30)
  – Molossi hounds used for keeping watch at camps (Fragment 54)
• Provides a vivid picture of the “grandeur that was Rome” at the height of its power:
  – Powerful, well-trained army, drawn from many far-flung provinces
  – Performing graceful and skilled maneuvers in colorful parade dress in front of the Emperor, showing their martial prowess
  – Honored with a monument that partially remains as a testament almost 2000 years later
Further Reading


Questions?