ABSTRACT

Roman readiness to equate deities of other peoples with their own gods, and the willingness of provincials to give Latin names to their gods, with the resultant formation of composite deities, sometimes with Roman, sometimes with Celtic or Germanic, sometimes with joint names, is well-known under the Tacitean phrase of 'interpretatio Romana'. The most influential body of Roman immigrants into the Rhineland were soldiers. Their contribution to this phenomenon is studied here. It becomes clear that neither the Roman military nor the local provincials were aiming at cultural hegemony: the concerns throughout were those of religion.

It is a great honour to be invited to write an article in memory of Professor Vogel. When I visited Heidelberg in the 1950s I was told about a student there from South West Africa, as Namibia was known in those days. We duly met and later Miss Weidemann, as she then was, came to Oxford where we renewed our acquaintance. In later years we saw much of each other, on the board of Acta Classica, then when Professor Vogel invited me to serve as external examiner in Ancient History and finally when I joined the staff of Unisa under her as head of department. Discussing any problem in Roman history with her was always useful and illuminating. We had talked about the following theme before her untimely death.

The Romans always took foreign gods very seriously. They even devised a ritual called evocatio (Macr. Sat. 3.9.7f.) to entice the enemy gods to leave them and come to Rome with the promise of a better cult there.

Those travelling to foreign places, especially in remote regions, were usually intimidated by the unfamiliarity of their new surroundings and would be anxious to appease whatever ominous powers controlled the area concerned. Roman soldiers were not less religious, or superstitious, than the rest of the population. Spearheading new advances they would be particularly eager to placate the named and unnamed spiritual powers of their new station.
Evidence for this comes from two altars at Fines on the Vinxtbach, the stream which marks the boundary between the provinces of Upper and Lower Germany. One was erected by a soldier of Legio VIII Augusta (stationed at Strasbourg, Argentorate, upstream) who was a beneficiarius consularis, an orderly of the governor, to "I.O.M. et Genio Loci Iunoni Reginae" (CIL XIII 7731). Jupiter Optimus Maximum—Juno Regina was his consort—was the chief Roman god and especially important in the religion of the army. What is of interest is his coupling of the unspecified local 'Spirit of the Place' with these high and official deities. The dedication, by two soldiers of the legio XXX Ulpiia Victrix (stationed at Xanten, Vetera, downstream) was to "Finibus et Genio Loci cr. I.O.M." (CIL XIII 7732). They apparently recognized the Boundary as a deity, with whom they then associated the Genius Loci and Jupiter. The Genius of a troop or of a defined area was an important concept in Roman military religion. In 230 a soldier of Legio XXII Primigenia (at Mainz, Mogontiacum) who was a junior orderly on the governor's staff and who informs us that his father had served in the Praetorian Guard in Rome set up a statue of the "Genius Plaenae Novi Vici", the Genius of a new part of the civitas capital of Heddernheim nr. Frankfurt-am-Main (Nuda). It was accompanied by a small shrine and an altar. The soldiers' two brothers and his mother participated in the dedication; rather strangely at this late date he describes them as Roman citizens: the statue itself has a classical appearance (ILS 7096 = CIL XIII 7355). The family was honouring the spirit of the area in correct Roman fashion, with the soldier's brother taking the initiative.

The Genius Loci and boundary features drew the worship of not only ordinary soldiers but senior commanders as well. Around 220, under Elagabalus, an eques and legate of I Minervia (stationed at Bonn, the ancient Bonna) erected an altar to Jupiter, Juno and Minerva to whom he added

1. The Vinxtbach (its name derives from the Latin Fines) enters the Rhine opposite Rheinfelden some 25 km N of Koblenz. For a description of the site, cf. M. Kluge, Die Limes gespielt hier und Main (Stuttgart 1996) 306f. There was another Fines (now Pfyn) in the Thurgau) on the boundary with Yaeris.

2. For the place of Jupiter in military cult cf. A. von Domaszewski, "Die Religion des römischen Heeres", in Aufsätze zur römischen Heeresgeschichte (Darmstadt 1972) 14ff.

3. Thresholds and boundaries were important in Roman religion, as the god Terminus shows. Comparable dedications occur on the Great St. Bernard (Domona Tennes). A centurion from Fundi in Italy in VI Xerculis, which was stationed in Germany and Britain after 70, fulfilled a vow to "reu Posingi", Jupiter of the Pennine Alps (ILS 4850). Another tablet from the same site, to Penninus alone, gives a reason for the dedication: it was "pro itu et reditu" (ILS 4850a—to judge by his name, the dedicant was probably a freedman).

the ‘Genius huius loci, Neptunus, Oceanus et Rhenum’ and all the gods and
goddesses at Vechten nr. Utrecht on the Rhine (Fectio), where there was a
Roman fort.5 From the same place comes a parallel dedication by Marcus
Galilius, commander of XXX V.V. (at Xanten). He honoured Jupiter, his
Ancestral Gods and the Protectors of This Place (‘Praesides Huius Loci’,
rather than the Genius) and then added Ocean and the Rhine ‘for his own
safety and that of his own (family?)’ 6 Another legiomy legate, Oppius
Scerrius,7 made a dedication to the Rhine further upstream at Strasbourg
(as noted, the headquarters of VIII Augusta).

In addition to such vague powers as the Genius Loci soldiers worshipped
local deities, sometimes even ones restricted to comparatively small areas.
A bronze tablet found near Tongeren (Atuatuca Tungrorum) is instructive
in this regard: ‘Vihansae Q. Catius Libo Nepos centurio leg. I11 Cyrenaicae
scutum et lanceam d. d.’ (ILS 4755 = XI11 3592). The III Cyrenaica

was stationed in the East, in Egypt and later Arabia. Accordingly Nepos
was not serving locally, so that the most probable context is that he was
a returning soldier fulfilling a vow to the local Germanic war goddess8
made before his departure: it is notable that local deities were the least
preferred recipients of dedication by centurions serving in the Rhineland
itself.9 His dedication of his shield and lance to the goddess is paralleled
by finds of deposited weapons at shrines.10 Dedication to local deities by
returning soldiers were more common among the auxilia.

A decurion or squadron commander in an ala stationed in Britain set up a bronze
statue to Vagdavercustis, a war goddess known only from inscriptions by soldiers. His name Simplicius is attested in the
area: ‘Deae Vagdavercusti Simplicius Super dec. alae Vocontior. exercitus
Britannici’11 Another auxiliary, of the Ala Noricorum, which was in

5. CIL XIII 8811; G. Alfoldy, Die Legionshauptquartiere der römischen Rheinarmen
(Cologne 1967) 84, no. 87.
6. ILS 4755 = CIL XIII 8810; Alfoldy (note 5) 54, no. 68. Alfoldy suggests that
they were engaged in an unexpected war in his area. Their appeal to Ocean and
Neptune suggests that there may have been a sea battle.
der germanischen Proxriarmen (Cologne 1993) 247, no. 47 (this perhaps under
Hadrian). For a dedication by an ordinary soldier, cf. CIL XIII 7790, 1.o.m. et Genio loci et Rheno’, in
190 at Ricomagus (Remagen).
8. S. Gothenhoven, Die germanischen Gitternamen der antiken Buckelriemen (Haarzuusen
1995) 103, derive the name from *wih-ansuz, ‘war goddess’.
hiérarchie (Rangordnung) de l’armée romaine (Actes du Congrès de Lyon 1994)
ed. Y. Le Bohec (Paris 1995) 31-7 at 34.
10. As at the Batavian shrine at Empel nr. ‘s-Hertogenbosch: cf. N. Roymans & T.
11. ILS 2636 = CIL XIII 8806; G. Alfoldy, Die Befestigungen der römischen Provinz

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Lower Germany from 70 onwards, inscribed a bronze tablet to her in Altkalkar (Burgisnatum), the regiment's camp. Eventually even Roman units, rather than just individuals, were prepared to honour local gods: a veillation of 1 Münerva (at Bonn) honoured the Dea Hludana at a limekiln works at Bad Münstereifel-Iversheim. The goddess' name is spelled Hludana. It was not only ranking soldiers who felt the need for protection by the divine powers of a province. Even sophisticated governors, who were of senatorial status, approached the non-Roman gods. Especially notable was the action of A. Didius Galba Fabricius Veiento, tribune consulis. He was also one of the quindecimviri sacris faciundis, the distinguished board of priests (to whom Tacitus also belonged) especially concerned with the oversight of foreign cults at Rome. But when in Mainz (Magoniacum) at the end of the first century he and his wife performed a vow to the Celtic goddess Nemetona, often a consort of Man, more than a century later Fulvius Maximus, governor of Inferior in the early third century, dedicated an altar at Bonn to 'Nemistus, Concordiae, Granno, Causidis, Martin et Pacis Latini quin e decem sterni genito Casendi': included among the Roman deities is Grannus, more often Apollo Grannus, tutelary god of the healing springs at Aachen (Aquae Granni). More than a century later Fulvius Maximus, governor of Inferior in the early third century, dedicated an altar at Cologne (Colonia Claudia Ara Agrippinensium, the capital of Inferior) shows a typically Roman sacrificial scene. But it is inscribed 'Deae Vagdavercustis Titus Faustus Constans praef. praet. eum(menistium) ut\(\text{\textsuperscript{16}}\)' the deity whom the future (A.D. 164) prefect of the Praetorian Guard in Rome chose to worship was the local war goddess Vagdavercusis mentioned above. The worship of plural female deities, with or without proper names or epithets and called Matres or Matronae, was widespread in the German provinces, especially in Usian territory around Cologne. Soldiers were attracted. The inscription 'Matronis M. Val. Crescens eques leg. \(\text{\textsuperscript{18}}\) Germaniae inferior (Düsseldorf 1968) 191, no. 81. For Vagdavercusis cf. Gutenbrunner (note 6) 102ff; for Simplicius in Germania Inferior, CIL XIII 5, index, p.49.

12. CIL XIII 8002; Alfoldy, (note 11) 181, no. 49.
13. CIL 4745 = CIL XIII 7944. The inscription was set up under Severus Alexander. Apparently Hludana was a fertility goddess (Gutenbrunner, note 6, 73).
14. CIL 3565 = CIL XIII 7253; PIR² F 91; Eck (note 7) 142, connects his visit to Mainz with the revolt of Antonius Saturninus (PIR² A 874) in 88/9.
15. ILS 1190 = CIL XIII 8007; PIR² F 551; Eck (note 7) 200.
16. ILS 9060 = CIL XIII, 12057 = Die römischen Steininschriften aus Köln, by B. & H. Gaither (Cologne 1975) 46, no. 146, illustrated on pl. 32; PIR² F 547.
cornicularius P. Aburi Lucullus—suggests. The dating is uncertain. VI Victrix was on the Rhine from Vespasian till early under Hadrian. The legion was given the title of Pia Fidelis in 89: its absence on the inscription could mean that the dedication was made prior to that year. Soldiers often stressed personal links with the Matres, calling them 'their own' (suae, meae, domesticae, parentae). The Matres concerned were often very local: a custodia in XXX Ulpi Victrix dedicated to 'Matres Paternae Hannanae'. The mother goddesses were worshipped by auxiliaries as well. A cavalryman of the Ala I Asturum who had fought 'in Mylia', i.e., in Moesia, made a dedication to (unnamed) Matronae in Cologne (AE 1990, 732). A Ubii had served in the unit in Germany early in the Principate (ILS 2560 = CIL XIII 2013): perhaps the cavalryman, with the uninformative name of Victor, had returned to Cologne after service in Moesia, where the unit is attested in 99 (CIL XVI 45) before its transfer to Dacia (before 140—RMD 39). It has been suggested that the Maiae worshipped by Simplicius Sepulch I of the Ala Asturum, who had been chosen as an orderly to the governor (singulares consularia), were African, like the ethnicnicum of his unit. But the name of the auxiliary is not African: Simplicius and its compounds are frequent in Lower Germany, although, of course, he may have been worshipping deities traditional in the unit. The Maiae remain obscure.

The worship of the Aufaniae goddesses by soldiers is especially instructive. The Aufaniae were widely honoured in Germania Inferior, especially in Ubii territory. Their name is no longer connected etymologically with that of the Ubii themselves: one derivation connects it with the Germanic Aufaniae were widely honoured in Germania Inferior, especially in Ubii territory. Their name is no longer connected etymologically with that of the Ubii themselves: one derivation connects it with the Germanic

19 AE 1932, 41 = BRGK XXVII (1937) 4. It is not clear what Aburius (or Abullius [FOR A 194] according to a different reading) Lucullus' position in Belgium was (W. Meyers, L'administration de Belgique [Bruges 1964] 48). He could have been either legate or procurator. Probably the latter, as the inscription comes from Trier, where the procurator had his seat.

20 CIL XIII 8233 = Galsterer (note 16) 32, no. 106; Alfoldy (note 11) 170, no. 16. Simplex was also the cognomen of a soldier (with the nomen Flavius) in the same regiment (ILS 1046 = CIL XIII 10024, 35; Alfoldy 173, no. 21). C.B. Rüger, 'Beobachtungen zu den epigraphischen Belegen der Muttergottheiten', Matronen und verwandte Gottheteten (note 17) 16. As Rüger says (ibid.) 30, small groups of soldiers are found worshipping their own Matronae. This was probably a carry-over from the worship patterns of groups of young men called curiae. He cites the case of a dedication by seven men, four with the German-type nomen of Albinius, two with that of Oolumnius, and one (---Issinius showing the tell-tale termination -zntus, to the Matres Octocannae at Gelduba where there was a Roman fort (AE 12 [1881] 304, no. 16). (The name Octocannae is probably mixed Latin-Celtic—R.B. Schmidt, [UBA] 1465; compare Middle Eng. spectra, 'sprite', 'spirit'.) For the curiae cf. C.B. Rüger, RS IX (1992) 251-60.
root *ufjo and understands it to mean 'Those who bestow in superabundance'; another relates it to the root *fanja-, 'fen, moor'.21 Sculptural representations are distinctive. The best example is that commissioned by a city treasurer ('quaestor') of Cologne, Vettius Severus, and set up in Bonn. The three goddesses are shown seated in an exedra or niche with their attributes. Only their headgear, the local Germanic wide-brimmed bonnet, marks the cult as indigenous. Otherwise the iconography conforms to Roman norms.

Most of the dedications to the Aufaniae come from a collection of altars found in secondary use in the foundations of a small 4th-century structure under the minster in Bonn: presumably they came from a nearby sanctuary which has not yet been discovered.22 Most of the military inscriptions cluster in the 150s and have been interpreted as vows in connection with the plague which was brought to the west from the east after the Parthian War under Marcus Aurelius (Amm. Marc. 23.6.24). But as C. Rüger23 has shown, many of the inscriptions predate 166, when the Bonn legion returned from the War. He suggests that the upgrading of the cult to the position of prominence it held for the legion could have proceeded its departure for the East and that it then commemorated the glory it won in the war, perhaps when Marcus assumed the title of Arminiacus.

The importance assigned to the cult is shown by the level of the dedicants. They include a legionary commander, senior officers and ordinary soldiers. The legate, Calpurnius Proculus,25 interestingly came from the East: his family originated in Ankara (Ankry in Galatia). Not only he, but his wife, Domitia Regina, dedicated to the Aufaniae: nothing indicates that she came from a local family. The wife of another legate, Claudius Stratonicus,26 who was also a Galatian, set up a dedication as well. There are dedications from two praefecti castrorum (camp commandants), officers who were third in the legionary hierarchy. One gave his origo, Teano-
(Teanum Sidicinum) in Italy. The wife of the other, with the ‘Italian’
-sounding name of Sutoria Pia, shared in his vow (AE 1931, 13; 12 = BRGK
XXVII [1937] 150-1). It may be noted that the iconography on the wives’
altars, where it has survived, is not that of the usual classic anthropomorphic
triad shown on dedications by men (as described for Vettius Severus above)
but featured stylized goats, which has been interpreted as a reference to
an original myth associated with the cult.27 There are inscriptions from
four centuries and the wife of a centurion (AE 1931, 14; 1930, 22; 1930,
23 = BRGK XXVII [1937] 152-6). One, who later served in VII Claudia,
which was in Moesia Inferior, has a Greek cognomen, Andreas, which could
imply recruitment in the East. The context of the vow to which standard
reference is made in most of the military dedications (‘u. s. 1. m.’—‘votum solvit libens merito’) is rarely given. However one of the centurions (of leg.
I Minervae p. f. et VIII Aug. [in Strasbourg] spio diuo optio successurus u. s. 1. m.)
was probably paying a vow in return for promotion from deputy (‘optio’) to
full centurion.
Various beneficiarii consularis, soldiers seconded from a regiment to the
governor’s headquarters, come next (AE 1931, 16; 1930, 26; 1930, 25 =
BRGK XXVII [1937] 157-9). One associated his wife in his vow. She has
a cognomen Successinia with the -inius termination typical of the Gallo-
German provinces and can presumably be regarded as a local. In the third
century a beneficiarius dedicated a stone to ‘Dea. Aufan. et Tutelae Loci’
at Mainz (Moguntiacum): ILS 4796 = CIL XIII 6665: he does not name
his regiment, which was presumably one of the Upper German legions).
Beneficiarii were often assigned duty away from the capital at such points
(stationes) as important road crossings. Near Bonn a sizeable group of
dedications by off. cos. comes from Nettersheim in the Eifel from the late
second and early third centuries.28 Presumably the status was near the
sanctuary of the Aufaniae there.
There are a few stones by ordinary soldiers, and one by a veteran (ILS
27. C. B. Rüger, ‘A Husband for the Mother Goddess’, in Rome and her Northern
28. L. Wengenroth, ‘Das römische Namenswesen des Xantener Siedlungsräumes’, BJ
29. ILS 9227 = CIL XIII 11989; 9228 = 11988; 9330 = 11986, 11987-9; 11990.
The preferred title of the Aufaniae is Matronae, but Matres occurs once
and Dea twice. In the dative Aufaniae appears equally as Aufanis and Aufaniabw.
Similar forms occur in Bonn itself with the additional appellative of Sanctae (AE
1930, 25 = BRGK XXVII [1937] 159, in AD 233). (In the chronology of the
appellatives Deae and Sanctae given to the Aufaniae cf. M.-T. Raepsaet-Charlier,
Diis Deabusque Sacrum: Formulaire votif et datation dans les nois Gaules el les
For the sanctuary at Nettersheim, cf. Die Römer in Nordrhein-Westfalen, (note
22) 371; A.-B. Follmann-Scholz, ‘Die römischen Tempelanlagen in Germania infer-
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4780 = CIL XIII 8213; AE 1931, 17 = BRGR XXVII [1937] 160; ILS 4795 = CIL XIII 8213 = Galsterer (note 16) 20, no. 93; AE 1931, 15 = BRGR XXVII [1937] 182). One, Clodius Marcellinus, addressed the goddesses as those of his home, 'Matribus siue Matronis Aufaniis Domesticis' (showing the basic equivalence of the terms Matronae and Matres). The veteran 'ex armatura' (probably a weapons instructor) separated his Matres Domesticae from the Aufaniis (by 'et'). It is only on these soldiers' dedications that the Aufaniis are called Matres: the preferred term for the mother goddess in Lower Germany is Matronae.30 It would appear that the higher ranks preferred Matronae, only ordinary soldiers using Matres, which was the usual military term in Gaul and Britain. Another miles, Aelius Super, whose cognomen suggests that he came from Lower Germany, had himself portrayed on his altar in armour riding down a Parthian. Such scenes were stock-in-trade of military sculpture, especially tombstones, but may be significant in this case and refer to the Parthian War. If accurate, Super would have been a legio­nary eques, and therefore a cut above the ordinary soldier. The last soldier, perhaps a Ubiius—his monument is in Cologne—actually refers to his service in the East: 'fuit ad Natum flumen secum mort. Custos'.

The Aufaniis were taken outside Lower Germany by soldiers. One, with the high rank of military tribune, set up a dedication in Lyon (Lugdunum) (ILS 4794 = CIL XIII 1766). This presumably when I Minervia was involved in the civil war between Clodius Albinus and Septimius Severus there in 197. The Aufaniis are called Matronae, but he associated with them the Matres Pannoniorum et Dalmatarum, presumably a reference to his pre-Bonc postings.

The cult of the Aufaniis mother goddesses suddenly blossomed in the 160s and remained popular for nearly three quarters of a century. In spite of its obscure local origins it attracted civilian and military worshippers of high rank. These included legio­nary commanders whose origins were in the eastern half of the empire. Apart from certain features essential to the Aufaniis as mother goddesses the wording of dedications to them and the iconography of the altars set up in their honour were essentially Roman. The military were prepared to adopt the most unlikely of cults as their own.

If not actual mother goddesses, the Suleviai31 resembled them in several respects. A dedication to Matres and the Suleviai (they are joined by 'et')

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30. Riiger (note 20) 4, 13.
31. Heichelheim, RE 4A (1931) 725; Gutenbrunner (note 8) 195. Wellington, who refers to the nymph Sul (equated with Minerva) at Bath in England and compares Old Sull = 'bull', 'eye', then 'eye' (of a [hot] spring), K.H. Schmidt, however, in Matronae (note 17) 149, derives the name from two Celtic roots su- and lew meaning 'guiding' or 'directing well'.
was made by a beneficiarius from VI Victrix. It does not have its later title of Pia Fidelis, which, as noted, it acquired in 89. It arrived on the Rhine in 70. Hence, if significance can be ascribed to the absence of the title P.F., the dedication was made in the Flavian period. A veteran of the Mainz legion XIM Prima Agrippina Pia Fidelis (the element P.F. making the date post 89) worshipped the Suleiuas (using the dative form 'Suleiuas') near Andenmark (Antonineum — ILS 4772 = CIL XIII 7725). Their worship, however, was not confined, as that of the Aufaniae, to Lower Germany. They often feasted, together with the Caugentes, the Goddess of the Parade Ground, Epona, the Celtic Goddess of Horses, and Matres (adules, the term applies to them) with Roman military deities in the shrine of the emperor's special horse guards, the equites singulares. An early altar, of 132, has three Saxonian, members of the tribe around Xanten, among the dedicants (ILS 2181 + CIL VI 31140). One dedication is by an individual, a troop commander or decurion with the Gallo-German sounding nomen of Caugentes. He selected 'Matetius Paterinus et Maternas Mioque Soleius' (ILS 4778, in 207). A decurion of the Ala I Caesaris legion, again with the '-inius' termination, worshipped them as 'Suleiuas Sororibus' in Ladenburg (Laudunum in Germania Superior). The phrase — interpretatio Romana — in Tacitus (Germ. 43) has become the name of a common feature of religion in the provinces, the identification of local with Roman deities with similar attributes. The phenomenon appears most clearly in the double names given to such deities, but also in such features as style in the iconography of the god concerned. Only male deities received Latin names. In the Germanies three gods, Hercule, Mars, and Mercury, appear most frequently, but Apollo features as well. Tacitus (Germ. 3) says that the Germans honored Hercules as a military hero. On the Lower Rhine he is especially addressed as Hercules Saxius and Hercules Magnusum. It is not clear what local deity lies behind Hercules Saxianus—h Magnum, 'of rocks', although it only appears as a title of Hercules, in a Latin work. Soldiers worshipped the god in quarries. At Norroy on the Moselle in Mediomatrican territory in Belgica, four centurions in charge of legionary (and in one case [ILS 9120 = CIL XIII 4633] also auxiliary) detachments honored the god. The phrasing of the inscriptions (in one case the citation refers to his 'comitantes') implies

32. A. Oes, Germania 11 (1927) 31-3; AE 1928, 89.

33. ILS 9323 = CIL XIII 1742. The second's name was L. Galienius Juvenalis, M.P. Niddel, Germania 9 (1972) 172f., pointed another decurion in the same regiment, L. Galienius L. M. Fab. Primo (also in tow commliss of Britain—CIL V 1600). As his name is otherwise unattractive and there is an alternative reading of Galienius he suggests that he be preferred. This means that the two dedications were probably identical, perhaps brothers. Juvenalis cap there be regarded as a North Italian prepared to honor local deities in the province where he was stationed.
that the soldiers were actively involved in the worship. One dedication, by the X Gemina which Vespasian had stationed at Nijmegen (Nijmogamus), was made to the god and the emperor and his sons: "Herculi Saxano et imp. Vespasiano et Tito imp. et Domitiano Caesari." He was also worshipped in the quarries in the Brohltal in the Eifel. One inscription, there is by a centurion and his "vexillarii" of Legion XV, which was destroyed in 70 (ILLS 3455 = XIII 7700). Another mentions the "cudenitiae" of the centurion "to select infantry of an imperial legate" (signationes pedes Acili Strabo leg. Aug.).—ILLS 3456 = XIII 7700. It is not clear whether Acilius Strabo (PIR2 A 822; Eck (note 7) 139) was a legionary legate or the governor of Lower Germany at the time. The date remains early Flavian, and the special quality of the soldiers clear. The same uncertainty attaches to the status of Licinius Sura (PIR2 L 253; Eck (note 7) 155), also called "legatus" in 97 or 98. The soldiers were again pedes singulares (AE 23, 33 = BRGK XVI (1927) 253). By contrast, a centurion in the German fleet and his "comitiales" at the site dedicated to Neptune (AE 23, 32 = BRGK XVII (1927) 252).

The choice of Hercules Saxanus as the god to worship in the quarries would clearly seem to have been made by officers and men alike. Hercules Magusanus is a clearer case. He is first recorded at Ruinen near Nijmegen (Nijmogamus, the "capital" of the Batavians, by a Romanizing chief, "Flaus Vahimartis fil.").—does Flavus imply approximation to the Flavius, or reflect his colouration, as probably Flavus, the brother of Arminius (Tac. Ann. 2.9)? He called himself "summus magistratus civitatis Batae," presumably as the equivalent of the classical post of duumvir. He put the name Magusanus before Hercules on his dedication (CIL XIII 8771). A vexillator of the Nijmegen legion, X Gemina, which had left the area at the beginning of the second century, paid his vow to "Herculi Magusanum," at Empel near "Anholtsebosch (AE 1990, 740), where there was a cult centre to the god from pre-Roman times.35 That he was a war god is shown by the items of military equipment deposited in the sanctuary: this was an indigenous, not a Roman practice. Such a dedication by a centurion in III Cyrenaica in Belgica was noted above. Eventually a temple was erected at Empel, probably in the Flavian period.

The worship of Hercules Magusanus spread from Batavian territory. A centurion of I Minervia honoured him in Bonn (CIL XIII 8640). He has the same name, Claudia Marcellinus, as the miles mentioned above who...
honoured the Aufaniae there, and is probably the same person. So, in 226, did an optio or centurion’s understudy. The god is shown as Hercules in a classical pose, performing one of his twelve labours, leading Cerberus from Hades. The sides of the altar portray fruits full of fruit, one topped by Hercules’ club, the other by a Genius, perhaps the Genius Castrorum. 26

Auxiliaries worshipped him outside Germany, in Britain on the Antonine Wall (RIB 2168) and in Dacia (AE 1977, 704). Also in that province an equestrian prefect, P. Aelius Maximus, honoured him as ‘Deo Invicto Herculis Magusanus’, thus ‘for his well being and that of his own (family)?’. Maximus also dedicated to I.C.M. as a result of a vision (‘ex voto’) and to unknown deities (‘…-laus = [De Magnus?]’) in Cluj (Napoca), again ‘pro salute sua’. There he was ‘flamen or priest of the altar of our Augustus in the Three Dacias’. 27 No reason can be discovered why Maximus should have included the German god in his dedications: the speculation may be advanced that he was commander of the Ala I Pannoniorum in which the auxiliary, a ‘stator’ or messenger, who made the first dedication, served.

The god reached Rome. Various of the emperor’s mounted guard there, the vexates singulares, paid their vow to him (the only god named) for the return of the emperor Elagabalus to the city in 218. The reason for the choice of the god is clear; the sinuarii involved were ‘ciues Batavi siue Thraces actecti ex prouincia Germania inferior’ (ILS 2188). Even on such an occasion and at this date it was not felt inappropriate to honour an obscure provincial deity.

Tacitus (Hist. 4.64) made the rebel Batavian leader Civilis ascribe his victories to the German Mars, who in inscriptions is often paired with indigenous deities. A cuirass of Legion XXXI honoured him as ‘Marti Halantrarii’ near Xanten.

In Trier (Augusta Treverorum in Belgica) he was worshipped with Lenus, whose name (unusually) appears before his. He appears on an inscription set up at a villa in Merric (in Luxembourg) by an exponent who had been prefect of a Coh. .. Hispanorum, military tribune in IX Hispana and prefect of the Ala Vornitorum. The equestrian officer was a quinquennalis (magister with census responsibilities), presumably in Trier, as well as ‘flamen Augusti flamen Leni Martis’. The usual title of a priest of the imperial cult at the provincial level was sacerdos. Accordingly the vexatius was probably


28. CIL XIII 8797. Gutenbrunner (note 8) 24, explains the name as ‘all-murdering’. 165
priest of the imperial cult at Trier only at the city level. He did not feel it unjustable to combine it with the priesthood of the chief Trierian deity.39

The inscription belongs to the early 2nd century, before IX Hispana left Britain and Germania Inferior.

Soldiers worshipped a Mercator Gebribius in the sanctuary of the Ala

niae in Born. Probably he was the goddes316 consort. His name appears to derive from the Celtic root fo goat (gaban, cf. Lat. caper).40 The presence of the goat on one of the altars to the Matrona of Born has already been noted.

As most people are usually inarticulate when asked to define their religious beliefs, it is almost impossible to deduce the religious attitudes of the military figures discussed above. But in one case we have more evidence than usual, that of a centurion, M. Cocceius Firmus, known from four altars on the Antonine Wall and a dedication of 169 at Hircania in Moesia Inferior. He is probably the 'Cocceius Firmus centurio' mentioned in a case discussed in the Digest (49.15.6).41 One altar was dedicated to I.O.M. and Victorious Victory. The phenomenon is not common, but occurs elsewhere, as at Osterburken on the Upper German limes, where Victoria Victrix is associated with Mars Marsilia (BRGK XVII [1927] 200) where the epitrites Deus and Militaris are also both 'unRoman'. A second altar was set up to Diana and Apollo, in this order important gods in Thrace and other areas in the Balkans. Silvanus on an incomplete altar (BR 2178), probably revered by Firmus, was also a popular Danubian god. The third was to the Genius Terrae Britannicae: Firmus seems to have been thinking not of the local Genius of the fort, Ausvindavia, where he was stationed, but of the Power behind the military district in which he was serving. The fourth altar names six gods, Mars, Minerva (who was especially favoured by clerical grades in the army), Victory (without epithet), the Campestres (as noted, the Goddesses of the Parade Ground), Hercules and Epona (as noted, the Celtic Goddess of Horses). Interestingly

39. CIL XIII 1030 = AE 1913, 286 = PFE 1962, 239; J. Kneer and L. Scheidgen, ‘Die Merscher Inschrift’, ZR 37 (1934) 123-4. See for his epigraphs cf. [---]c Priscus (PFE P 151), also an officer-bearer in Trast, that was part of the Gaulish area. The Aresaces were part of the Trierian (H. Krombach, ‘Armament, in Limes-Studien 1957 [1959] 69-76, reporting on a shrine to Mars Locutorius honoured by Aresacans). Priscus was (provincial) ‘curial’; Born, at any, but also ‘sacerd. Rom. et Aug. (provincial)’, presumably at Tacitus, in whose sanctuary at Trast the inscription (AE 1926, 173 = BRGK XVII [1927] 322) was found.

40. AE 1924, 28 = BRGK XVII (1927) 166, where ‘ETF, visa Romani maiorum’ seems not to be part of the dedication of 169. On Gebribius cf. Helskamp, RE 16 (1931) 944; Riter (note 27) 213.

the list is virtually that of the equites singulares of Rome, which has led E. Birley to propose that Firmus had served among them before being promoted to his centurionate. One may compare Ulpius Martialis who was promoted from squadron commander ('decurio') to a centurionate in the Roman legion, I Minervia, by Hadrian. Before leaving Rome he set up a dedication to four of the deities regularly worshipped by the equites (ILLS 2213). Firmus' Moesian altar was vowed to I.O.M. for the well-being of the emperor. The dedicants were 'veterans and Roman citizens and resident Moesians' (they were a Thracian people some of whom had been transferred to Moesia Inferior). Three officials took the initiative, Firmus as 'quaestor' or treasurer. The dedication to Thracian-Moesian deities on the Auchenaz altar and the locale of the obelisk at Histras suggests that Firmus had returned to his country of origin.

Accordingly, on occasion this mid second-century legionary centurion would dedicate to official Roman gods, once in connection with the emperor, on another to his home gods under Roman names, on another to the gods of the regiment he served in Rome and then to the Spirit of the province in which he was serving. Basically he worshipped the deities of his environment, those of his home, of his regiment or of the empire at large. Where there was interpretation Romana, in his home and some of his Roman regimental deities, it was not new but long established.

Most of the evidence cited above is second- or early third-century. By this date the majority of the legionaries and even a good proportion of the officers came from the provinces rather than Rome or Italy. But that their thinking was not entirely based on their 'home' religion is shown by the readiness of commanders from the East—and their wives—to worship gods of the West with a very restricted geographical spread and by the acceptance of non-ethnic deities, as by the Thracians of the equites singulares, worshipping the gods of the Batavians in Rome.

The evidence is largely determined by the dedicants' wealth. Legionaries outnumber auxiliaries. Among the auxiliaries only cavalrymen, who were on better pay than infantry, feature. Many of the ordinary soldiers were immunes or principales, privileged if not better paid. Non-commissioned officers and commanders were proportionately more involved than the men. It is not possible to determine when the process started. The earliest dedication appears to be that of an auxiliary cavalryman, a Treviran, to Mars Lugurian, which was found in Strasbourg. It certainly pre-dated Nero: his regiment, the Ala Petriana, is attested in Mainz in 55. If it belonged to the auxiliary fort which preceded the legionary base there it

could be late Augustan.43 A soldier of Legio XV, which disappeared in 69, made a dedication to ‘M’, possibly Mars covering a local deity (CIL XIII 8209 = Galater [note 16] 27, no. 80). The prefect Priscus who was flamen, probably of Letus Mars, also seems to have been pre-Flavian: his regiment, the Coh. I Avernorum, is not heard of after 69. The worship of Hercules Saxamus is firmly dated to Vespasian. A soldier of XXI Rapax, at Mainz from 83 to 92, when it was destroyed, worshipped the Domesticae (ILS 9320 = CIL XIII 11900). A marine of the German fleet with the ‘Germanic’ type name of Similio paid a vow to ‘Matribus Suis’. Since he called the fleet ‘Domitiana’ (CIL XIII 7681) this was before 96, when Domitian suffered damnatio memoriae. The epex of VI Victorix who dedicated to the Matronae as a cornicularius was probably Domitianic. Fabius Victorio and his wife may well have made their dedication to Nemetera under Domitian also. Hercules Magnamus is pre- or early Trajanic.

Even this is clear that both legionary and auxiliary were prepared to approach local gods in the first century. The evidence is sparse—but most military inscriptions of the period were tombstones. The process of assimilation must have begun long before it was recorded epigraphically.

Roman soldiers abroad continued to worship the official gods and those of their host areas. But they regarded it as perfectly natural to approach the gods and numina, some very local indeed, of their current stations. Often they might do this with the procedures of Roman cult, as the future prefect of the praetorian guard, Flavius Constantius, did in worshipping Vaglavartius. But he remained a Germanic goddess all the same. Nor was worship confined to individual soldiers. In fact, local gods became fixed in regimental cult. Such was the worship of Hercules Saxamus by the centurions and their legionary and auxiliary detachments in the quarries. Epona and the Suleviae were on the same footing as Roman gods in the camp of the equites singulares in the city of Rome itself. The Matronae Antoninae—Matronae was their usual title, but a few soldiers addressed them by the warmer term of Matres—were suddenly transformed into recipients of an expensive and official cult with its own temple under the shadow of the legionary headquarters in Bonn. This under Antoninus Pius.

It was an expression of the new culture that had evolved on the Rhine during the preceding century and a half.44 The Ubians had entered fully into the Roman way of doing things, but it was their goddesses who were being worshipped even by high ranking Roman officials.

43. ‘Marti Louci. u.b.i.l.p. Petio Condoli f. eq. ait Petri. Tewes(i)’ (ILS 8136 = CIL XIII 11605); ILS 2491 = CIL XIII 6620.
44. When Civilis asked the people of Cologne a century earlier to join his revolt, they refused, saying that Ubian and Roman had become completely united (Tac. Hist. 4. 64f.).
In worshipping indigenous deities the desire was not so much to Romanize as to secure divine support in intelligible form.

ADDENDUM

Acta Classica is published annually by the Classical Association of South Africa. The journal has been in production since 1958. It is listed on both the ISI and the SAPSE list of approved publications.

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