



# TYCHE

**Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte  
Papyrologie und Epigraphik**

Herausgegeben von

Gerhard Dobesch, Hermann Harrauer  
Peter Siewert und Ekkehard Weber

**Band 3, 1988**

1988



Auflösung der Abkürzungen im Index von Tyche 3

Ba = Bastianini, Gallazzi, Seite 25—27

He = Herrmann, Seite 119—128

Kr = Kramer, Seite 141—145

Pr = Diethart, Sijpesteijn, Seite 29—32

So = Solin, Seite 190—192

Va = Diethart, Kramer, Sijpesteijn, Seite 33—37



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**1988**



**Verlag Adolf Holzhausens Nfg., Wien**

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**Redaktion:**

Johann Diethart, Bernhard Palme, Hans Taeuber

**Zuschriften und Manuskripte erbeten an:**

Redaktion TYCHE, c/o Institut für Alte Geschichte, Universität Wien, Dr.-Karl-Lueger-Ring 1, A-1010 Wien. Beiträge in deutscher, englischer, französischer, italienischer und lateinischer Sprache werden angenommen. Eingesandte Manuskripte können nicht zurückgesendet werden. Bei der Redaktion einlangende wissenschaftliche Werke werden besprochen.

**Auslieferung:**

Verlag A. Holzhausens Nfg., Kandlgasse 19-21, A-1070 Wien

Gedruckt auf holz- und säurefreiem Papier.

Umschlag: IG II<sup>2</sup> 2127 (Ausschnitt) mit freundlicher Genehmigung des Epigraphischen Museums in Athen, Inv.-Nr. 8490 und P. Vindob. Barbara 8.

© 1988 by Verlag A. Holzhausens Nfg., Wien

Eigentümer und Verleger: Verlag A. Holzhausens Nfg., Kandlgasse 19-21, A-1070 Wien. Herausgeber: Gerhard Dobesch, Hermann Harrauer, Peter Siewert und Ekkehard Weber, c/o Institut für Alte Geschichte, Universität Wien, Dr.-Karl-Lueger-Ring 1, A-1010 Wien. Hersteller: Druckerei A. Holzhausens Nfg., Kandlgasse 19-21, A-1070 Wien. Verlagsort: Wien. — Herstellungsort: Wien. — Printed in Austria.

ISBN 3-900518-03-3

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CONSTANTINE ZUCKERMAN

*Legio V Macedonica* in Egypt

CPL 199 Revisited

(Tafel 12)

In BASP 18 (1981) 51—52 R. S. Bagnall and K. A. Worp published a new reading of CPL 199a by J.-O. Tjäder which constitutes a considerable improvement on Wessely's reading (SPP XX 285) reprinted in CPL. It will be convenient to reproduce this new reading here:

- 1 est vino mille g. maced. sub c. Gaioli trib. d. an. octingentas triginta cinque ex d.  
quintum decimo Kal. April. [i]n d. qu[art]um decimo Kall. easdd. duocene post  
cons. [dom. n.] H[on]orii p. Augg. qua[ter]
- 2 et Eytychiani v. c. p. Sergio actuario ind. XII (?)
- 3 (τάλαντα) ωλε
- 4 est carne mille g. maced. sub c. Gaioli trib. d. an. octingentas trigint[a] ci[nqu]e ex d.  
qu[int]um decimo K[al. Apri]l. in d. quart[u]m decimo Kall. easdd. [d]uocene  
pos[t] c[onss.] d[o]m. n. Honorii [  
5 E[yt]ychiani v. c. p. Sergio a[ctu]ario ...
- 6 (τάλαντα) ωλε

The reading of the Greek belongs to Bagnall and Worp. Otherwise their main point concerned the chronological problem occasioned by the previously accepted reading *ind. XIV* which stood in contradiction to the consular date. In this regard, we accept Tjäder's argument for *ind. XII* and thus consider it established that the days cited in the receipts correspond to 18—19 III. 399.

However, any further interpretation of the document depends on the resolution of the abbreviations which, except for the date, has not been done and which can be proposed as following:

- 1 est vino mil(itum) leg(ionis) Maced(onicae) sub c(ura) Gaioli trib(uni) d(iurnarum)  
an(nonarum) octingentas triginta cinque, ex d(ie) quintum decimo Kal(endas)  
April(es) [i]n d(iem) qu[art]um decimo Kal(endas) easd(em), duo cene (l. cenae).  
Post cons(ulatum) [dom(ini) n(ostri)] H[on]orii p(erpetui) Aug(usti) qua[ter]
- 2 et Eytychiani v(iri) c(larissimi), p(er) Sergio actuario, ind. XII.
- 3 ] γ(ίνεται) ὀ(μοῦ) ξ(έσται) ωλε
- 4 est carne mil(itum) leg(ionis) Maced(onicae) sub c(ura) Gaioli trib(uni) d(iurnarum)  
an(nonarum) octingentas trigint[a] ci[nqu]e ex d(ie) qu[int]um decimo K[al]al(endas)  
Apri]l(es) in d(iem) quart[u]m decimo Kal(endas) easd(em), [d]uo cene (l. cenae).  
Pos[t] c[ons]ulatum) d[o]m(ini) n(ostri) Honorii [p(erpetui) Aug(usti) quater et]



5 E[yt]ychiani v(iri) c(larissimi), p(er) Sergio a[ctuario, ind. XII].  
 6 ] γ(ίνεται) ὀ(μοῦ) λ(ίτραι) ὠλε

1/4. *c(ura)*: proposed by Bagnall and Worp | *Gaioli*: the data of our text should be used to complete the entry *Fl. Gaiolus* in *PLRE* II 490 | *d(iurnarum) an(nonarum)*: cf. *Amm. Marc.* 22, 4, 9.

The reading of the lines in Greek — at least of the better preserved part of each — could be revised by Jean Gascoü thanks to the excellent photographs kindly provided by Hermann Harrauer. These lines add essential information unrecorded in Latin. It turns out that we have before us two receipts, each one for 835 daily rations (*diurnae annonae*), of wine and meat respectively, constituting the supply for two days (*duo cenae*) for the soldiers of the *legio V Macedonica*. The ration of wine is of one *sextarius* (0.54 litres) and the ration of meat is of one pound (327.5 grammes) per day.

Before we proceed to some further remarks on the legion and the supply system involved, mention should be made of two fragments of very similar receipts issued on the same day by the same *actarius* Sergius (first published by Wessely as SPP XIV, tab. XI and SPP XX 286 and 287). Unfortunately, the first part of each receipt which contained the indication of the product delivered is lost. The part preserved — which in both texts starts at about *d(iem) quartum* — is mostly identical with the corresponding part of the receipts cited above. The only exception is that after *duo cen(a)e* appears a mysterious indication which the successive editors of the text (after Wessely, CPL 199 b/c and PLP 58) read as *stibale*. The examination of the plates of both fragments in SPP XIV suggested, however, that the first letter — marked in both cases by a very clear left stroke — can hardly be other than *r*, while the alleged *l* should rather be read as *b*<sup>1</sup>. For the resulting reading, *rti babe*, the only resolution we can think of is *r(a)ti(one)* or *r(a)ti(onis) Babe(lonis)* (1. *Babylonis*)<sup>2</sup>. One cannot know for sure what the indication that the supplies in question were “on the account of Babylon” meant in practice. However, we learn from the contemporary *Notitia Dignitatum Orientis*, XXVIII 14, that *legio V Macedonica* was stationed in Memphis, that is, less than 20 km to the south from Babylon. So in spite of the fact that the garrison of Memphis received supplies of its own<sup>3</sup>, one can imagine that in case of a local shortage or for other reasons, Sergius could draw some of the food allowances for his unit from the depots in Babylon or from the foodstuffs destined for Babylon.

\* \* \*

The *legio V Macedonica* had a long history of service on the Danube; at the very end of the fourth century, the *Notitia Dignitatum* still amply attests to its presence in *Dacia ripensis*. The earliest trace left by the legion in Egypt is a fragment of a large dedication on

<sup>1</sup> I am most obliged to Dr H. Harrauer for having checked this reading on the original; he confirms in a letter from 30. 6. 1987 that “*stibale* ist verlässlich mit *rti babe* an beiden Positionen zu lesen.”

<sup>2</sup> The mistaken spelling Βαβελῶνες (for Βαβυλῶνος) is also attested in Greek (O.Mich. I 661, cf. P.Lond. IV 1550 l. 15).

<sup>3</sup> Supply of meat for “the most noble soldiers stationed in Memphis” in 311: P.Oxy. XXXIII 2668; supplies of wine and meat in 309—314: PSI VII 820; an ἐπιμελητῆς ἀννωνῶν Μέμφορος is mentioned in a badly mutilated fifth century text: SB XVI 12252, cf. P.Vindob. Tandem 19. Note also O.Mich. 1012 in which the same *epimeletai* are charged with gathering chaff for both Memphis and Babylon.

papyrus, possibly a draft for a dedicatory inscription, by a *vexill. leg. V M[ac]* to the emperors Diocletian and Maximian (P.Oxy. XLI 2950). It is assumed, and most probably rightly, that the *vexillatio* of the *legio V Macedonica* arrived in Egypt in 293/294 together with detachments of other Danubian legions, as a part of Caesar Galerius' expeditionary force<sup>4</sup>.

During the century that followed, the *legio V Macedonica* appears in several more texts; its dossier turns out to be one of the richest among fourth century units. A petition from 346 mentions the soldier Akiar whose daughter-in-law Maria owned land in the village of Theoxenis (P.Abinn. 49). In an undated document, the soldier Fl. Souchidas acknowledges the receipt of donkeys to the eirenarch of the village of Philadelphia in Fayyum; the purpose of this requisition is not specified (BGU III 899)<sup>5</sup>. In 381, the soldier Fl. Paul rents in the same village some abandoned land for sowing (W. Chrest. 380). His act, though questionable from the point of view of military discipline, was by no means exceptional: in 350ies, we see soldiers from another urban unit, the *Mauri scutarii* from Hermoupolis, renting plots for cultivation from the landowner Aurelia Charite (P.Charite 6—8).

Other documents present several higher ranking soldiers. The *ordinarius* Helias is mentioned on the gravestone of his wife Zenodora, a native of Antiochia<sup>6</sup>. The epitaph he had inscribed, remarkably elaborate by Egyptian standards, is the only text which seems to preserve awareness of the fact that the *legio V Macedonica* stationed in Egypt was only a detachment of this unit (τῶν διακιμένω[ν ἐν Μέ]νφι ἀπὸ λεγιῶνω[ς πέμπτ]ης Μακεδονικῆς). In a clear contrast to the urbane Helias is the *augustalis* Pserakos from the village Tieio. The long letter he sent to his relatives and friends (P.Ross. Georg. III 10) — paleographically dated by the editor c. A. D. 400 — shows little regard for spelling and is mostly filled with greetings. In a style that has changed little over the centuries, Pserakos insists on greeting by name his own and his wife's brothers and sisters as well as, among others, the priest and the *protokometai* of the village. He has good news to announce to them: with God's help, he has been promoted to the *schola* of *augustales*, and after Easter he hopes to visit the village in person<sup>7</sup>. Finally, four *protectores* were dispatched by the legion

<sup>4</sup> D. van Berchem, *L'armée de Dioclétien et la réforme constantiniennne*, Paris 1952, 105—106; cf. A. Bowman, *The Military Occupation of Upper Egypt in the Reign of Diocletian*, *BASP* 15 (1978) 25—38; for the date of Galerius' expedition, see J. Rea, R. Salomons, K. A. Worp, *A Ration-warrant for an adiutor memoriae*, *YCIS* 28 (1985) 101—113.

<sup>5</sup> The date proposed by the editor is the fourth century. G. Forni, *Il reclutamento delle legioni de Augusto a Diocleziano*, Milan, Rome 1953, 92 and 224, affirms, with no reasons stated, that Souchidas was recruited immediately after the arrival of the legionary detachment in Egypt and dates the text before the end of the third century; thus he assigns it in fact to the last seven years of the century. We see nothing which would justify such a restrictive dating. By an obvious lapse, N. Criniti, *Supplemento alla prosopographia dell'esercito romano d'Egitto da Augusto a Diocleziano*, *Aegyptus* 53 (1973) 118, no. 883a, cites Forni — whom he misunderstood — to date our text in II—III cent. and to include Souchidas among soldiers of pre-Diocletianic units.

<sup>6</sup> G. Lefebvre, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques-chrétiennes d'Egypte*, Cairo 1907, no. 70 restitutes <ορ>ορδι[ναριου].

<sup>7</sup> Pserakos' grade, ἀγουστάλιος νομέρου κυντανῶν, is indicated in the opening lines; in the letter itself he announces his promotion: εἶδε κ(αί) ἀπόσσχολος ἀγουσταλίου ἡμε (l. 22); finally, he signs: παρὰ Ψεράκου ἀπ[ο]σσχόλου ἀγουσταλίου νομέρου κυντανῶν. All this makes clear the meaning of the noun ἀπόσσχολος which has been unjustly spurned by all lexica, namely, a member of a *schola* comprising the totality of bearers of a given grade in a unit.

to the imperial *comitatus* to adore the sacred purple. The tribune who issued them the authorization to draw rations from the depots *en route* was the same Gaiolus who appears in Sergius' receipts; accordingly, the document can be dated c. A. D. 400 (CPL 267). It is remarkable that three of these newly promoted officers, who after long years of service in their unit were heading to Constantinople for higher commands, bear distinctly Coptic names: Bennafer, Babes and Besas<sup>8</sup>. After all, some Egyptian peasants may have found military service not as unattractive as it was imagined by Rémondon<sup>9</sup>.

The last document in our dossier is a fragment of a late fourth–early fifth century account of military supplies; the part preserved contains the record of wine and meat delivered to ἡ φαμίλια Ἀρκαδιανῶν, and probably the same commodities — the exact indication is lost — were supplied to ἡ φαμίλια πέ[μ]πτης Μακεδονικῆς (P.Strasb. 717). Presented by the editor as otherwise unknown, *familia Arcadianorum* should in fact be linked to the *ala Arcadiana nuper constituta* listed in *Not. Dig. Or.* XXVIII 21 under the command of the same *comes limitis Aegypti* as the *legio V Macedonica*. The exact relation of the *familia* to the respective *ala* or *legion* is, however, less obvious. The *familiae* of military units were variously interpreted as companies of recruits<sup>10</sup>, as “petit état-major”<sup>11</sup>. In recent studies, the primary sense of the term, namely soldiers' dependents, is more readily recognized<sup>12</sup>, yet in certain contexts, it is still often considered as an alternative designation for the unit itself<sup>13</sup>. Were then the supplies delivered to Sergius for the *milites* of the *legio V Macedonica* and those assigned in P.Strasb. 717 to its *familia* destined for distinct groups of recipients or for entirely or partly overlapping ones? To answer this question, the evidence available needs to be considered anew.

The phenomenon of military *familiae* as it emerges in fourth century sources was a direct consequence of the proliferation of *comitatus* under Constantine I and his successors. By that time, Roman soldiers had enjoyed the right to marry for over a hundred years, yet as long as their units remained steadily implanted in one place, this situation hardly

<sup>8</sup> The fourth name, Conon, is too common to permit any comment. On the name Bennafer (Wnn-nfr — Quanofre — Ουεναφρις), very rare in its old Egyptian form, see A. Gardiner, *The Egyptian Origin of Some English Personal Names*, *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 56 (1936) 190. Our document deserves notice as the latest attestation to *protectores* being promoted from the ranks.

<sup>9</sup> R. Rémondon, *Problèmes militaires en Égypte et dans l'Empire à la fin du IVe siècle*, *Revue Historique* 213 (1955) esp. 32–38.

<sup>10</sup> This interpretation — a pure speculation which has never been supported by any proof — originates in Godefroy's commentary on *Codex Theodosianus* (see J. D. Ritter's edition, Leipzig 1736–1743, esp. vol. III 425, cf. vol II 310); it long enjoyed universal acceptance — e. g. RE VI 2, 1983 — and is still retained by C. Pharr in his English translation of *The Theodosian Code*, repr. New York 1969; Pharr, however, admits in a note that *familiae* may simply refer to soldiers' families (160, n. 40).

<sup>11</sup> The editor of P.Strasb. 717 derives this meaning from P.Oxy. XII 1712 which mentions — as he cites it — an *optio* φαμίλιας ἡγεμονικῆς. However, this *familia praesidis* which inspired his interpretation is in fact an invention of the editor of P.Oxy. 1712, the actual reading being φαμίλιας ἡγεμονικῆς? Since no such *familia* is known from any other source and the missing part of the line requires a restitution about twice as long, one can only wonder how such a conjecture could be proposed in the first place.

<sup>12</sup> A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire*, Oxford 1964, 630–631 and notes; cf., however, n. 20 below.

<sup>13</sup> For C. Vogler, *La rémunération annonaire dans le Code Théodosien*, *Ktema* 4 (1979) 293–319, *familiae* are a “terme pour lequel aucune explication probante n'a encore été fournie” (302); so in the translation of C. Th. VII 4–5 appended to her study the term is mostly transcribed in italics. Nevertheless, in C. Th. VII 5, 1 she translates it as “garnisons” (318).

required the state's special attention. By way of contrast, the presence of families in the newly created mobil units created an obvious inconvenience. The fourth century emperors were not in the position to follow Augustus' example and to deny the *comitatenses* the right of *conubium*, yet certain restrictions were inevitable. So in a law from 349, the earliest one to mention the phenomenon, Constantius ruled out that only soldiers who earned a special imperial authorization could convoke their families, which he limited to wives, children and slaves (*C. Th.* VII 1, 3).

Often enough this authorization could not be easily denied. Ammianus Marcellinus describes how in 360 Caesar Julian was about to dispatch several *auxilia* from Gaul to the Persian front when a libellous letter was spread among the soldiers denouncing the fact that they were being taken away while leaving their dear ones behind to be slaves to the Alamanni. Julian recognized the well-foundedness of the complaint — in fact, many of the soldiers were promised upon enlistment that they would not be taken beyond the Alps — and allowed the soldiers to take their families with. Moreover, he authorized the families to move with the wagon post<sup>14</sup>. Four years later, in 364, a special law was deemed necessary to put end to the extortions of *hi, qui familiae praesunt* from the staff of the public post<sup>15</sup>. During the preparations for Julian's Persian campaign these abuses must have become particularly acute.

During the hostilities, the families were no doubt separated from the units. The well known contract from Ascalon of 359 (BGU I 316) may reflect such an situation. Wilcken rightly pointed out in his commentary the distinction made in this text between the *numerus auxiliarium* on one hand and the *familia* on the other of the *devotissimi Constantiaci* as well as the fact that only the *familia* and not the *numerus* was localized in Ascalon<sup>16</sup>. In times of peace, once the units were installed in their permanent quarters, such separation would make no sense. So a law from 406 warns the provincial governors *ut tam numeris quam familiis nec non impedimentis (...) id tantum in specie praebetur, quod militis flagitarit inspectio* (*C. Th.* VII 4, 28). Even though units, families and draft animals appear as three distinct categories of *annona* receivers, the condition for its delivery to all of them is one: the presence on the site of the soldiers to whom the families and the animals belong. We learn more from the law of 409. In the interest of the military, the emperor established a steady monetary value for the adaerated *annonae* customarily delivered to families in the Orient and in Egypt; he specified that it should vary from place to place and from one *numerus* to

<sup>14</sup> *cum familiis eos ad Orientem proficisci praecepit clavularis cursus facultate permessa*, Amm. Marc. XX 4, 11. On this episode, often misinterpreted, see R. Browning, *The Emperor Julian*, London 1976, 100—101.

<sup>15</sup> *C. Th.* VIII 5, 21. Pharr, *The Theodosian Code* (see not. 10 above), follows the old commentaries and interprets *familiae* as groups of employees of the *cursus publicus*. No such institution is otherwise attested to, however. If, on the other hand, we consider the law in the light of Ammianus Marcellinus' description which is so close in time and matter, little doubt remains that it deals with soldiers' families moving with the wagon post.

<sup>16</sup> παρὰ Φλ. Ἀγεμούγγου[υ] σιγάτορος νομῆρου ἀσιλ[ιαρίων] Κωνσταντιακῶν ὑπὸ Βάριον τριβούνον, νῦν εἰ[.....] τῆ ἐγγραῖθα (sc. in Ascalon) διατριβούση φαμίλιε τῶν γεγενε[άτων] Κωνσταντιακῶν στρατιωτῶν, cf. U. Wilcken, *Papyrusurkunde über einen Sclavenkauf aus dem Jahre 359 n. Chr.*, *Hermes* 19 (1884) 417—431, esp. 422. Fl. Agemundus' position with the *familia* remains unfortunately unclear. We note, however, that our examination of the facsimile of BGU I 316 (in U. Wilcken, *Tafeln zur älteren griechischen Palaeographie*, Leipzig, Berlin 1891, no. 16) revealed no traces which could be interpreted as ξ; the line cuts off very close to the ε. If one renounces the reading of ξ, a possible restitution will be ἐπικειμένου] τῆ (...) φαμίλιε which is the exact translation of *hi(c) qui familiae praest* in *C. Th.* VIII 5, 21 cited above.

another<sup>17</sup>. This text indicates expressly that the *numeri* stationed in Egypt in the period we study had families entitled to support; *legio V Macedonica*, alias *νοῦμερος κυντανῶν*<sup>18</sup>, was one of them. What is more, the law confirms that *annonae* of the families were delivered separately and had an accounting status of their own. Thus the terminological distinction preserved in our documents proves to be precise. Wine and meat issued to the *actuarius* Sergius were indeed destined for the *milites*; wine and meat marked in P.Strasb. 717 for the *familia* were for those who followed in the train.

Many questions concerning the structure of family allowances remain unresolved. They deserve at least to be posed. Did "the custom" to issue *annonae* to soldiers' families spread to all units? Almost certainly not. Nothing in our evidence would suggest that it benefited *alae* and cohorts *quae de minore laterculo emittuntur*, the lowest category of garrison troops represented by forty seven out of seventy five units stationed in Egypt at the time of the *Notitia*<sup>19</sup>. Was this allowance tantamount to the rations accorded to *adcrecentes*, soldiers' sons inscribed from early age on the rosters of their fathers' units? Probably not. The *annonae* of *adcrecentes* seem to have been a particular arrangement, more limited in time and in the categories of units concerned<sup>20</sup>. Was the allowance destined to support, in addition to wives and children, also soldiers' attendants, mostly slaves, who are often mentioned in the sources of the period? Given the definition of family in *C. Th.* VII 1, 3, this is quite probable; what is more, in the *Strategikon* of Mauricius the allowance called τὰ φαμιλιαρικά was clearly intended for this purpose<sup>21</sup>. As to the extent of the family allowance and the manner of its distribution we do not even have grounds to guess. Leaving, therefore, these questions to await a solution which only the discovery of new evidence will permit, we return to Sergius' receipts.

\* \* \*

<sup>17</sup> *Militaribus commodis prospicientes adaeratarum annonarum, quae familiis apud Orientem vel Aegyptum praebere consuerunt, certa ac distincta locis et numero pretia statuimus, C. Th.* VII 4, 31.

<sup>18</sup> P.Ross. Georg. III 10; cf. CPL 267. In P.Merton I 43, the editor's restitution *κυν]τανῶς* (l. 18—19) is not implausible, yet the document is too lacunary to make any sense.

<sup>19</sup> When Libanius described soldiers who had to cut their bread into thin slices to feed their wives and children (Or. II 39, of 381), he may have had in mind this category of troops; his main point, however, was to recall the good old days when soldiers were not entitled to marry at all. To our knowledge, the auxiliary units *quae de minore laterculo emittuntur* were never called *numeri*.

<sup>20</sup> A law from 364 granted the young children and relatives of the *domestici* a right to *annonae* of their own: *ita ut non solum matriculis inserantur, verum etiam annonarum subsidiis locupletentur, C. Th.* VI 24, 2. A law from 372 abolished the *annonae* furnished in the name of those (*super eorum nomine*) who *inter adcrecentes matriculis adinentur, C. Th.* VII 1, 11; this time, the units concerned were not specified. We never hear of the *annonae* of *adcrecentes* again, although we know that children continued to be inscribed in the *matriculae* of their fathers' units (*C. Th.* VII 1, 14 of 394). What seems to have been tried and then given up was treating children as *annona* recipients in their own right (*super eorum nomine*) which no doubt could lead to abuses. It is clear, however, that under this arrangement, *adcrecentes* were receiving soldier's rations as regular members of the unit, while the rations for *familiae* appear in our sources as a distinct allowance. Besides, Jones' attempt to identify the *annonae* of *adcrecentes* with those of the *familiae* (see n. 12 above) involves such chronological complications that the need for a different solution becomes obvious.

<sup>21</sup> *Das Strategikon des Maurikios*, I 2, 62, ed. G. Dennis, trad. E. Gamillscheg (*Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* 17), Vienna 1981. We stress, however, that any continuity one may assume between the fourth-early fifth century family allowances and the late sixth century φαμιλιαρικά remains conjectural.

The Greek postscripts to the Latin receipts constitute the only fourth century evidence on the size of a soldier's ration of wine and meat. The rates recorded, one *sextarius* (0.54 litres) of wine and one pound (327.5 grammes) of meat per day, come as no surprise. In fact, they have been conjectured by A. Segrè in his analysis of the adaerated *annona* in Valentinian III's Novel XIII of 445<sup>22</sup>. The advantage of secure figures over the best of conjectures is, however, obvious<sup>23</sup>.

The supplies issued to *actuarius* Sergius were for two days only. This detail is far from being incidental. The mistrust of the *actuarii*, "a race of men ... created by nature for carrying out and concealing frauds", inspired quite a number of restrictive regulations in the fourth century legislation<sup>24</sup>. One of them was the law of 365 which prohibited the distributors of *annona* from issuing rations to *actuarii* for more than two days at once (*C. Th.* VII 4, 13). Every day or two the *actuarius* was to present himself at the depot with an *authenticum pittacium* stating the exact number of soldiers in his charge; thus opportunities to appropriate the *annona* of those absent were considerably reduced. This and other measures adopted to control the *actuarii* appear so burdensome that doubts are often expressed as to their practical application. Since, however, nothing suggests that the receipts signed by Sergius conceal any fraud, it seems that he did actually go to the depot every two days to claim from the *susceptor* his 273.5 kg of porc and 450.9 litres of wine, or whatever other amount he was entitled to according to his *pittacium*. We hesitate to conclude too much from one series of receipts, yet this is in any case the only documentary evidence we have on the daily functioning of the military commissariate. And it certainly gives us reasons to believe that beyond all much publicized abuses, the routine was fairly conform to the prescriptions of the law.

Even if Sergius tried to cheat on rations, he could not have cheated by much. Thus the number of *annona* issued should reflect the number of soldiers present, no doubt in the camp in Memphis, on 18—19 III. 399. However, any conclusions drawn from these figures involve a certain number of assumptions which should be made explicit. First, the probability of a considerable shift in the number of recipients from one day to another is, in our view, very small. Thus 835 rations evenly divided between the two days indicate a daily consumption of 417.5 rations. This fractional result reminds us, in its turn, of the fact that many soldiers received more than one *annona*. We possess no clue as to what part of these multiple rations was adaerated and what part was claimed in kind; nor is there any precise data as to what percentage of soldiers was entitled to an increased *annona*. If we estimate their number at about a third of the total and take 1.5—2 *annona* as the average limit of

<sup>22</sup> A. Segrè, *Essays on Byzantine Economic History*. I. *The annona civica and the annona militaris*, Byzantion 16, 1 (1942/43) 409. On the sixth century soldier's rations see now J. Gascou, *La table budgétaire d'Antaeopolis* (*P.Freer 08.45c-d*), in: *Hommes et richesses dans l'empire byzantin I*, Paris (forthcoming).

<sup>23</sup> The calculation of a soldier's ration of wheat in R. Duncan-Jones, *Pay and Numbers in Diocletian's Army*, Chiron 8 (1978) 541—560, esp. 542—543, illustrates this point. The ration of 2.5 Italic *modii* per month derived from P.Beatty Panop. I 395—398 — a "relatively low" one by the author's admission — is in fact a result of an obvious oversight. The next line of the document, I 399 (printed on the next page), indicates that the military unit in question received, in addition to  $128\frac{7}{8}$  *artabae* of wheat taken into account by Duncan-Jones, 100 *artabae* more. This would almost double the ration. However, the complete amount of wheat does not fit so neatly with the other figures involved in the calculation and thus undermines Duncan-Jones' entire reasoning.

<sup>24</sup> Jones, *Later Roman Empire* (see n. 12 above), 626—628.

what was delivered in kind, then the *milites legionis Macedonicae* counted in mid-March 399 about 340 men. If, on the other hand, no more than 1 — 1.5 *annonae* were claimed in kind, the number of receivers would be closer to 400. The premisses proposed can be revised, yet unless we assume that non commissioned officers consumed wine and meat in truly gargantuan portions — one should not forget that families received separate supplies — the number of soldiers in Sergius' charge is likely to stay within the limits we indicated.

The figure of c. 400 soldiers may well correspond to the actual strength of the *vexillatio* (P.Oxy. XLI 2950) which appropriated during its stay in Egypt the name of its motherlegion, the *legio V Macedonica*. John Lydus puts the strength of a *vexillatio* at 500 men; earlier, Hyginus indicated a similar figure<sup>25</sup>. If the *vexillatio* dispatched from *Dacia ripensis* to Egypt in A. D. 293 counted about the same number of soldiers, then its ranks shrank during the next hundred years by at least 20%. The frequently denounced contemporary practice of keeping units under establishment makes the figures perfectly plausible.

In conclusion we recall that *actuarius* Sergius' receipts are the only specimen preserved of a Ῥωμαικὴ φρουμαρία (P.Oxy. I 43 passim), a Latin receipt as issued by the military commissariat officers to civilian distributors of *annona*. Expectedly enough, their technical vocabulary and the data they contain find no documentary parallels. At the same time, it proves that this data, new as it is, could not fit better into the general view of the late fourth — early fifth century military institutions as it emerges from contemporary sources. This lack of surprises should not be a disappointment. On the contrary, it is rather reassuring to find another proof that the dispositions of the Theodosian Code, our sole source in many matters of the essence, were so close to reality.

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When this study was already in print, Jean Gascoü suggested to us a different interpretation of the text. He pointed out that the term ἡ(μεριναὶ) ἀνν(ῶναι), the Greek equivalent of *d(iurnae) an(nonae)*, appears in the budget of Antaeopolis (see n. 22 above) which he dates in 530ies. This document indicates the number of rations due to several military units *per diem* as the basis for calculating Antaeopolis yearly contribution to their supplies. The total, however, is not calculated in *diurnae annonae* multiplied by 365; only the total quantity of each commodity due is indicated. Gascoü suggests by analogy that also in Sergius' receipts 835 is the number of *annonae* due to the *legio V Macedonica* every day and not the total for two days as we assumed. To obtain the daily allowance, he divides the total amount of wine and meat delivered by (835 × 2), the result being 0.5 *sextarius* (0.27 l) of wine and 0.5 pound (c. 164 gr) of meat. For our part, we remind that the two documents had very different functions. In the budget of Antaeopolis, it would serve no purpose to indicate the total number of *annonae* in addition to the total in commodities, since the taxes

<sup>25</sup> Ioannes Lydus, *On Powers*, ed. and transl. A Bandy, Philadelphia 1983, ch. 46; Pseudo-Hygin, *Des fortifications du camp*, ed. and trad. M. Lenoir, Paris 1979, ch. 5 (below 600 men). On both texts, see Duncan-Jones, *Pay and Numbers* (see n. 23 above), 546—548. Duncan-Jones cites very similar figures for the numerical strength of the *vexillationes* in P.Beatty Panop. 1—2, which arrived in Egypt together with the *vexillatio* of the *legio V Macedonica*. Unfortunately, we cannot consider his method of calculation as entirely reliable.

paid by the city were denominated in wheat, wine, meat etc., not in *annonae*. On the other hand, what one expects in a receipt is not an indication of the general entitlement but the precise number of the rations delivered. We admit, however, that only the discovery of new data on fourth century rations may bring a conclusive solution.\*

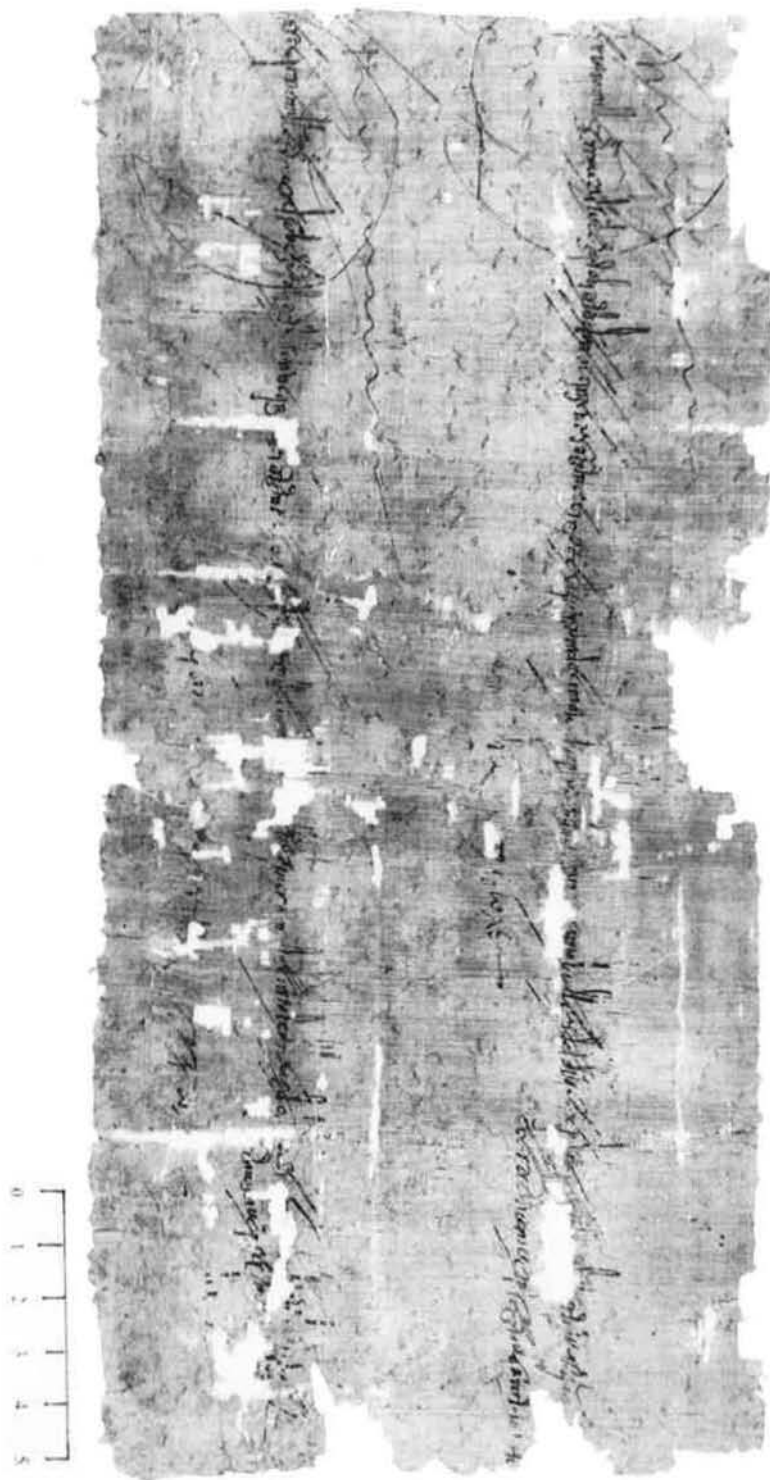
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\* Once it has been made clear that Jean Gascou cannot be held responsible for our errors of interpretation, it is a pleasure to thank him for his interest for this study and many stimulating observations.





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