'MILITIA IN URBE'. THE MILITARY PRESENCE IN ROME

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The idea of Rome being a demilitarized zone has often been transferred from the Republic to the imperial period.¹ Nevertheless numerous written sources prove the presence of military and paramilitary units in the imperial city and its direct environment.² As a matter of fact, from the first to the early fourth century between ten and forty thousand soldiers roamed the streets of the empire's capital:³

Unit	1st century	2nd century	3rd century	early 4th century
<i>Cohortes praetoriae</i>	4.500	5.000	10.000 ⁴	10.000
<i>speculatores Augusti</i>	300 (?) ⁵	300 (?)	300 (?)	300 (?)
<i>Evocati</i>	(?)	(?)	(?)	(?)

¹ M. Durry, *Les Cohortes prétoriennes* (Paris 1938), 9 describes Rome as a „ville inermis“. See also: F. Kolb, *Rom* (München 1995), 555; K. Christ, *Geschichte der römischen Kaiserzeit von Augustus bis Konstantin* (München 1988), 108f. In Republican Rome soldiers within the city limits were only allowed during the triumph or other special ceremonies. F. Fless, 'Römische Prozessionen', in *Thesaurus Cultus et Rituum Antiquorum I* (Los Angeles 2004), 44. The *pomerium*, as the religious border, separated the spheres of *domus* and *militiae*. J. Rüpke, *Domus militiae: Die religiöse Konstruktion des Krieges in Rom* (Stuttgart 1990), 35f., 55–57.

² Tacitus, *Historiae* 4.53.2; Tacitus, *Annales* 12.69; Herodianus 5.8.5–7; Cassius Dio 55.24–26; Historia Augusta (from now on: SHA), *Septimius Severus* 7.1. Apart from that there are thousands of sepulchral and sacral inscriptions (CIL VI 2421–3491; 32515–32899; 37189–37273) as well as the rich archaeological remains of the soldier's accommodation in Rome. *LTUR I*, 246–256 ('Castrum'); 292–294 ('Cohortium Vigilum Stationes'). For the accommodation of the *Germani corporis custodes* see Suetonius, *Galba* 12.2; H. Bellen, *Die germanische Leibwache der römischen Kaiser des julisch-claudischen Hauses* (Mainz 1981), 56f., 101.

³ For an overview see J.C.N. Coulston, 'Armed and Belted Men: The Soldiery in Imperial Rome', in: J.C.N. Coulston and H. Dodge, eds., *Ancient Rome. The Archaeology of the Eternal City* (Oxford 2000), 76–81.

⁴ Cassius Dio 55.24.6.

⁵ About thirty *speculatores* served in a *cohors praetoria*. Durry 1938, op. cit. (n. 1), 28. Contra A. Passerini, *Le coorti pretorie* (1939), 70 n. 6.

Table (cont.)

Unit	1st century	2nd century	3rd century	early 4th century
<i>Statores</i>	500 (?)	500 (?)	500 (?)	500 (?)
<i>Germani corporis custodes</i>	500 ⁶	—	—	—
<i>Equites singulares Augusti</i>	—	(500) 1.000	(1.000) 2.000	2.000
<i>Cohortes urbanae</i>	1.500	2.000	6.000 ⁷	6.000
<i>Cohortes vigilum</i>	3.500	3.500	7.000 ⁸	7.000
<i>Classarii</i>	(?)	(?)	(?)	(?)
<i>Frumentarii</i>	—	90–100 ⁹	90–100	—
<i>speculatores legionis</i>	(?)	(?)	(?)	(?)
<i>legio II Parthica</i>	—	—	5.000–10.000	5.000–10.000
Others ¹⁰	(?)	(?)	(?)	(?)
Total	10.800+X	12.900+X	35.900+X	35.900+X

It is inevitable that these troops, as an interacting social group, had an impact on everyday life. Their high number and permanent residence established them as a core influence on Rome's cultural and social life. Their basic needs—for instance for food, housing and armoury—soon became an economic factor.¹¹ In addition, the services they carried

⁶ Bellen 1981, op. cit. (n. 2), 53ff., 101.

⁷ Cassius Di o 55.24.6.

⁸ Two inscriptions from the beginning of the third century that were found in the Villa Mattei on the Caelian hill mention 113 officers and 930 soldiers, and 109 officers and 1013 soldiers from the *cohors V vigilum*, CIL VI 1057; CIL VI 1058 (= ILS 2157).

⁹ The real strength of the *numerus* is unknown, but the existence of a '*centurio frumentariorum*' as well as the fact that a legion could send three *frumentarii* to Rome at the same time, leads to the given number. M. Reuter, *Die frumentarii*—neugeschaffene ›Geheimpolizei‹ Traians? In E. Schallmayer, ed., *Traian in Germanien*. Congress Saalburg/Bad Homburg 1999 (1999), 78.

¹⁰ The presence of other formations, that are not well-known, such as the so-called *numerus primipilarius*, the *lanciarum* the *exploratores* and the *protectores* is also proved for Rome. *Ephemeris Epigraphica* 4 (1881), 339 nr. 911–913; *Ephemeris Epigraphica* 5, 1884, 121–141, 647 f.

¹¹ Also the act of obtaining their *frumentum* created contacts between soldiers and civilians, notably the *vigiles* '*f(rumentum) p(ublicum) a(ccipit) d(ie) XXII ost(io) XII*.' See:

out for the general public and the emperor made them appear as a substantial component of urban life.¹²

In this paper the relevance of the military presence in imperial Rome will be explored from two different angles. A first part will focus on the topography and design of military camps and their perception by civilians. This approach mainly deals with the appearance and organization of military forces under urban conditions—the 'military landscape of Rome.' In the second part of the paper, the changes in the designs of sepulchral monuments will be discussed, because these archaeological remains illustrate the development in the soldiers' self-presentation and their relation to their contemporaries more than anything else. The scope of the study ranges from the beginning of the reign of Augustus in the year 27 BC to the victory of Constantine over Maxentius in the year 312 AD. Augustus was the first to install military units in the capital.¹³ He established the basis of the garrisons' structure that lasted until the dissolution of the Praetorian Guard and the *equites singulares Augusti* after the battle at the Milvian Bridge in 312 AD.¹⁴ The first permanent stationing of soldiers in Rome marked a crucial turning point between republic and principate.¹⁵ While Augustus revitalized the sacral laws of the republic,¹⁶ he ignored the regulations concerning the presence of soldiers within the *pomerium*. According to these laws, armed forces were only allowed outside the sacral centre of the city of Rome, beyond the city limits, where the *imperium militiae* began.¹⁷ To the public, the installation of troops within the *pomerium* certainly brought to mind some negative memories of the civil wars

B. Pferdehirt, 'Ein kaiserliches Reskript aus dem Jahr 248/249 n. Chr.', *Archäologisches Korrespondenzblatt* 33 (2003), 403–418; ebenda, *Römische Militärdiplome* (2004), 192ff.; E. Lo Cascio, *Il Princeps e il suo impero* (Bari 2000), 19ff.

¹² Tacitus, *Annales* 1.7; 12.69; 14.15; Tacitus, *Historiae* 4.53.2; N. Hannestad, *Roman Art and Imperial Policy* (Aarhus 1986), 193f. n. 174 ('Anaglypha Hadriani'); G.M. Koeppl, 'Die historischen Reliefs der römischen Kaiserzeit III. Stadtrömische Denkmäler unbekannter Bauzugehörigkeit aus trajanischer Zeit.' *Bonner Jahrbücher* 185 (1985), 171f.

¹³ W. Nippel, *Aufbruch und Polizei in der römischen Republik* (Stuttgart 1988), 150ff.

¹⁴ Zosimus 2.17.2; Y. Le Bohec, *L'Armée Romaine sous le Haut-Empire* (Paris 1989), 20–24; Coulston 2000, op. cit. (n. 3), 99.

¹⁵ In Republican times there was neither a regular police force, nor a formation of firemen run by the state. Strabon 5.3.7; Suetonius, *Augustus* 30; *Corpus Juris Civilis, Digesta* 1.15.1; F. Kolb, *Rom* (München 2002, 2nd ed.), 555; W. Nippel, *Public Order in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge 1995), 78–84, 90f.

¹⁶ K. Latte, 'Die augusteische Restauration', in G. Binder, ed., *Saeculum Augustum II* (Darmstadt 1988), 21–51.

¹⁷ Rüpke 1990, op. cit. (n. 1), 29.

in the late republican period.¹⁸ For obvious reasons, the emergence of a permanent military presence within the context of the restoration of the republican order must be considered highly problematic, which makes it worthwhile to closely examine the soldiers' appearance and the public's reaction to their services in the capital—*militia in Urbe*—at the beginning of the imperial period. How was the positioning of troops perceived, as an affirmation of the public order or as a threat to it? It is remarkable that there were, apart from the units in Rome and the permanent marine units at Ravenna and Misenum, no other soldiers on Italian ground.¹⁹

As to the 'military landscape' of Rome, *i.e.* the topography of military quarters, there are issues of special interest. Where were the camps located and for which reasons? In how far were they integrated into civilian districts? A first glance at a map of the military quarters of Rome shows that some of these were erected on elevated spots on the periphery, whereas most of them had no particularly exposed position (Fig. 1). Among the more elevated sites are the following. The largest and most important of the camps were the *castra praetoria*, located on the so-called *campus Viminalis*, a plateau East of the Viminal, between the *Via Nomentana* in the North and the *Via Tiburtina vetus* in the South.²⁰ The *castra peregrina* were built on one of the highest points of the Caelian Hill.²¹ Still visible today is the site of the later *castra nova equitum singularium*, which have been rediscovered underneath the basilica of San Giovanni in Laterano.²² Among the less elevated locations are the quarters of the *classarii*, in the region *Transtiberim* and near

¹⁸ A. Knepppe, *Metus temporum. Zur Bedeutung von Angst in Politik und Gesellschaft der römischen Kaiserzeit des 1. und 2. Jhs. n. Chr.* (Stuttgart 1994), 57–71.

¹⁹ Tacitus, *Annales* 4.5; Cassius Dio 55.24.1–8; C.G. Starr, *The Roman Imperial Navy 31 BC–AD 324* (Cambridge 1960), 13f.; D. Kienast, *Untersuchungen zu den Kriegsfлотten der römischen Kaiserzeit* (Bonn 1966), 48.

²⁰ Coulston 2000, op. cit. (n. 3), 82–84; E. Lissi Caronna, 'Castra Praetoria', in *LTUR I*, 251–254; U. Antonielli, 'Su l'orientamento dei "Castra Praetoria"', *Bullettino della Commissione Archeologica Comunale di Roma* 41 (1913), 31–47; C. Buzetti, 'Castra Praetoria', *Bullettino della Commissione Archeologica Comunale di Roma* 90/2 (1985), 334–335; L. Cecilia, 'Castra Praetoria', *Bullettino della Commissione Archeologica Comunale di Roma* 91 (1986/2), 366–368; P.A. Gianfrotta, 'Castra Praetoria', *Bullettino della Commissione Archeologica Comunale di Roma* 89 (1984), 380; I.A. Richmond, 'The relation of the Praetorian Camp to Aurelian's Wall of Rome', *Papers of the British School at Rome* 10 (1927), 12–22.

²¹ A.M. Colini, *Storia e topografia del Celio nell'antichità* (Rome/Vatican 1944), 240–245; C. Buzetti, 'Castra Equitum Singularium, Singulariorum', in *LTUR I*, 246–248.

²² P. Liverani, ed., *Laterano I. Scavi sotto la Basilica di S. Giovanni in Laterano. I Materiali* (Rome/Vatican 1998); Buzetti op. cit. (n. 21).

Fig. 1. Military accommodations in Rome from the first to the fourth century: 1 *Castra Praetoria*, 2 *Campus Cohortium Praetorianorum*, 3 *Horti Dolabellae*, 4 *Castra Piora Equitum Singularium*, 5 *Castra Nova Equitum Singularium*, 6 *Campus Caelimontanus*, 7 *Castra Urbana*, 8–14 *Stationes Cohortium Vigilum*, 15 *Castra Misenatium*, 16 *Castra Ravennatium*, 17 *Amphitheatrum Flavium*, 18 *Naumachia Augusti*, 19 *Castra Peregrinorum*, 20 *Palatine*, 21 *Palatium Sessorium*, 22 *Thermae Traianae*, 23 *Thermae Diocletianae*, 24 *Thermae Antoninianae*, 25 *Excubitorium Cohortium Vigilum*. © 2006 M. Bishop

the Colosseum; the *castra urbana* on the *campus Martius*; and the *stationes cohortium vigilum*, which were spread over the city and consistently built along the boundaries between the fourteen regions (Fig. 2).²³ The sites were always chosen strategically, with special regard to accessibility and functionality. This allowed the troops to control the main roads of the city and react quickly in cases of emergency. The main road of the Viminal, for example, led all the way from the *castra praetoria* through the *vicus patricius*, the *Subura*, the *Argiletum* and the *forum transitorium* to the political centre of Rome, the *forum romanum* and the Palatine (Fig. 1).

A closer examination of the map shows that—apart from some of the *stationes cohortium vigilum* and the *castra misenatum*—all camps are situated outside the Servian Wall and seem to be aligned in relation to it. On first sight this appears as a threat, as if these camps were built as fortifications to put the city under siege. However, in actual reality they came into being for differing reasons and by various causes over the course of three centuries. So the circumstances at their origin should be explored first, after which the design of the camps may be fruitfully analyzed.

Under Augustus, only the *vigiles*, a paramilitary unit serving as a fire-brigade, were accommodated in the city.²⁴ The 3500 soldiers were spread over seven *stationes* and fourteen *excubitoria* across the entire city (Fig. 2). At the same time three of the nine Pretorian cohorts took quarters in private accommodations within the city limits, while the remaining six lay outside Rome.²⁵ Nothing is known about the accommodation of the city cohorts, but it may be assumed that they were also accommodated in private places. When the Pretorians and the city cohorts were united under Tiberius' rule, their new camp was established at the Northeastern edge of the city, in a thinly populated area, which up to that time had been mostly used for burial places (Fig. 3).²⁶

²³ D. Giorgetti, 'Castra Ravennatum. Indagine sul distaccamento dei classari ravennati a Roma,' in *Corsi di cultura sull'arte ravennate e bizantina* (Ravenna 1977), 223ff.; F. Coarelli, 'Aedes Fortis Fortunae, Naumachia Augusti, Castra Ravennatum,' *Ostraka* 1 (1992), 39ff.; C. Lega, 'Castra Ravennatum,' *LTUR* 1, 292–294.

²⁴ Cassius Dio 55.26.5.; L. Homo, *Rome impériale et l'urbanisme dans l'antiquité* (Paris 1951), 124–149; R. Sablayrolles, *Libertinus miles. Les cohortes de vigiles* (Roma 1996), 250.

²⁵ Suetonius, *Augustus* 49.1.

²⁶ Suetonius, *Tiberius* 37.1; Tacitus, *Annales* 4.2 „*procul urbis incelebris*“; Plinius, *Naturalis Historia* 3.5.57 „*ad extrema tectorum*“; see also L. Haselberger, ed., *Mapping Augustan Rome*. Journal of Roman Archeology Supplement 50 (Portsmouth, Rhode Island 2002), 78.

Fig. 2. The fourteen Augustean regions of Rome with the seven *stationes cohortum vigilum*.
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Fig. 3. Military installations in Rome under Tiberius. © 2006 M. Bishop

Existing sepulchral monuments and gravesites were either integrated in the new wall, or destroyed. Remarkable in this context is the distance between the *castra praetoria* and the cohorts' main place of work, the imperial palace on the Palatine. While the *stationes* of the *vigiles*, according to their functions and the duties, were located in central places in the densely populated city, the site selected for the *castra praetoria* was rather inefficient as to the praetorians' role as guards of the emperor. Considering the main function of the city cohorts—the maintenance of public order and the protection of people within the city—their posting to the remote *campus Viminalis* surprises as well.²⁷ Pragmatic reasons for the selection of this site, as mentioned before, may have been the strategic qualities of it, but there are additional aspects. It is striking, for example, that the *castra praetoria* were erected about 500 meters outside the Servian Wall, well behind the *agger*, which was still several meters high at this time.²⁸ The area was certainly suitable for the construction of such a large complex, but other areas within the borders of the *pomerium* were equally fit, for instance the site where, at the beginning of the fourth century, the baths of Diocletian were built. Therefore, respect for traditional sacral laws must have been of great consequence to the decision to build the *castra praetoria* on the Viminal. The emperor may have disregarded certain aspects of the republican law, but he seems to have been well aware of the negative perception that the population of Rome would have had of a large presence of armed troops within the city. The choice that was finally made demonstrated his respect for traditions, but also made the general public conscious of the presence of military forces, particularly through the daily ritual of the change of guards.²⁹

In a way similar to the *vigiles* fleet troops were in the later decades of the first century AD stationed in well-populated areas close to the soldiers' places of work. At the beginning of the second century the *castra priora equitum singularium* and *castra peregrina* marked a strong

²⁷ The seat of their commander, the *praefectus urbi*, lay a great distance away from the camp, near the Basilica Aemilia. F. Coarelli, 'Praefectura Urbana', *LTUR IV*, 159–160; A. Chastagnol, *La préfecture urbaine à Rome sous le Bas-Empire* (1960).

²⁸ T. Wiseman, 'A stroll on the rampart', in *Horti Romani*, *Bolletino della Commissione Archeologica Comunale di Roma*. Supplementi 6 (Roma 1998), 13–22; M. Andreussi, 'Murus Servii Tullii', *LTUR III*, 324–334.

²⁹ Tacitus, *Historiae* 1.38.5; Martial 6.76.

military presence on the Caelius.³⁰ The area was at this time already occupied by wealthy private houses and baths. The *castra peregrina*, located close to the Palatine, provided accommodation for soldiers from the provinces visiting Rome on special duties.³¹ At the beginning of the reign of Septimius Severus an additional camp for the *equites singulares* was built in short distance to the older *castra* to accommodate their increased number.³² The area, situated in the Southeastern part of the city, close to the Palatium Sessorium, was far from optimal:³³ its surface showed large ground-level differences and was already occupied by two *domus* that were still in use in the second half of the second century, as their decorations show.³⁴ It must have been quite an effort to make the designated site usable. Furthermore, the selection of this site demonstrates that, 150 years after the first of the new *castra* had been erected in Rome, criteria had changed. The area of the *castra nova* had been populated before, and even if the two estates were already imperial property, which they probably were, it is interesting to wonder who lived there and who had to leave.³⁵

The erection of a new camp for the *cohortes urbanae* on the *campus Agrippae* under Aurelian about 270 AD marked the climax of this development.³⁶ At this point the cohorts, which had been stationed in the *castra praetoria* at the edge of the city for 250 years and whose number had by then grown to 6000, were transferred right to the heart of the

³⁰ Colini 1944, op. cit. (n. 21), 240–245 (*castra peregrina*), 314–317 (*castra priora equitum singularium*).

³¹ The *frumentarii* took care about the food supply. M. Reuter, ‘Die frumentarii—neugeschaffene „Geheimpolizei“ Traians?’, in E. Schallmayer, ed., *Traian in Germanien. Traian im Reich* (Bad Homburg 1999), 77–81.

³² M.P. Speidel, *Riding for Caesar. The Roman Emperors Horse Guards* (London 1994), 128.

³³ F. Giudobaldi, ‘Sessorium’, *LTUR IV*, 304–308; A. Chastagnol, *La préfecture urbaine à Rome sous le Bas-Empire* (1960).

³⁴ P. Liverani, ed., *Laterano I. Scavi sotto la Basilica di S. Giovanni in Laterano. I Materiali* (Vaticano 1998), 11. For the wallpaintings see E.M. Moormann and S.T.A.M. Mols, ‘Le pitture romane. Frammenti e resti in situ’, in Liverani 1998, op. cit. (n. 22), 115–132.

³⁵ According to the literary sources the area around the Lateran was by that time already imperial property. SHA, *Vita Marci Antonini philosophi* 1.7; 5.3; 11. 10. I owe many thanks to Anthony Birley for this remark.

³⁶ For the ‘campus Agrippae’ see: L. Richardson, *A New Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome* (Baltimore/London 1992), 64; Anonymous Chronograph of AD 354: “*Hic (Aurelianus) muro urbem cinxit, templum Solis et castra in campo Agrippae dedicavit, (...)*”; G. Lugli, *Fontes ad Topographiam veteris urbis Romae I–IV* (Rome 1952), 203, nr. 5; XII–XIV (1957), 378f. nrs. 65–67; A. Nordh, *Libellus de regionibus urbis Romae*. Acta Instituti Romani Regni Sueciae III 8 (Göteborg 1949), 83.

city.³⁷ As a main reason for this transfer literary sources mention their function in controlling the meat distribution in the *Forum Suarium*.³⁸ In addition, this measure has to be interpreted in the context of an increasingly tense atmosphere, which also led to the construction of the Aurelian wall.

To summarize this first examination of the military landscape: in the early imperial period military units were stationed according to their function. Only units that had to maintain public order lived in the city, while those without such civilian functions stayed outside the city limits. Over the course of the first century and at the beginning of the second century, due to the creation of new units, more and more military facilities were built within the city. Towards the end of the second century AD, the development culminated in the establishment of a camp on top of former *domus* and the massing of military facilities in the Southeast of the city. By the third century the military camps were built directly where the troops would be needed and used, even in the middle of the city.

Design and reception of military bases

After the topographical situation of the camps their outer appearance and its reception by the general public now has to be examined. Since the only remaining outer wall of the known camps is that of the *castra praetoria*, one has to focus on this military base.³⁹ The study of the outer walls, the gates, the building materials, the original height of the walls and possible hindrances is necessary to understand how the building may have been perceived by the populace of Rome.⁴⁰

The wall of the *castra praetoria* was constructed in brick-faced *opus caementicium*. In the beginning, the wall was approximately 4,50 m high. The towers projected only a few centimeters forward (Fig. 5).

³⁷ Cassius Dio 55.24.6. The *cohortes urbanae* also took part on military campaigns and other duties, therefore it is not sure if the new camp had to provided place for all 6.000 men.

³⁸ Ulpian, *Corpus Juris Civilis, Digesta* 1.12.1.11.

³⁹ I.A. Richmond, 'The relation of the Praetorian Camp to Aurelian's Wall of Rome', *Papers of the British School at Rome* 10 (1927), 12–22.

⁴⁰ P. Zanker, 'Bild-Räume und Betrachter im kaiserzeitlichen Rom.' In A. Borbein, T. Hölscher and P. Zanker, eds., *Klassische Archäologie. Eine Einführung* (Darmstadt 2000), 205ff.

Fig. 4. Wall of the *castra praetoria*. © 2001 A. Busch

CASTRA PRAETORIA. PART OF NORTH WALL, TO THE EAST OF PORTA
PRINCIPALIS DEXTRA, AT SUCCESSIVE PERIODS

Fig. 5. Changes in the outer appearance of the *castra praetoria*—the building phases of the wall.

Apparently, the camp had the usual features of common fortifications along the borders of the empire, but the sites around the remaining walls showed no traces of ditches, which were characteristic for camps and fortresses.⁴¹ Surely the situation of a camp in the capital was different from that of a camp on the border, but while other camps in civilian settings, for instance the 'Cripplegate' fort in London, possessed ditches, this one did not.⁴² Thus the wall of the camp was at the beginning of the imperial period less fortified than other camps in civilian settings. The *castra praetoria*, as well as the *stationes* of the *vigiles* had no distinctly military character. Their walls only separated soldiers and civilians. The different building phases of the wall however show that the appearance of the camp changed in the course of time (Fig. 6).⁴³ From the first to the third century the wall was heightened until the *castra praetoria* under Aurelian were finally included into the city wall and lost their original function as an independent military installation.⁴⁴ But what made these structural changes necessary? The steady growth of the outer wall of the *castra praetoria* must have been a reaction to certain events, which called for a better defense of the base. When times became more troubled, especially in late antiquity, military camps and urban defences in the provinces were increased or established in a more appropriate height.⁴⁵ In Aurelian's Rome, this led to the construction of a new city wall, after the city had remained unfortified over several centuries.⁴⁶ Therefore the preceding increases of the *castra praetoria* are

⁴¹ A. Johnson, *Römische Kastelle des 1. und 2. Jahrhunderts n. Chr. in Britannien und in den germanischen Provinzen des Römerreiches* (Mainz 1987), 59ff.

⁴² W.F. Grimes, *The Excavation of Roman and Mediaeval London* (London 1968), 15ff., fig. 4, pl. 1–14; M. Millett, *The Romanization of Britain* (1992), 91, fig. 31. Another exception is the recently discovered military camp of Virunum. M. Doneus, Ch. Gugl and R. Jernej, 'Ein neu entdecktes römisches Militärlager in Virunum (Noricum)—erste Ergebnisse der Luftbildauswertung,' *Archäologisches Korrespondenzblatt* 33/3 (2003), 393ff.

⁴³ I.A. Richmond, 'The relation of the Praetorian Camp to Aurelian's Wall of Rome,' *Papers of the British School at Rome* 10 (1927), 12–22, pl. 6; L. Cozza, 'Mura di Roma dalla Porta Nomentana alla Tiburtina,' *Analecta Romana* 25 (1997), 8–113.

⁴⁴ Richmond 1927, op. cit. 19f.

⁴⁵ S. Johnson, *Late Roman Fortifications* (London 1983).

⁴⁶ I.A. Richmond, *The City Wall of Imperial Rome* (College Park, Maryland 1971); L. Cassanelli, G. Delfini and D. Fonti, *Le Mura di Roma* (Rome 1974); M. Todd, *The Walls of Rome* (London 1978); M. Todd, 'The Aurelian Wall of Rome and its Analogues', in B. Hobley and J. Maloney, eds., *Roman Urban Defences in the West* (London 1983), 58–67; L. Cozza, 'Osservazioni sulle mura aureliane a Roma', *Analecta Romana* 16 (1987), 25–52; L. Cozza, 'Mura di Roma dalla Porta Flaminia alla Pinciana', *Analecta Romana* 20 (1992), 93–138; L. Cozza, 'Mura di Roma della Porta Pinciana alla Salaria', *Analecta Romana* 21 (1993), 81–140; L. Cozza, 'Mura di Roma dalla Porta Nomentana

Fig. 6. Gravestones of the praetorians, the *cohortes urbanae* and the *vigiles* from the Vigna del Cinque. After: F. Piranesi, *Le Antichità Romane I* (Rome 1757) III

not to be understood as reactions to more troubled times in general, but have to be seen and evaluated in their concrete urban context. The changes in the wall's structure resemble the social changes, for instance in the relationship between the troops inside the camp and the urban population, or between the soldiers and the emperor.⁴⁷

Apart from that the camp had a special architectural meaning in Rome, since it was the first monumental building constructed with a brick facing. The relatively plain front contrasted with the more complex marble architectures in the city.⁴⁸ The brick building method, now all the more visible because of the missing plaster of the wall, represented other characteristics or qualities than extant sacral buildings, which were massive constructions, made of marble, limestone, tufa and travertine.⁴⁹ The new and very modern method had its own aesthetics and value, which corresponded very well with the function of the *castra*.⁵⁰

Having examined the decisive factors for the establishment of the camps in Rome and the architectural changes in their outer appearance, one should focus on a more abstract level of their perception: their role as landmarks and points of orientation. The military camps undoubtedly were used as points of orientation, which is proven by the delineation of the *castra Misenatium* on the *Forma Urbis*.⁵¹ It may be assumed that the other camps were marked correspondingly. Other buildings that were named on the *Forma Urbis* were all places of public, political or religious importance.⁵² On other ancient geographical depictions topographic landmarks were used in a similar way and, of course, there are

alla Tiburtina', *Analecta Romana* 25 (1997), 8–113; R. Mancini, *Le mura aureliane di Roma: atlante di un palinsesto murario* (Roma 2001).

⁴⁷ There are some ancient texts that mention such conflicts and describe what happened to the building during these events like e.g. SHA, *Maximus et Balbus* 8.4; Zosimus 2.17.2.

⁴⁸ Hannestad 1986, op. cit. (n. 12), 39ff.; P. Zanker, *Augustus und die Macht der Bilder* (Munich 1987) 85–132, 319–328.

⁴⁹ H. von Hesberg and M. Pfanner, 'Ein augusteisches Columbarium im Park der Villa Borghese', *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Institutes* 103 (1988), 479.

⁵⁰ The *cohortes* were put together in one camp to lighten/strengthen the discipline of the soldiers. Tacitus, *Annales* 4.2; Suetonius, *Tiberius* 37.1.

⁵¹ E. Rodríguez Almeida, *Forma Urbis Marmorea. Aggiornamento generale 1980* (Roma 1981), 70f., pl. 4.

⁵² Cf. F.A. Bauer, *Das Bild der Stadt Rom im Frühmittelalter. Papststiftungen im Spiegel des Liber Pontificalis von Gregor dem Dritten bis zu Leo dem Dritten*. Palilia 14 (Wiesbaden 2004), 12. Examples of other buildings: Rodríguez Almeida 1981, op. cit. (n. 51), 93f. (Amphitheatrum Flavium); 96ff. (Basilica Aemilia, Templum Castoris); 77ff. (Thermae Traiani).

modern map-makers who do likewise.⁵³ The mentioning of the camps and stations in the two regional catalogues of the late antiquity, the *Notitia Regionum Urbis Romae* and the *Curiosum Urbis Romae* underlines the meaning of the military buildings as landmarks in the urban landscape of that period.⁵⁴ The sites most likely continued to be connected with the camps for a long time even long after the *castra praetoria* and *castra nova equitum singularium* had been abandoned or destroyed.

Apart from its geographical importance, a camp obviously stood as symbol for the unit stationed in it. The destruction of the *castra nova equitum singularium*, on whose remains the basilica of S. Giovanni in Laterano was erected, as well as the destruction of the soldiers' cemetery, must be understood as a kind of collective *damnatio memoriae*.⁵⁵ By destroying buildings and monuments, the identity of a unit, which was expressed in the camp and the cemetery, was also destroyed. The close connection between a camp and its soldiers lead to an understanding of the two as synonyms, which is underlined by a line of Cassius Dio, who speaks of camp and city, meaning the Praetorians on one hand, and Rome's civil population on the other.⁵⁶ The images of the *castra praetoria* on coins lead to the same interpretation: Immediately after his accession Claudius arranged a high value coin issue, which shows the camp of the guard, whose officers had murdered his predecessor and proclaimed him the new emperor.⁵⁷ The inscription '*Imperator Receptus*' in combination with the camp may be understood both as a direct appeal to the soldiery and as an indication of strong military backing, directed at a wider urban population. The coins honoured the praetorians and were most likely used as military pay.⁵⁸ The depiction of the camp was

⁵³ O.A.W. Dilke, *Greek and Roman Maps* (London 1985), 120–122; B. Salway, 'Sea and River Travel in the Roman World', in K. Brodersen and R. Talbert, eds., *Space in the Roman World* (Münster 2004), 92ff., fig. 12 (the fragment of the so-called 'shield' from Dura Europos, around 260 AD); R. Talbert, 'Cartography and Taste in Peutinger's Roman Map', in Brodersen and Talbert 2004, op. cit. 113ff. (*Tabula Peutingeriana*, 335–366 AD); M. Piccirillo, *Madaba: le chiese e i mosaici* (Amman 1993) (the Byzantine mosaic of Madaba, 542–565 AD). For an overview see K. Brodersen, *Terra Cognita. Studien zur römischen Raumerfassung*. Spudasmata 59 (Hildesheim 1995).

⁵⁴ Nordh 1949, op. cit. (n. 36), 81, 83; Bauer 2004, op. cit. (n. 52), 12.

⁵⁵ F. Vittinghoff, *Der Staatsfeind in der römischen Kaiserzeit. Untersuchungen zur damnatio memoriae* (Berlin 1936).

⁵⁶ Cassius Dio 75.2.3.

⁵⁷ H.-M. von Kaenel, *Münzprägung und Münzbildnis des Claudius*, *Antike Münzen und geschnittene Steine* 9 (Berlin 1986), pl. 1, 22; 1, 40; 6, 466; 6, 473; 6, 478.

⁵⁸ O.J. Hekster, 'The Roman Army and Propaganda', in P. Erdkamp, ed., *A Companion to the Roman Army* (Oxford 2007, forthcoming).

replaced on another issue by the depiction of praetorian officers. The soldiers and their camp could be used to transport equal meanings.

Design of the soldiers' sepulchral monuments

In the first century simply decorated gravestones dominated the funerary monuments of the units at Rome (Fig. 6). These were usually distributed in small groups over the civilian necropolises of the city. The tombstones of the Praetorians and the city-cohorts, found in the Vigna del Cinque, are representative of these homogeneous accumulations of monuments.⁵⁹ They are of a simple shape and were in most cases only decorated with a *corona vittata* with long *lemnisci*.⁶⁰ Their form corresponds to the gravestones of the *Germani corporis custodes* (Fig. 7).⁶¹ In their modesty and simplicity they embody some uniformity and reflect similar values. The simple shape with a *corona* must have been regarded as a kind of monument suitable for different units with a diverse social and cultural background, and became a characteristic of the Rome garrison.⁶² Their formal modesty and regularity showed a clear, collective identity. The fact that the statement of the monuments was understood in an appropriate sense by ancient viewers seems to be affirmed by a document from the writings of the Roman land-surveyors. Under the '*Terminorum Diagrammata*' one finds the designation '*sepultura militaris in finem*' for rectangular stones with a semicircular top.⁶³ Since the material of the corpus covers a wide period, from early to late empire, it is significant that this form was widely understood as referring precisely

⁵⁹ C.D. Fea, *Miscellanea filologica, critica e antiquaria* II (Rom 1836), 99–119, esp. 101–107; G.B. Piranesi, *Le Antichità Romane* II (Roma 1751), Tables 50–54. Others are the so-called 'cemetery from the Milvian Bridge' and the accumulation of gravestones from the Via Cassia. A. Giuliano, ed., *Museo Nazionale Romano. Le Sculture* I, 7 (Roma 1984), 159–176, nrs. V, 28 a–w; U. Antonielli, 'Militi Urbani d'Etruria sepolti lungo la via Cassia.', *Studi Etruschi* 2 (1928), 635–642.

⁶⁰ For the meaning of *coronae* see M. Bergmann, *Die Strahlen der Herrscher* (Mainz 1998); V.A. Maxfield, *The Military Decorations of the Roman Army* (London 1981). The *lemnisci* enhanced the honour. Plinius maior, *Naturalis Historia* 21.6: „accesserunt et lemnisci, quos adici ipsarum coronarum honor erat.“

⁶¹ Bellen 1981, op. cit. (n. 2), 107–113, nrs. 7–22, pl. 3–10.

⁶² A. Busch, 'Kameraden bis in den Tod? Zur militärischen Sepulkraltopographie im kaiserzeitlichen Rom', in P. Zanker and R. Neudecker, eds., *Lebenswelten: Bilder und Räume in der römischen Stadt der Kaiserzeit*. Palilia 16 (Wiesbaden 2005), 106–108.

⁶³ F. Blume, K. Lachmann and A. Rudorff, *Die Schriften der römischen Feldmesser* I (Berlin 1848), 341f., pl. 33, fig. 275; Busch 2005, op. cit. (n. 62), 108, fig. 4.

Fig. 7. Gravestone of the *Germanus corporis custos* Indus.—Rome, Museo Nazionale Romano Inv. 125660. DAI Rome, INR 78.465

to military grave monuments. There was obviously a 'soldiers' style', which was recognizable as such to the wider population of Rome.

Considering the various possibilities people had in the capital from which to choose an adequate sepulchral monument, the uniformity and simplicity of the soldiers' gravestones in Rome are noticeable. Weapon representations, such as one known from Northern Italy, are almost missing completely, as are the representations of soldiers in full military equipment.⁶⁴ While gravestones from Northern Italy frequently show full-figured representations of soldiers in their military equipment and gravestones in the provinces even show them fighting barbarians, the early military gravestones from Rome simply do not employ such devices, quite unlike praetorian gravestones found in Italy away from Rome.⁶⁵

On one of the very scarce full-figure representations of the first century, the gravestone of Q. Iulius Galatus, clear visibility of the belt, which usually stresses military status, is avoided (Fig. 8).⁶⁶ Pictures such as battle scenes or barbarian riders, which would have been particularly suitable to refer to military abilities, do not occur.⁶⁷ In the second century a broader iconographic range came to be adopted. The gravestones of the *equites singulares* differ from the ones of the other units, always showing dining scenes and *calones* with horses.⁶⁸ The images being chosen emphasize the status of cavalrymen, but overtly military pictures are still missing. Civilian and private aspects are stressed by the canonical use of

⁶⁴ The altar of Aelius Bassus, a *custos armorum* of the *equites singulares*, is one of the only pieces that show weapons in Rome. M.P. Speidel, *Die Denkmäler der Kaiserreiter* (Bonn 1994), 112f., nr. 83. In Northern Italy these forms of representation occur regularly. See C. Franzoni, *Habitus atque habitudo militis. Monumenti funerari di militari nella Cisalpina Romana* (Rom 1987), nrs. 1–3, 6, 7, 28, 29.

⁶⁵ For the barbarian-fighter see: M. Schleiermacher, *Römische Reitergrabsteine* (Mainz 1984).

⁶⁶ ILS 2169; W. Amelung, *Die Sculpturen des Vatikanischen Museums I* (Berlin 1903), 259, nr. 128 d; A. Sablayrolles, *Libertinus miles. Les cohortes de vigiles* (Roma 1996), 219ff., 349, 354 note 89, 386 note 174, 669, nr. 273; I. Di Stefano Manzella and G.L. Gregori, eds., *Supplementa italica—Imagines. Roma (CIL, VI) 2. Musei Vaticani—Antiquarium Comunale del Celio* (Roma 2003), 64f., nr. 2300.

⁶⁷ The only exception is a gravestone of an *eques singularis*, today in the Museo Capitolino Inv. NCE 573. Schleiermacher 1984, op. cit. (n. 65), 226, nr. 103; Speidel 1994, op. cit. (n. 64), 296, nr. 540.

⁶⁸ Speidel 1994, op. cit. (n. 64), nrs. 80, 83, 86 etc.; A.W. Busch, 'Von der Provinz ins Zentrum—Bilder auf den Grabdenkmälern einer Elite-Einheit,' in P. Noelke, ed., *Romanisierung versus Resistenz und Wiederaufleben einheimischer Elemente* (Mainz 2003), 679–694.

Fig. 8. Gravestone of Q. Iulius Galatus.—Rome, Musei Vaticani, Galleria Lapidaria Inv. 7406. Forschungsarchiv für antike Plastik, Köln FA 6024/05

banquet scenes.⁶⁹ The soldiers appear as educated, integrated citizens. For almost two hundred years this limited form of self-representation for all the different types of troops in Rome did not change, indeed not until the reign of Septimius Severus. The lack of military motifs in Rome finds no parallels in any other region of the empire. These 'reduced' monuments from Rome have to be seen in the context of a time when the presence of military within the city boundaries of the *urbs* was not unproblematic. At the beginning of the imperial period the population was still traumatised by the crucial and brutal events of the late Republic.⁷⁰ Soldiers were regarded with distrust and fear. A passage in the *Panegyricus* for Trajan, where Pliny the Younger describes the soldier behaving properly, illustrates, how soldiers were normally noticed by the population.⁷¹ The stress on their good, inconspicuous behaviour shows that this represented an exception.

From the very end of the second century there was, however, a crucial change. The soldiers now appear well equipped on their monuments (Fig. 9).⁷² With the reign of Septimius Severus their position had obviously changed. With his reforms, to which among other things the increase of the soldier's salary and the right of the marriage belonged, he improved the status and conditions of the soldiers fundamentally.⁷³ The military had won a new and powerful place in society. To the displeasure of his contemporaries the emperor had not only increased the number of the soldiers of Rome's garrison, but he founded a new legion that was placed in the direct proximity of the empire's capital, just fifteen kilometres Southeast, at Albano.⁷⁴ Moreover Severus went in full military dress with his armed soldiers on to the Capitol and

⁶⁹ Banquet scenes also appear on military gravestones from the lower Rhine: P. Noelke, 'Grabreliefs mit Mahldarstellungen in den germanisch-gallischen Provinzen—soziale und religiöse Aspekte,' in P. Fasold, Th. Fischer, H. von Hesberg and M. Witteyer, eds., *Bestattungssitte und kulturelle Identität. Grabanlagen und Grabbeigaben der frühen römischen Kaiserzeit in Italien und den Nordwestprovinzen* (Köln/Bonn 1998), 416.

⁷⁰ Knepppe 1994, op. cit. (n. 18), 57–71.

⁷¹ Plinius minor, *Panegyricus* 23.3; cf. Iuvenalis, *Satirae* 16.

⁷² For example the gravestone of L. Septimius Valerinus (Rom, Museo Nazionale Romano Inv. 104542). See Giuliano 1984, op. cit. (n. 59), 146ff., nr. V 20.

⁷³ Herodianus 3.8.5; G. Alföldy, 'Das Heer in der Sozialstruktur des Römischen Kaiserreiches', in G. Alföldy, B. Dobson and W. Eck, eds., *Kaiser, Heer und Gesellschaft in der Römischen Kaiserzeit* (Stuttgart 2000), 33ff.; S.E. Phang, *The Marriage of Roman Soldiers (13 B.C.–A.D. 235). Law and Family in the Imperial Army* (Leiden/Boston/Köln 2001).

⁷⁴ Herodianus 3.13.4. For the *legio II Parthica* see H.W. Benario, 'Albano and the Second Parthian Legion', *Archaeology* 25 (1972), 257–263; E. Tortorici, *Castra Albana. Forma Italiae, Regio I*, 11 (Rom 1974).

Fig. 9. Gravestone of L. Septimius Valerinus.—Rome, Museo Nazionale Romano Inv. 104542. DAI Rome, INR 72.3021

used military men against the senate.⁷⁵ The military had become more powerful and became an important element in society.

The changes described undoubtedly played an important role for the appearance and wide distribution of the new representational motif on the soldier's grave monuments particularly in Rome, but also right across the provinces.⁷⁶ A broader influence was also exerted on the development of sepulchral art, where the general interest in military themes grew during this period.⁷⁷ Soldiers could now, at the beginning of the third century, refer self-confidently their affiliation to the 'state-making' military on their graves. They showed up proudly on the monuments in their new equipment that consisted of the ring-buckle-belt and the *spatha*.⁷⁸ As Cassius Dio reports, the changes had also their negative sides. He speaks of regular collisions between soldiers and civilians, and the people being indignant about the abuse of power by the Praetorian Guard.⁷⁹ Distrust towards the guard was the consequence. The relationship between the military formations and the civilian population of Rome had obviously changed.

Summary

To sum up: Within the urban area of Rome at the beginning of the imperial era both the grave monuments of the military and the erection of military bases were treated with a certain discretion and moderation, more so than in later years. With the spreading of the 3.500 men of the *cohortes vigilum* to numerous smaller accommodations all over the entire city and the establishment of the city cohorts to maintain public order,

⁷⁵ Cassius Dio 75.1.3; 75.2.2; Herodianus 2.14.1; 3.8.7.

⁷⁶ J.C. Balty and W. van Rengen, *Apamée de Syrie. Quartiers d'hiver de la IIe légion Parthique. Monuments funéraires de la nécropole militaire* (Bruxelles 1993); M.P. Speidel, Eagle-Bearer and Trumpeter, *Bonner Jahrbücher* 176 (1976), 123ff.; J.C.N. Coulston, 'Roman Military Equipment on Third Century Tombstones', in M. Dawson, ed., *Roman Military Equipment. The Accountements of War*. BAR International Series 336 (Oxford 1987).

⁷⁷ In senatorial sepulchral art suddenly battle-scenes and triumphs reappear from the Severan period to 3rd century, e.g. the Great Ludovisi Battle sarcophagus, Rom, Museo Nazionale Romano Inv. 8574. See: H. Wrede, *Senatorische Sarkophage Roms. Der Beitrag des Senatorenstandes zur römischen Kunst der hohen und späten Kaiserzeit* (Mainz 2001).

⁷⁸ M.C. Bishop and J.C.N. Coulston, *Roman Military Equipment from the Punic Wars to the fall of Rome* (Oxford 2006); cf. Coulston 1987, op. cit. (n. 76), 141ff.; idem in the present volume.

⁷⁹ Cassius Dio 75.2.6; 77.3.

under Augustus's rule the military was solely presented as a guarantor of public order and security. Under Tiberius the largest military unit of Rome, the *cohortes praetoriae*, was concentrated in one impressive camp, which lay at the edge of the city, 'hidden' behind the *agger Servii Tullii*. In the necropolises, the soldiers' graves in smaller numbers were mixed with the people's graves.⁸⁰ Contrary to the practices in other parts of the Imperium Romanum, they were not represented explicitly as military. No military equipment or actions were depicted on gravestones.

The beginning of the second century saw a similar tendency. New camps were established in relatively sparsely settled areas at the edge of the city. Although this time also produced the first and so far only known *necropolis* solely for soldiers at the third milestone of the via Labicana, the *equites singulares Augusti* who were buried there did not choose military topics or representations in military equipment for their cemetery.⁸¹ Instead, socio-cultural and civilian aspects are emphasised on their monuments.⁸² In contrast to the earlier periods Trajan, after having reordered or reorganised the empire, had begun to emphasize the military's strength and power in service of the empire. The construction of Trajan's Forum with the depiction of his military campaigns to Dacia on Trajan's Column, illustrate this more than anything else.⁸³ In the following decades of the second century there are more examples for the growing acceptance and connection between soldiers and the general public: for instance, official reliefs of the time show soldiers acting as helpers and supporters for the well-being of the people. Reliefs like the Anaglypha Traiani and the Chatsworth relief (Fig. 10), on which soldiers are burning debt records in the city, were surely meant to demonstrate to the citizens what the emperor did for them, but it is remarkable that it was specifically the military that was doing good in the service of the emperor.⁸⁴ Summarizing the observations for the first and the earlier second centuries, the aspects of the designs of the

⁸⁰ One of the best examples is the *necropolis* along the Via Salaria, outside the Porta Pinciana.

⁸¹ Buried together with the *equites* were their slaves, their freedmen, their women and children. Speidel 1994, op. cit. (n. 64), nrs. 691–698 (*calones, servi*); 699–707 (freedmen); 708–727 (relatives); 728–743 (veterans); 744–750 (praetorians); 751–753.

⁸² Busch 2003, op. cit. (n. 68), 679ff.

⁸³ B. Fehr, 'Das Militär als Leitbild: politische und gruppenspezifische Wahrnehmung des Trajansforums und der Trajanssäule', *Hephaistos* 7/8 (1985/1986), 39–60.

⁸⁴ Hannestad 1986, op. cit. (n. 12), 193f, n. 174; Koeppl 1986, op. cit. (n. 12), 21ff., nr. 2.

Fig. 10. 'Chatsworth-Relief'.—Chatsworth, Derbyshire. Forschungsarchiv für antike Plastik Köln, FA 1035/08

grave monuments, the images depicted on the official reliefs and the topography of the camps create the impression that the driving forces were well aware of the negative elements in the late republic—and tried to avoid a negative perception of the soldiers in Rome. The fact that the history of the late republic had not been forgotten in the imperial period can be seen in Augustinus' references to the civil war, which he compared to the attacks of the Goths.⁸⁵

A clearly visible change occurs under Septimius Severus, who almost quadrupled the number of soldiers stationed directly in and around Rome. More so than before, the city appeared like a military camp.⁸⁶ The enlargement of the military force in the empire's capital at this time was just as unnecessary as the stationing of a newly founded legion within a distance of a half day's march at Albano, about 15 kilometers Southeast of Rome. Both can be surely understood in the sense of a power demonstration, since the camp of the new *legio II Parthica*, could have been established in any other place than right before the gates of the city. With the described changes in the social status of the soldiers came a change in the design of sepulchral sculptures. The troops displayed a significantly greater self-confidence on their monuments and actively demonstrated their ranks and significance. While public interest in military topics and the acceptance of the *militia in Urbe* seemed to grow on one hand, there was also an increasing number of reports about their bad behaviour on the other. Cassius Dio's writings describe how for instance the senators regarded these changes caused by the military presence and that they saw it as a threatening gesture, or even a direct menace. In the third century, the continuous conflicts between the troops and the citizens of Rome led to tense situations, like the cutting off of the *castra praetoria*'s water support, during the clashes between the populace of Rome and the soldiers in AD 238.⁸⁷ The climax of imposition was reached when the 6.000 men of the *cohortes urbanae* were placed right in the heart of the city, regardless of the traditional borders of the *pomerium*.

⁸⁵ Augustinus, *De civitate dei* 3.29.

⁸⁶ Cassius Dio 75.2.3.

⁸⁷ SHA, *Max. et Balb.* 8.4.