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### EPIGRAPHIC AND PROSOPOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON Q. MARCIUS QUADRATUS FROM IBIDA

**Abstract:** The author discusses the origin of Q. Marcius Quadratus, whose epitaph was found in Ibida (Moesia inferior). The debate was about a Libyan or a Liburnian origin of Quadratus. Taking into account the occurrences of Marcii in both Dalmatia and Africa, as well the historical content, the author proves that the restitution *Libycus* is more plausible, identifying the person with a veteran.

**Keywords:** *prosopography, Ibida, Libya, veterans.*

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Quite recently, upon discussing the epigraphic dossier of early Roman Ibida (Fig. 1)<sup>1</sup>, I took a quick glimpse at the inscription ISM V, 225, published as follows in the corpus of inscriptions:

*Q(uintus) Marcius Qua/dratus nat(ione) Lib(ycus) sive Lib(urnus) / vix(it) ann(is) LXXXXV Q(uinuts) Mar/cius Provincialis fil(ius) / f(aciendum) c(uravit).* (Fig. 2)

E. Doruțiu-Boilă preferred to publish two reconstruction versions for the origin of the deceased (*Libycus* and *Liburnus*), the first being the favourite<sup>2</sup>. In *Epigraphische Datenbank Clauss-Slaby*, the version taken into account is also the first one (*Libycus*), although the editors suggest that the reconstruction is still uncertain<sup>3</sup>. In the brief commentary of the *Epigraphische Datenbank Heidelberg*, the editor of the epigraphic note argues that “it may also read *Lib(urnus)*.”

It must be stated from the beginning that A. Aricescu had also proposed a version in what concerns Q. Marcius Quadratus’ origin, *natione Libida*, in order to enforce the assumption that the city’s name is Libida, not Ibida<sup>4</sup>. Aricescu’s reconstruction cannot be supported here using technical, epigraphic, or logical arguments. First of all, because when origin was mentioned using the noun *natione*, the term was followed by the name of the region or the province of origin, even of the tribe occupying a certain territory; in no case, was it followed by the city’s name. Secondly, if the deceased had indeed been from that city, the mention of the origin seems illogical on his tombstone, all the more as Quadratus’ epitaph was set up at Ibida.

<sup>1</sup> A conference held in Iași in 2020.

<sup>2</sup> ISM V, 225, *sub numero*.

<sup>3</sup> EDCS 11300771.

<sup>4</sup> ARICESCU 1971, 58-60.

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Therefore, the other two versions are open to discussion. Our character is definitely a foreigner settled at Ibida. Considering that the settlement harboured – as shown in the epigraphic dossier – veterans and their families<sup>5</sup>, Marcus Quadratus may have very well been a veteran or the descendant of a veteran. The text dates to the second century, to the second half or to the third quarter of it most likely, if we consider that he was 95 years old when he died. This is not necessarily the real age of Q. Marcus Quadratus, but the figure certainly suggests that the person commemorated lived a very long life.

Regarding the reconstruction *natione Liburnus*, one must think of Liburnia, of course – the region on the north-eastern shore of the Adriatic Sea, in the Roman province of Dalmatia. This province includes two mentions of Q. Marcii: a *quaestor* of the rural settlement of Naronia during the Republican era<sup>6</sup> and a certain Q. Marcus Bassus from Beneventum, soldier in the seventh Claudia legion, stationed in Dalmatia until the year 42<sup>7</sup>. There are other Marcii mentioned, too, either freedmen or other persons from Italy (such as C. Marcus Cilix, from Lupiae, Calabria<sup>8</sup>), but they are not more than 10. Given that this province had recorded at the beginnings of its organisation a strong immigration wave from Italy – comprising veterans, but also merchants or their freedmen – most representatives of the *gens Marcia* in Dalmatia are believed to be descendants of Italian families. From the perspective of epigraphic mentions, their number – Q. Marcii included – remains scarce.

Romans referred to Libya to name both the regions and provinces of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in a more limited sense, and a wider African territory situated west from the Nile, which also comprised modern-day Maghreb. Hence, upon reading *natione Libycus*, we should not think of a province – for there was no province of Libya – but of a territory largely corresponding to northern and northwestern Africa. Whereas in the province of Crete and Cyrenaica, no occurrence has been found thus far for the *gentilicium* Marcus, such occurrence is far more abundant in the other Latin-speaking African provinces. In Africa proconsularis, there are none less than ten Q. Marcii: two Q. Marcii Pudentes (father and son; the father was a jurisconsult)<sup>9</sup>, Q. Marcus Asper<sup>10</sup>, Q. Marcus Protomachus (physician)<sup>11</sup>, Q. Marcus Fabianus<sup>12</sup>, Q. Marcus Maximus<sup>13</sup>, Q. Marcus Candidus Rusonianus<sup>14</sup>, Q. Marcus Saturninus<sup>15</sup>, Q. Marcus Suriacus<sup>16</sup>, Q. Marcus Saedius<sup>17</sup>. Their ancestors must have obtained their citizenship during the governorship of Q. Marcus Barea, in the early period of Claudius' reign. There are mentions of even more Marcii, most of them holding

important positions (knights, such as L. Marcus Honoratus Fabianus<sup>18</sup>, *flamines* such as L. Marcus Simplex<sup>19</sup>, P. Marcus Quadratus<sup>20</sup> or C. Marcus Clemens<sup>21</sup> – all three of them sons of a certain Quintus, or L. Marcus Ferox<sup>22</sup>, C. Marcus Dentus<sup>23</sup>, *duumvirus* like P. Marcus Felix<sup>24</sup>). In Mauretania Caesariensis, two Q. Marcii are attested<sup>25</sup>, while in Numidia eight more<sup>26</sup>. Other Marcii are mentioned, too; hence, the number of occurrences exceeds 100.

Returning to the inscription of Ibida, statistics show that Marcii – especially Q. Marcii – from Africa are far more numerous than those from Dalmatia. However, the distance from Lower Moesia – where the inscription featuring Q. Marcus Quadratus was found – is much shorter. Beyond statistics, though, there is another argument that makes me favour the version *natione Libycus*. Three inscriptions mention this formula. We are discussing about two sailors within the pretorian fleet of Ravenna<sup>27</sup> and one within the fleet of Misenum<sup>28</sup>. No inscription attests the formula *natione Liburnus*.

There is still the matter of distance. We do know, however, that the mobility rate was high, mostly in what concerned the displacement of military forces. There are examples of a part of *auxilia Moesiae Inferioris* being stationed in Mauretania Tingitana during the reign of Antoninus Pius. In Lower Moesia, too, there are mentions of soldiers from Africa or of their descendants. At Troesmis, L. Antonius Felix, centurion in two legions, from Carthagina, is commemorated by his wife and sons<sup>29</sup>. A veteran of the first Italica legion in Novae has a son called Mampsalachanus, a typical north-African name<sup>30</sup>. Ti. Plautius Felix Ferruntianus, from Mactaris (Africa proconsularis), was sent around 175-176 to command vexillations stationed in the Roman bridgeheads within the Northern Black Sea area<sup>31</sup>. Petronius Fortunatus is mentioned in a text from the second half of the second century, as being from Cillium (the same African province)<sup>32</sup>. A *primus pilus* who lived during the reign of Heliogabalus, M. Valerius Flavianus, was a resident of Cirta (Numidia)<sup>33</sup>. Another centurion, Aemilius Pudens, who exercised his command both in *legio III Augusta* and in *legio XI Claudia*, was born at Thenae (Africa proconsularis)<sup>34</sup>. I will not detail any further the examples of other military commanders of equestrian ranks, such as C. Vettius Sabinianus Iulius Hospes, born at Thurburbo Maius (Africa proconsularis)<sup>35</sup>, or L. Marius Perpetuus Aurelianus, born at

<sup>5</sup> See MIHAILESCU-BÎRLIBA 2011, 83-143.

<sup>6</sup> CIL III 11820.

<sup>7</sup> CIL III 14392.

<sup>8</sup> ILJug 1834.

<sup>9</sup> IRT 647.

<sup>10</sup> IRT 725.

<sup>11</sup> CIL VIII 24030.

<sup>12</sup> CIL VIII 26281.

<sup>13</sup> CIL VIII 26605.

<sup>14</sup> IRT 705.

<sup>15</sup> KHANOUSSI/MAURIN 2002, 751.

<sup>16</sup> ILAfr38,50

<sup>17</sup> CIL VIII 1227.

<sup>18</sup> CIL VIII 14555.

<sup>19</sup> CIL VIII 1471.

<sup>20</sup> CIL VIII 2606-2607, 26645.

<sup>21</sup> CIL VII 26604.

<sup>22</sup> AE 1982, 975.

<sup>23</sup> IRT 600.

<sup>24</sup> ILAfr 457.

<sup>25</sup> CIL VIII 9502, 21047.

<sup>26</sup> ILAlg II-2, 5608, 6692, 6695, 6698, 7102; CIL VIII 5813, 5816, 6521.

<sup>27</sup> CIL XI 92, 115.

<sup>28</sup> CIL VI 3134.

<sup>29</sup> ISM V, 176.

<sup>30</sup> IGLNovae 80.

<sup>31</sup> CIL VIII 11780.

<sup>32</sup> CIL VIII 11301.

<sup>33</sup> IGLNovae 33.

<sup>34</sup> AE 1049, 38.

<sup>35</sup> See especially ILAfr 281.

Lepcis Magna<sup>36</sup>, governors or representatives of the imperial administration. The aforementioned cases represent enough evidence concerning the mobility of soldiers from Africa to Lower Moesia.

Therefore, Marcius Quadratus may have been a veteran or a relative of a veteran from Africa. His very old age at death makes me believe that the first version is the accurate one. This would not be the first veteran settled in the area; the first such mentions date to the year 99<sup>37</sup>. In the region of Ibida and in the vicinity (Topolog, Mihai Bravu) other veterans are mentioned in inscriptions, too<sup>38</sup>. Buildings of the *villa* type are yet another argument in favour of the retreat of former soldiers to such rural settlements<sup>39</sup>. Quadratus came from a numerous branch of the *gens* Marcia; he must have come from Africa on a military mission, most likely in a legion stationed in Lower Moesia, taking into account that he was, by all appearances, a citizen from his birth. I should also remind, however, that the *auxilia* comprised initially populations from northern Africa stationed in Lower Moesia from late first century and early second century. Thus, the *ala I Flavia Gaetulorum* was attested for the first time in this province as early as the year 92<sup>40</sup>; in 97, *cohors I Flavia Numidarum*<sup>41</sup> was mentioned, as well as *cohors II Flavia Numidarum* in 113<sup>42</sup>.

Consequently, I believe that the version *natione Libycus* in the inscription of Ibida is the most plausible. It represents one more proof of population mobility across the Roman Empire, especially among soldiers. Q. Marcius Quadratus chose to remain in the province where he had completed his military service: the long distance entailed by a possible way home and the relative prosperity and stability of the province may have been additional reasons for his decision.

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<sup>36</sup> See especially CIL VI 1450; THOMASSON 1996, 84 sqq.

<sup>37</sup> MIHAILESCU-BÎRLIBA 2008, 199-210.

<sup>38</sup> See MIHAILESCU-BÎRLIBA 2011, 87-143; 2021 258-266, with bibliography. See also NUȚU/MIHAILESCU-BÎRLIBA 2017, 171-176; MIHAILESCU-BÎRLIBA/IBBA 2021, 15-38, with bibliography.

<sup>39</sup> NUȚU/MIHAILESCU-BÎRLIBA 2017, 171-176.

<sup>40</sup> PETOLESCU/POPESCU 2004, 269-276.

<sup>41</sup> ECK/PANGERL 2009, 510-512.

<sup>42</sup> AE 2009, 1803-1804. See also DANA 2019, 227-232; ECK 2020, 279.

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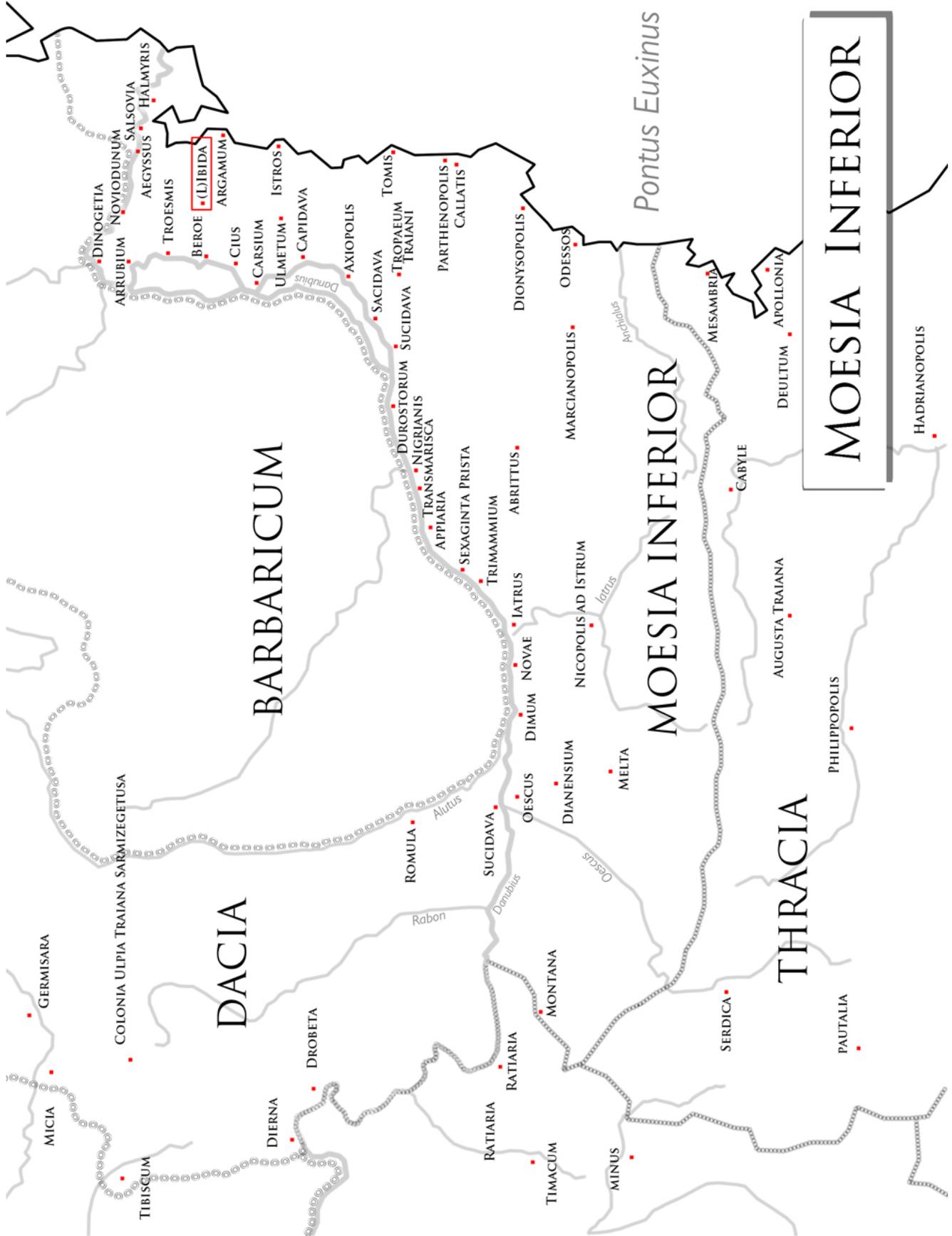


Fig. 1. Localisation of Iibida in Moesia inferior (map of Ștefan Caliniuc).



Fig. 2. Funerary stone of Q. Marcius Quadratus ([https://db.edcs.eu/epigr/bilder.php?s\\_language=de&bild=\\$Conrad\\_00233.jpg;pp](https://db.edcs.eu/epigr/bilder.php?s_language=de&bild=$Conrad_00233.jpg;pp)).