

MILITARY TRIBUNATE IN THE CAREERS OF ROMAN
SENATORS OF THE SEVERAN PERIOD.
PART I: INTRODUCTORY ISSUES*

by

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ABSTRACT: During the 42 years of the rule of the Severan dynasty (193–235), several thousand people with the title of military tribune probably served in troops of the Roman Empire. Some of them then entered the Roman Senate, starting a public career (often a long-term career) and forming the core of the State government. The aim of this paper is to answer the following questions: What were the terms used in the inscriptions for military tribunate? How were tribunes appointed and how long did they hold their offices? How many military tribunes were there in the Severan Period? How many of them are currently known and what territorial and social circles did they come from?

I. PRELIMINARY REMARKS

What we find in the *cursus honorum* of Roman senators are offices of a religious, civil and military nature. Much as the religious offices were important and prestigious, they remained outside the basic course of promotions, regardless of whether they were of local or higher rank. Other offices (civil and military) often intertwined with each other, creating different individual structures (relevant to a specific person), which lays the foundation for contemporary researchers to generalise and construct various typologies of senatorial careers¹. In my latest publication, *Album senatorum*, I suggested a typology based on the criteria of social origin and the course of subsequent stages of a given career, with a particular focus on the praetorian stage (terminated with a consulship, because it is only then that

* This article opens a series of publications dedicated to military offices in the *cursus honorum* of Roman senators. Papers about the influence of military tribunate on subsequent senatorial career are being prepared. I would like to extend my gratitude to Anthony R. BIRLEY for email correspondence and sending me one of his papers (BIRLEY 2003) as well as to Leszek MROZEWICZ for consultations regarding the present study.

¹ See, for instance, ALFÖLDY 1977; BARBIERI 1952; A.R. BIRLEY 1981: 4 f.; ECK 2015; LEUNISEN 1989; OKOŃ 2016 and 2018.