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XXXIII.—Official Policy towards Oriental Cults in the Roman Army

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The widespread worship of Oriental gods in the Roman army rested on an official policy of toleration. But the conditions of worship imposed show that these gods were always excluded from the official pantheon. Their shrines and votive offerings are found only outside the camps, civilians mixed with soldiers as worshippers, the priests were not normally attached to the troops. Although excluded from the army's official religion, these cults nevertheless received official support and encouragement. The sole exception to this policy of exclusion was the cult of Sol Invictus. Probably from Aurelian's reign, certainly under Constantine, this cult was officially accepted and prescribed for the army.

In contrast to the preoccupation with Oriental religious influences on the later principate, it is time to give proper importance to the continuity of Augustan tradition and the strength of the official effort to maintain it. In the case of the official religion of the army this change of emphasis is much overdue. The army has been rightly recognized as one of the great centers for the worship of the Oriental cults so popular in the Roman Empire from the middle of the second century A.D. onwards.¹ But the assumption has been too readily made that these cults were accepted into its official religion and prescribed for celebration by the troops. To the reign of Severus Alexander, to take one example, has been ascribed a policy of officially fostering these cults in the army.²

¹ F. Cumont, *Textes et monuments figurés relatifs aux mystères de Mithra* (Bruxelles, H. Lamertin, 1899), 1.246-62; H. Graillot, "Le culte de Cybèle, mère des dieux, à Rome et dans l'empire romain," in *Bibl. Éc. fr. d'Athènes et de Rome*, no. 107 (Paris, Fontemoing, 1912), chap. XII, *passim*, esp. 415-19; A. H. Kan, *De Iovis Dolicheni Cultu* (Groningen, J. B. Wolters, 1901), 11, 13-16.

² A. von Domaszewski, "Die Religion des römischen Heeres," *Westdeutsche Zeitschrift* xiv (1895), 61-3; cf. 95f. Domaszewski considered that the Oriental cults, already fostered by Commodus, became a part of official military religion under Septimius Severus (*ibid.*, 59).

Yet a papyrus copy of the list of festivals officially prescribed for the troops during this reign, which was found several years ago at Dura,³ contains among its forty-three entries, covering more than nine months of the year, not a single mention of any of these cults. But this new evidence has also a wider bearing. The contents of the list conform in all important respects to the Augustan canons for official religion, and it is a fair inference that in this exclusion of Oriental cults the document likewise embodies a traditional policy. The aim of this paper is to examine the rest of the evidence relating to military worship of Oriental gods and to determine whether it shows reflections of such an established policy, and when, if ever, that policy was modified.

Reflections of official policy are all that may be found. For, as a direct source embodying the official prescriptions themselves, the *Feriale Duranum* is unique. The problem accordingly is to distinguish in the large body of epigraphical and archaeological evidence those items in which official religion finds expression from those which testify simply to the personal preferences of individual officers or soldiers.⁴ The distinction is in all cases a difficult one to make, but the use of certain criteria results in a fair amount of success for the purposes of this study.

At the outset, however, one thing is clear. This large mass of perplexing evidence simply would not exist unless the official attitude towards worship of Oriental cults by the soldiers had been characterized by the widest tolerance. A host of dedications from all over the empire bear witness to freedom of worship. Oriental legions and auxiliaries might carry the cults of their *di patrii* with them wherever they went in the

³ This document, the *Feriale Duranum*, will be published in full in *Yale Classical Studies* VII, which is now in press.

⁴ The difficulty of this problem has not always been recognized (cf., however, K. Stade, *Der Politiker Diokletian und die letzte grosse Christenverfolgung* [Wiesbaden, Stadt, 1927], 94). Arbitrary statements as to what was official and what was not have too often taken the place of an unprejudiced attempt to face it.

West. No attempt was made to prevent the troops of the Western provinces from adopting these cults and practising them. The army indeed became one of the chief agents in their dissemination⁵—and there was no official interference.

This aspect of official policy it needs no long exposition to establish. What must be determined is whether the Oriental cults ever attained any higher standing in the military sphere than that of tolerated cults. Official tolerance of these cults was one thing—it was not always mere indifference, it was sometimes even official encouragement as cults to be practised privately by the troops. But acceptance into the official religion of the army, implying reception of the cult images of their gods into the shrine of the camp itself (or at least of votive offerings to them into the courtyards of the *praetorium*) and the prescription of their observances as part of the officially conducted ceremonial life of the army—this was something quite different. It must be asked whether the gulf between these two was ever crossed by the Oriental cults.

The extant evidence is adequate to establish reasonably well the conditions under which these cults were practised in the Roman army. The new light which the *Feriale Duranum* has thrown on the care and thoroughness with which military religion was organized and controlled makes it clear that these conditions would be subject to centralized official regulation. The entrance of the Oriental cults into the official religion of the army could only be effected by an express official enactment which would apply to the whole army throughout the empire. If, on the other hand, these cults did not become a part of official religion, this exclusion was likewise the manifestation of a deliberate policy. In the conditions of worship dictated we should find official policy recognizably reflected.

The first subject of investigation is the places where these cults were practised. The focal point of the official religious life of the camp was the shrine in the *praetorium*, mentioned in literary authorities and identified in numerous camps and

⁵ Cf. the references given above, note 1.

forts excavated along the various sections of the *limes*.⁶ Perhaps originally a *domus signorum* only, the shrine where the semi-divine military standards were kept, it later, together with the courtyards of the *praetorium* in front of it, served as the place of dedication of statues and votive offerings of the various official gods of the army.⁷ On the extant evidence it is often difficult, sometimes impossible, to say with certainty whether any given monument was originally set up within the *praetorium*. A categorical denial that this was ever the case with the monuments of the Oriental cults would but add another to the arbitrary pronouncements based on the absence of evidence, in which the discussion of this question has been so rich. But, so far as my knowledge goes, there is not a single certain instance in our evidence of a statue, a votive relief, or a dedication connected with these cults finding a place there. It will be illuminating to examine several examples which have been put forward as such instances. They have incidentally served as the basis for far-reaching deductions about official military policy towards the cults in question.

(1) Great significance has been attached to scenes on the lowest register of some of the conical bronze tablets common as votive offerings to Iuppiter Dolichenus.⁸ In this register two standards are frequently represented, one on each side of a central scene—an *aedicula* containing a statue of Dolichenus (Kömlöd),⁹ a priest performing a cult act (Jassen),¹⁰ a statue of Victoria on a globe placed on top of an altar (Mauer a. d. Url).¹¹

⁶ Domaszewski, *loc. cit.* (see note 2), 9–19; Fr. Koepp, "Die Bauten des röm. Heeres," in *Germania Romana*,² ein Bilderatlas herausgegeben von der röm.-germ. Kommission d. deutsch. arch. Inst. (Bamberg, C. C. Buchner, 1925), 21f.

⁷ It was doubtless here too that all official religious ceremonies were carried out.

⁸ For these tablets cf. G. Loeschke, "Bemerkungen zu den Weihgeschenken an Iuppiter Dolichenus," *Bonner Jhbb.* cvii (1901), 66–72; G. I. Kazarow, "Denkmäler des Dolichenuskultes," *Öst. Jhft.* xxvii (1931–32), 168–73; R. Noll, *Der grosse Dolichenusfund von Mauer a. d. Url* (Wien, Kunsthistorisches Museum, 1938), 9–11.

⁹ Domaszewski, *loc. cit.* (see note 2), Taf. III, 1b.

¹⁰ Kazarow, *loc. cit.* (see note 8), 168, Abb. 105.

¹¹ Noll, *op. cit.* (see note 8), 10, no. 5. On another relief (*ibid.*, Abb. 4) the Dioscuri with their horses flank a similar standard.

These standards have invariably been interpreted as the *signa militaria*. The *aedicula* was consequently their shrine in the camp chapel, and the ceremony the official offering of a cult act to Iuppiter Dolichenus together with the standards of the legions.¹² Dolichenus had possession of the *sacellum* and had supplanted Iuppiter Optimus Maximus as the supreme god of the camps.¹³ The truth is, as a more careful examination of standards similar to these has revealed,¹⁴ that these standards are almost certainly not the military *signa* at all, but the religious standards common in temples of Oriental gods, in which cults the *aedicula* also has a parallel.¹⁵ The cult images and the scenes of sacrifice represented are doubtless to be connected solely with the temples of Dolichenus outside the camps concerned and have no relation to the official religion of the army.

(2) It has been claimed that two important groups of inscriptions, one found at Moguntiacum,¹⁶ the other at Aquincum,¹⁷ came from the *praetoria* of the legionary camps in those two centers.

The Mainz group includes dedications to I. O. M. Sabazius, Deus invictus Sol (though the restoration is by no means certain), and Caelestis Dea.¹⁸ But the case for connecting

¹² Domaszewski, *loc. cit.* (see note 2), 12, 60; A. H. Kan, *op. cit.* (see note 1), 23, 76; Kazarow, *loc. cit.* (see note 8), 170f. (but see *Nachtrag, ibid.*, p. 173); Noll, *op. cit.* (see note 8), 9–11.

¹³ Domaszewski, *loc. cit.* (see note 2), 60.

¹⁴ P. V. C. Baur, "Report on Finds, Sculptures," in *Excavations at Dura-Europos. Preliminary Report, Third Season, 1929–30*, ed. M. I. Rostovtzeff and others (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1932), 115f., 120–3.

¹⁵ Cf. a dipinto from the temple of Aphlad at Dura (*Excavations at Dura-Europos. Preliminary Report, Fifth Season, 1931–32*, ed. M. I. Rostovtzeff [New Haven, Yale University Press, 1934], 104f. [Plate xxxvii, 2]); M. Rostovtzeff, "Dura and the Problem of Parthian Art," *Yale Class. St.* v (1935), 248f. (figs. 54, 55). Note that a *thymiaterion* is represented within this *aedicula*, just as on the Kömlöd relief (see note 9).

¹⁶ Domaszewski, *loc. cit.* (see note 2), 62f.

¹⁷ V. Kuzsinszky, *Aquincum, Ausgrabungen und Funde* (hrsg. v. d. Hauptstadt Budapest, 1934), 195f. (with refs. to earlier publications); Domaszewski, *loc. cit.* (see note 2), 73f.

¹⁸ *C.I.L.* XIII.6708, 6754, 6671.

these sixteen inscriptions as a group with the *praetorium* at Mainz is far from being a strong one. They were not found in their original places of dedication, but built into a mediaeval wall,¹⁹ for which there is no reason to suppose that only stones from the *praetorium* were used. Moreover, from the point of view of official importance—the *Feriale Duranum* has given us a very good idea of what gods stood high on the official list—the deities honored in this group have, with the exception of Minerva,²⁰ little or no significance.

Not so with the Aquincum group. The gods of these eleven altars include some of the most important official gods of the army—Iuppiter Optimus Maximus, Mars and Victoria, Urbs Roma, Minerva Victrix.²¹ Moreover, in contrast to the inscriptions from Mainz, all these altars without exception are dedicated by *legati Aug. pr. pr.* Finally, they were found near the location assigned to the *praetorium* on the basis of calculation.²² In its courtyard it is quite probable that they were all set up as members of a series. It is noteworthy that in only one case can there be question as to the Roman character of the deity honored. Q. Caecilius Rufinus Crepereianus, a legate probably of Severan times, dedicates an altar to Iuno Caelestis,²³ which is one of the commonest Roman names for the city goddess of Carthage.²⁴ In all cases, however, where the epithet *caelestis* is given to a goddess, there must remain a considerable degree of uncertainty as to whether the African goddess is intended.²⁵ In this instance it is worthwhile emphasizing that the other dedication of this group set up by

¹⁹ Domaszewski, *loc. cit.* (see note 2), 62.

²⁰ *C.I.L.* XIII.6747 (cf. *C.I.L.* XIII.6746, *deae Palladi*).

²¹ *C.I.L.* III.10415 and 10424 (I.O.M.), 10436 (Mars and Victoria), 10470 (Urbs Roma), 10438 (Minerva Victrix).

²² Kuzsinszky, *op. cit.* (see note 17), 9.

²³ *C.I.L.* III.10407.

²⁴ G. Wissowa, *Religion und Kultus der Römer*² (München, Beck, 1912), 374, note 7.

²⁵ *Idem*, "Interpretatio Romana," *Arch. f. Religionswiss.* XIX (1916–19), 37, note 4.

the same legate has for its recipient Iuppiter Optimus Maximus.²⁶

(3) In the inner courtyard of the *praetorium* at Carnuntum there were found in 1884 two life size statues which have given rise to some controversy. Interpreted at first as Elagabal, in the first case in military, in the second in priestly garb,²⁷ they were pronounced by Domaszewski to be Azizus and Monimus, *σβνναοι* of the sun god at Edessa.²⁸ They need not detain us long. Later research has revealed that it is with statues of a third century emperor and empress that we have to deal.²⁹

These are the main instances of assignment of Oriental cult monuments to the camp *sacellum*.³⁰ In view of the results of our examination of them it is clear that certain other such

²⁶ *C.I.L.* III.10415.

²⁷ F. Studniczka, "Ausgrabungen in Carnuntum, II. Bildwerke," *Arch.-epig. Mitt.* VIII (1884), 59ff. He later withdrew this interpretation, "Ein Pfeiler-capitell auf dem Forum," *Röm. Mitt.* XVI (1901), 273, note 4.

²⁸ *Loc. cit.* (see note 2), 65f.

²⁹ A. Alföldi, "Die weibliche Prachtgewandstatue von Carnuntum," *Jahrb. d. ungar. arch. Ges.* I (1923), 217f., Plate III, 1-5 (Hungarian art. with notes, *ibid.*, 39-41); *idem*, "Insignien und Tracht der römischen Kaiser," *Röm. Mitt.* L (1935), 27, note 3; W. Kubitschek-S. Frankfurter, *Führer durch Carnuntum*⁶ (Wien, Hölzel, 1923), 59-61, Abb. 26, 27. It must be pointed out, however, that the cuirass of the emperor bears a representation of Iuppiter Heliopolitanus (cf. H. Seyrig, "La Triade héliopolitaine et les temples de Baalbek," *Syria* X [1929], Pl. 83, 1). (I have not been able to see the article by A. Schober in *Carnuntum, Zur 50jährigen Bestehung des Vereins Carnuntum* [Wien, Rohrer, 1935]).

³⁰ The votive tablet to Iuppiter Dolichenus found in the treasure vault below the *sacellum* of the *limes* fort at Aalen (J. Jacobs, "Das Kastell Aalen," in *Der obergerm.-raetische Limes des Römerreiches*, no. 66 [Heidelberg, Petters, 1904], 15f.) may well have been placed there for protection before an invasion (cf. L. Jacoby, *Das Limescastell Saalburg bei Homburg vor der Höhe nach den Ergebnissen der Ausgrabungen* [Homburg, E. Fraunholz, 1897], 404f.). The fragments of an inscription, one of which bears the letters DO (*Do[licheno?]*), found in the second courtyard of the *praetorium* of the *limes* fort at Alteburg-Heftrich (H. Hofmann, "Das Kastell Alteburg-Heftrich," in *Der obergerm.-raetische Limes*, no. 9 [Heidelberg, Petters, 1904], 11, no. 1; Abb. 12, 1) are not material on which to base any conclusion.

assignments, which rested mainly on the untrustworthy general deductions from the above cases, must be reconsidered.³¹

Thus the absence of everything at all connected with the Oriental cults from the *sacellum* and the *praetorium* seems to be our first illustration of a strict and uncompromising policy of exclusion of these cults from official military religion. For it can hardly be fortuitous that worships so popular with all the camps and garrisons of the empire are not attested among the numerous monuments of a variety of gods, which have been found within the *praetorium*. If it is true that they were never represented among these gods, the *θεοὶ τοῦ ἡγεμονικοῦ πραιτωρίου*,³² they assuredly had no place in the official religion of the army.

Exclusion from the *praetorium* would have meant that the Oriental cults were relegated to the region outside the camp walls. It is in fact outside both the legionary camps³³ and

³¹ E.g., (i) a statuette of Iuppiter Heliopolitanus found at Soukhné, N. E. of Palmyra (H. Winnefeld, "Die antiken Kulte von Baalbek," in *Baalbek, Ergebnisse d. Ausgrabungen u. Untersuchungen in den Jahren 1898 bis 1905* [Berlin u. Leipzig, de Gruyter and Co., 1923], II, 111, Abb. 172), dedicated by the prefect of a cohort, was assigned to the *sacellum* of the garrison there (*ibid.*, 112). (ii) Two portions of a relief of Iuppiter Dolichenus found outside the N.E. corner of the fort of Croy Hill (Sir George Macdonald, *The Roman Wall in Scotland*² [Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1934], 269) were said in all probability to have been "accorded the place of honor in the shrine of the standards" (*ibid.*, 416).

³² *I.G.R.R. 1.1* (Eboracum).

³³ E.g., (i) Lambaesis, temple of Dolichenus, R. Cagnat, *L'armée romaine d'Afrique*² (Paris, Leroux, 1913), 351, note 2; temple of Isis and Serapis, *C.I.L.* VIII.2630; temple of Magna Mater, *ibid.*, 2633. (ii) Carnuntum, Mithraea, Kubitschek-Frankfurter, *op. cit.* (see note 29), 52; temples of Dolichenus, *ibid.*, 167. (iii) Poetovio, third Mithraeum, E. Reisch, "Die Grabungen des öst. arch. Inst. während d. Jahre 1912 u. 1913," *Öst. Jhft.* XVI (1913), 100-05. (iv) Aquincum, Mithraea, Kuzsinszky, *op. cit.* (see note 17), 14, 53-8. (v) Sarmizegetusa. The suggestion that a shrine of Dolichenus was situated within the camp in the S.W. corner has little to support it (C. Daicovicu, "Fouilles et recherches à Sarmisegetusa," *Dacia* I [1924], 230). (vi) Alexandria, Iseum, C. B. Welles, "The *Immunitas* of the Roman legionaries in Egypt," *J.R.S.* XXVIII (1938), 42, line 2f.; 44f.

the auxiliary forts of the *limes*³⁴ that the remains of their temples have been found.³⁵ Taken by itself, this location would not have sufficed to prove a policy of exclusion of Oriental cults from official military religion. For the temples of Roman gods also, some of them official gods,³⁶ are sometimes found outside the camp walls. In the case of the official gods, however, these temples were simply centers of their cults supplementary to the *sacellum*, though this time in all probability not set up on official initiative.³⁷ But this is clearly not the case with the Oriental cults, or their monuments would sometimes be found in the *sacellum*. Even the unofficial gods worshipped outside the camp³⁸ might on occasion

³⁴ E.g., (i) Mithraea: Housesteads, J. Collingwood Bruce, *The Handbook to the Roman Wall*, 9th edition revised by R. G. Collingwood (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, A. Reid, 1933), 125f.; Rudchester, *ibid.*, 57f.; Stockstadt, F. Drexel, "Das Kastell Stockstadt," in *Der obergerm.-raetische Limes*, no. 33 (Heidelberg, Petters, 1910), 25f.; Ober-Florstadt, F. Hettner-J. Jacobs, "Das Kastell Ober-Florstadt," *ibid.*, no. 19 (Heidelberg, Petters, 1903), 7f. (Taf. 1); Gross-Krotzenburg, E. Fabricius-J. Jacobs, "Das Kastell Gross-Krotzenburg," *ibid.*, no. 23 (Heidelberg, Petters, 1903), 13f. (Taf. 1); Saalburg, Flügge, *Das Römerkastell Saalburg mit Umgebung* (map) (Kartogr. Abt. d. königl. preuss. Landesaufnahme, 1906); Campona, St. Paulovics, "Il limes romano in Ungheria," in *Quaderni dell'Impero, Il limes romano* IV (Roma, Istituto di studi romani, 1938), 12f. (ii) Temples of Dolichenus: Stockstadt, F. Drexel, *loc. cit.* (see above [i]), 26f.; Pfünz, F. Hettner-J. Jacobs, "Das Kastell Pfünz," in *Der obergerm.-raetische Limes*, no. 73 (Heidelberg, Petters, 1901), 9; Zugmantel, *Saalburg Jhb., Bericht d. Saalburg Museums* VI (1914-24), 168ff. (iii) Temple of Magna Mater: Saalburg, Flügge, *loc. cit.* (see above [i]).

³⁵ Only excavated temples which have been certainly identified are treated as evidence in this section. The mention of a temple in an inscription, which was found outside a camp, is not taken to prove that the temple was outside the camp.

³⁶ E.g., at Lambaesis, temples of Iuppiter Optimus Maximus (*C.I.L.* VIII.2614, 2615), Neptune (2652-4), and Minerva (2611).

³⁷ Failure to recognize that the gods worshipped outside the camp might also be represented in the *sacellum* led Cagnat to exclude the Capitoline Triad, Neptune, and Minerva from official military religion (*Annales du musée de Guimet, Bibl. de vulgarisation* XVIII [1906], 80f.; *idem, op. cit.* [see note 33], 348-50).

³⁸ Cf. e.g., at Lambaesis, Iuppiter Valens (*C.I.L.* VIII.2579, b, d), Iuppiter Depulsor (2621), Silvanus Pegasianus (2579, c, e), Diana (2580), *di patrii* of legates (2581-5, 2642), Mercurius (2643).

establish themselves within it. This is well illustrated by the auxiliary forts of the *limes*, where the reduced number of dedicants meant less variety in the cults practised. There the *praetorium*³⁹ was the center for *all* the Roman cults.⁴⁰ The only temples found outside, with the exception of shrines of native cults of the West, are those of the Oriental cults. Their location is thus positive evidence of that exclusion from official religion which appeared to be indicated by the absence of their monuments from the *praetorium*.⁴¹

The case of Dura, an apparent exception, is accounted for by the peculiar circumstances. There several Oriental cult temples were within the camp itself—the Mithraeum, the joint temple of Mithras and Dolichenus, the temples of Artemis Azzanathcona and Zeus-Bel.⁴² But at Dura the camp was built into a preëxisting city. Castrametation could not be carried out as thoroughly as usual, and the normal canons for Roman camps were not felt to apply.⁴³ This is illustrated by the fact that the amphitheatre also, which is regularly situated outside the camp, is within it at Dura. The truth is that the quartering of troops within cities, which was customary in Syria, led of necessity to more than one relaxation

³⁹ Possibly other parts of the camp also, e.g., the *scholae* and the *via principalis* (Jacoby, *op. cit.* [see note 30], 405).

⁴⁰ A few dedications to Roman gods are found outside these *castella* (cf. e.g., Domaszewski, *loc. cit.* [see note 2], 27f.), but no temples.

⁴¹ It can hardly be contended that temples of Oriental gods were always outside the camps and their monuments excluded from the *praetorium* simply because their ritual was peculiar, or because Mithraism, for example, was a secret cult, the ceremonies of which were carried out for the initiated only. For votive offerings at least could have been made to them within the *praetorium*, they could have become the tutelary gods of *scholae*, and room could have been found for their temples within the camps, as it was in special circumstances at Dura (see p. 465f.).

⁴² M. Rostovtzeff, *Dura-Europos and its Art* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1938), 51f. (for detailed bibl. see *ibid.*, 140, note 14).

⁴³ Cf. perhaps the case of Corstopitum, which was "neither an ordinary fortress nor an ordinary town" (F. Haverfield, "Corstopitum," in *A History of Northumberland* x [1914], 479). Here what seems to have been a temple stood quite near to the *praetorium* (*ibid.*, 490; R. G. Collingwood, *The Archaeology of Roman Britain* [London, Methuen, 1930], 139f.).

of Roman military standards.⁴⁴ Moreover, it must be pointed out that the Mithraeum at Dura,⁴⁵ as well as the temples of Artemis Azzanathcona and Zeus-Bel,⁴⁶ were standing before the camp was built, the two latter being spared when the northern portion of the city was razed to provide room for the camp, the Mithraeum being rebuilt by legionary soldiers. The Dura instances could not in any case signify a general breakdown of the rule, since Oriental temples built later than this in the Western provinces are without exception still outside the camp.⁴⁷

Once exclusion from the camp itself was ensured, however, the treatment of the Oriental cults was a liberal one. Many of their temples were in the *territorium legionis*,⁴⁸ over which area the commander of the camp or fort naturally had control. Some of these temples, as will appear later,⁴⁹ were even founded by him. It seems clear, however, that others were not so near the camp as this, but were in the larger civil settlements in the neighborhood.⁵⁰ This, taken with the fact that their worshippers included at least as many civilians as soldiers—and among these civilians were many women⁵¹—would be enough to demonstrate the unofficial character of these shrines. Such an admixture is inconceivable in the temples of official

⁴⁴ Th. Mommsen, *Röm. Ges.* v (Berlin, Weidmann, 1886), 449.

⁴⁵ Rostovtzeff, *op. cit.* (see note 42), 52.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁴⁷ E.g., the third Mithraeum at Poetovio (temp. Gallieni), E. Reisch, *loc. cit.* (see note 33), 100–05.

⁴⁸ On this cf. A. Schulten, "Das *territorium legionis*," *Hermes* xxix (1894), 481–516. In civil life, it is worth noticing, the temples of Mithras were almost always built *in solo privato* (F. Cumont, *op. cit.* [see note 1], i.280f.). Mithras was, however, allowed to cross the *pomoerium* at Rome (before A.D. 181, *ibid.*, 275), as also was Dolichenus, whose temple on the Aventine would be inside it.

⁴⁹ See below, note 70.

⁵⁰ On these as distinct from the *canabae* cf. O. Bohn, "Rheinische 'Lagerstädte,'" *Germania* x (1926), 25ff.

⁵¹ Cf., e.g., as devotees of Iuppiter Dolichenus at Mauer a.d. Url, Noll, *op. cit.* (see note 8), 12f. There were, of course, no women among the worshippers of Mithras.

gods of the Roman army.⁵² If it is remembered that during and after the reign of Septimius Severus soldiers lived with their wives and children outside the camp,⁵³ it will be realized that these Oriental cults can in reality be said to be cults of the *canabae* with their characteristic mixed population of soldiers and civilians rather than cults of the camp itself.⁵⁴

The mixed character of these cults is further illustrated by the fact that, whereas all other temples in or near the camps were founded by members of the army, many of the Oriental cult temples were instituted by priests not attached to the troops, or by other civilians.⁵⁵ Such temples, originally without any connection with the soldiers, in many instances doubtless passed under their control and were used as their centers of the cult, just as the Mithraeum of the Palmyrene *τοξόται* at Dura, after being rebuilt, was taken over by legionary vexillations about A.D. 210.⁵⁶ At Poetovio the soldiers adopted Mithraism from civilians, certain petty customs officials, and established their own temple.⁵⁷

For long the devotees of Oriental cults were humble folk, drawn from the lower classes of society.⁵⁸ In the army these

⁵² At Dura also there is this mixture of soldiers and civilians (Rostovtzeff, *op. cit.* [see note 42], 51f.)—another indication that even the inclusion of the Oriental cult temples within the camp there made no difference to the unofficial status of the cults.

⁵³ Herodian III.8, 5.

⁵⁴ Contrast with this sharing of temples the situation as regards amphitheatres. At Carnuntum there were separate amphitheatres for soldiers and for civilians (cf. A. Graf, "Übersicht der antiken Geographie von Pannonien," in *Dissertationes Pannonicae* 1.5 [Budapest, Inst. f. Münzkunde u. Archäologie d. Pázmány Universität, 1936], 80 [with refs.]).

⁵⁵ Cf. one of the Mithraea near the praetorian camp (M. Durry, *Les cohortes prétorienne*s [Paris, Bocard, 1938], *Bibl. Éc. fr. d'Athènes et de Rome*, no. 146, 340f.) or the shrine of Dolichenus at Virunum (R. Egger, "Ausgrabungen in Norikum 1912-13," *Öst. Jhft.* xvii [1914], *Beibl.*, 45-8).

⁵⁶ *Excavations at Dura-Europos. Preliminary Report of the 7th and 8th seasons of work 1933-34 and 1934-35*, ed. M. I. Rostovtzeff and others (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1939), 63, 83-8.

⁵⁷ E. Reisch, *loc. cit.* (see note 33), 103.

⁵⁸ Cumont, *op. cit.* (see note 1), 1.65, note 4; 244f.; 327f.; Kan, *op. cit.* (see note 1), 12f., 31.

are represented by numerous worshippers in the centurionate and lower ranks. Private soldiers are not seldom attested,⁵⁹ in spite of the fact that they often had not the means to make dedications. But the cults spread to the upper classes,⁶⁰ and in the military world there is no lack of eminent names among their followers. Indeed, were the lists of these names considered in isolation from the rest of the evidence, there would be ample excuse for believing that these cults had nothing more in the way of official support and acceptance to gain.⁶¹

As a result of a study of dedications to native gods in the Western provinces Wissowa was able to point out that no responsible Roman in a high official post, administrative or military, made such a dedication as an official before the time of Marcus Aurelius.⁶² The same generalization would apply to the Oriental cults, except for the case of Africa⁶³ and for one or two odd instances. But of course by the time of the Antonines the Oriental cults were only just on the upsurge, and after the Severan period at least there was no comparable restraint.

Just what degree of official favor these dedications indicate is questionable. At the least, they prove active participation of officers, often prefects of cohorts, legionary legates, or even governors of provinces, with the non-commissioned officers and the rank and file of the army. This participation is well illustrated by the Tribune Fresco at Dura.⁶⁴ In the ceremony depicted, a sacrifice to the Palmyrene Triad, the tribune, Iulius Terentius, sacrifices in the name of the *cohors XX*

⁵⁹ Cf., e.g., Cumont, *op. cit.* (see note 1), II.537; Kan, *op. cit.* (see note 1), 12f.

⁶⁰ Cumont, *op. cit.* (see note 1), I.275f. This spread was of course fostered by the change in the composition of the upper classes (A. D. Nock, *Conversion* [Oxford University Press, 1933], 125ff.).

⁶¹ For Mithras cf. Cumont, *op. cit.* (see note 1), II, Index, 537; for Dolichenus, Kan, *op. cit.* (see note 1), 31.

⁶² *Loc. cit.* (see note 25), 21-3.

⁶³ Cumont, *op. cit.* (see note 1), I.259f.; Kan, *op. cit.* (see note 1), 14f.

⁶⁴ F. Cumont, *Fouilles de Doura-Europos (1922-23)* (Paris, Geuthner, 1926), 89-114 (*Atlas*, Plate L).

Palmyrenorum,⁶⁵ whose *vexillifer* stands by the altar holding the *vexillum* of the cohort.⁶⁶ Yet it can hardly be supposed that this ceremony was one of the officially prescribed observances of the Dura garrison. It does not take place in the *praetorium*, and there is no trace of the rest of the garrison besides this auxiliary cohort. Moreover, the extant official list for Dura, the *Feriale Duranum*, has no mention of this or any similar Oriental cult ceremony.

Whatever the exact truth may be, it is certain enough that the significance of dedications by high authorities has been overrated. Domaszewski, for example, declared that mere mention of the governor of a province in the dedication of an altar proved that the altar was of the *sacellum*.⁶⁷ On the contrary, when it is not simply a method of dating, all that it proves is that the permission of the governor has been obtained to set it up—doubtless outside the camp.

Furthermore—an important point that has been overlooked—many of these dedications by high military officials bear in their very wording the evidence of their private character. (i) They are often offered *pro sua salute, pro se suisque*, that is, for the dedicant's health or personal welfare or for those of his family.⁶⁸ (ii) They are often dedicated *cum uxore, cum uxore et filia*, etc.⁶⁹ These forms occur even in combina-

⁶⁵ Or perhaps merely in the name of the twenty men represented on the fresco (on this interpretation cf. M. Rostovtzeff, *loc. cit.* [see note 15], 247, note 123).

⁶⁶ Cf. the scene on the Palestrina mosaic (M. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire* [Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1926], Pl. xli, 1). The commander of nine soldiers carries out a sacrifice before the temple of a native Egyptian god (W. Weber, "Ein Hermes-Tempel des Kaisers Marcus," *Sitz.-ber. Heidelb. Ak., Phil.-hist. Kl.* [1910], Abh. 7, 14, no. 6). Cf. the way in which the prefects of cohorts along Hadrian's Wall seem to have given the lead to their men in the worship of Mithras (Cumont, *op. cit.* [see note 1], 258).

⁶⁷ *Loc. cit.* (see note 2), 52.

⁶⁸ In this connection it is worth while to mention the standing of Iuppiter Dolichenus as a god of healing (Kan, *op. cit.* [see note 1], 25f.; G. Loeschke, *loc. cit.* [see note 8], 68).

⁶⁹ Not to Mithras, of course, since no women were allowed in the cult. For Dolichenus cf. *C.I.L.* viii.2623, 2624; for Isis and Serapis, viii.2630. This was recognized as a criterion of the unofficial by Wissowa (*loc. cit.* [see note 25], 22).

tion with the full official titles of the illustrious dedicants, which of themselves might have suggested official character for the inscriptions. The forms mentioned are, however, sufficient indication that on these occasions at least the dedicants were not acting in their official capacity.

In any case, dedications set up by important officials, even when they institute an Oriental cult,⁷⁰ would not suffice to prove that the cult had been accepted into the *sacra* officially prescribed for worship by the Roman army. In one sense only do they betoken official acceptance—official cognizance has been taken of these cults, they have official permission, they even have official support and encouragement—but it is only on the understanding that they keep their distance and confine themselves within the limits officially prescribed for their activities. The setting up of these dedications by high ranking officers may perhaps be compared with the appearance of Oriental gods on the imperial coinage. The type of *Sol Invictus*, for example, is frequently used from Septimius Severus on—long before it became a state cult (under Aurelian).⁷¹

Similarly, dedications of whole military units to these gods do not prove official status for their cults. They are only another illustration of the lengths to which official tolerance of these cults went. There was no objection felt even to corporate worship of them by the troops.

The unofficial character of the cults under discussion is further brought out by a study of their professed leaders, the priests. The Oriental cults were peculiar among the religious cults of the army in demanding priests for their service.⁷² For Roman cults priests were not necessary, since

⁷⁰ *C.I.L.* VIII, Suppl. II.18221 (Lambaesis). At Colonia Agrippinensis a temple of Dolichenus is restored by the *legatus Aug. pr. pr.* of Lower Germany (*L'Année épig.* 1895, no. 86).

⁷¹ See below, p. 479f. Cf. A. D. Nock, "The Development of Paganism in the Roman Empire," in *Cambridge Ancient History* XII (Cambridge University Press, 1939), 415–17.

⁷² Cumont, *op. cit.* (see note 64), 113; Fr. Drexel, "Die Götterverehrung im röm. Germanien," XIV. *Bericht Röm.-Germ. Kommission*, 11.

the right of maintaining relations with the gods was vested in the commander himself,⁷³ assisted only by *haruspices* and *victimarii*, and a few temple attendants.⁷⁴ In the Oriental religions, on the contrary, it was the priest alone who was entitled to carry out sacrifices and to conduct ceremonies.⁷⁵

Our knowledge of the composition and recruitment of this priestly body is slight indeed.⁷⁶ The preponderance of Oriental and Greek names, however, indicates that its members, except for the Mithraic priests, were mostly of Eastern origin.⁷⁷ The *tria nomina* are not very common, and among those with Roman citizenship there are many *Aurelii*. It is even doubtful in many cults whether the priesthood was professional in character,⁷⁸ but this is immaterial for our purpose. For that it is enough to emphasize that the priests were civilians. In none of the shrines near the camp is the priest a soldier, and only occasionally is a veteran found holding the office.⁷⁹

These priests set up their temples or came to serve existing

⁷³ Domaszewski, *loc. cit.* (see note 2), 110; Cumont, *op. cit.* (see note 64), 113.

⁷⁴ *Haruspices*: Domaszewski, "Die Rangordnung des röm. Heeres," *Bonner Jhbb.* cxvii (1908), 14, 37, 197; Cumont, *op. cit.* (see note 64), 113, note 1. *Victimarii*: Domaszewski, *ibid.*, 14, 24, 52. Temple attendants: *C.I.L.* III. 1158 (*aedis custos c(ivium) R(omanorum) leg. XIII*), 5822 (*aedituus singularium*). The *antistes sacerdos temp(li) Martis castror(um) praetorianorum* (*C.I.L.* VI.2256, IIIrd century) is quite exceptional, and it may be questioned whether he was much more than a temple attendant. Domaszewski is possibly right in holding that the *primus pilus* was entrusted with the care of the *sacellum* (*loc. cit.* [see note 2], 28, note 122; 35, note 150; 111), though the evidence is hardly satisfactory.

⁷⁵ Cumont, *op. cit.* (see note 64), 113.

⁷⁶ For Mithraic priests cf. Cumont, *op. cit.* (see note 1), 1.323f., and A. D. Nock, "The Genius of Mithraism," *J.R.S.* xxvii (1937), 109f.; for priests of Dolichenus, F. Hettner, *De Iove Dolicheno* (Bonnae, Univ. Typog., 1877), 8-10; for priests of Egyptian cults, G. Lafaye, "Histoire du culte des divinités d'Alexandrie hors de l'Égypte," in *Bibl. des écoles fr. d'Athènes et de Rome*, no. 33 (Paris, E. Thorin, 1884), 150-52.

⁷⁷ The list of priests of Dolichenus in Hettner (*op. cit.* [see note 76], 8, note 2) now calls for many additions, but the new evidence has only strengthened his conclusions.

⁷⁸ It clearly was not in Mithraism (A. D. Nock, *loc. cit.* [see note 76], 109f.).

⁷⁹ *C.I.L.* III, Suppl. II.7760 (Dolichenus).

temples near the camps apparently of their own accord.⁸⁰ They do not seem to have been interfered with by the military authorities, but were left free to try out their propaganda on the soldiers. On its success depended the closeness of their connection with the camp concerned, the degree to which they were encouraged by the commandant himself being also a factor.⁸¹ In exceptional cases, where Oriental troops were concerned, the priests might perhaps be appointed by the troops themselves.⁸²

Interesting glimpses of the ways in which these priests established connection with neighboring camps are afforded by our evidence. Q. Pompeius Primigenius, a *pater et sacerdos* of one of the Mithraea near the praetorian camp, makes a dedication on behalf of the safety of the imperial house, *item cohortium pr[ae]torianarum*.⁸³ One priest of Dolichenus, M. Ulpius Chresimus, *natione Parthus*,⁸⁴ includes in his dedication to Sol Invictus at Rome the *genius* of the *equites singulares*,⁸⁵ the altar set up by another, Arcias Marinus, at Remagen in Lower Germany, bears the information that it was his gift to the *equites* of the *cohors I Flavia*.⁸⁶ It is of interest to find the same methods being used by a priest of Moorish gods, in whose dedication at Lambaesis are included the legate Fuscinus

⁸⁰ Whether they acted independently or as units in an organization is not of course known. There is no agreement as to whether the *totius provinciae sacerdotes* of Pannonia Inferior who set up a dedication to Dolichenus (C.I.L. III.3343) were priests of that god (Kan, *op. cit.* [see note 1], 32; J. Toutain, *Les cultes païens dans l'empire romain* [Paris, Leroux, 1911], II.54, note 5) or provincial or municipal priests of the imperial cult (Mommsen, C.I.L. III, p. 432; Graf, *loc. cit.* [see note 54], 72).

⁸¹ Where a cult was instituted by a high military officer (see note 70), they probably came at his invitation.

⁸² The *sacerdos creatus a Pal(myrenis)* mentioned in the Mithraic inscription of Dorstadt (C.I.L. III.7728) may have been appointed by the *numerus Palmyrenorum* in the province (Cumont, *op. cit.* [see note 1], I.250, note 3).

⁸³ C.I.L. VI.738.

⁸⁴ I.L.S. 2193.

⁸⁵ Bull. Com. XIV (1886), 137.

⁸⁶ C.I.L. XIII.7786.

and *legio III Augusta* with its auxiliaries as well as Antoninus Pius and the Roman Senate.⁸⁷

To enhance the appeal to the soldiers, the priests were ready even to carry out modifications of the cults themselves. Both Mithraism and the cult of Dolichenus were everywhere liberal in their acceptance of other gods as *σύνναοι*,⁸⁸—doubtless with a view to attracting a wider circle of converts. But it has been observed in the case of the latter cult at least that the incorporation of Roman gods was closer in military than in civil centers.⁸⁹ This suggests a more thoroughgoing effort on the part of the priests to adapt the cults to their environment. Certainly this motive accounts for the emphasis on Victoria in the Dolichenus temples near the *limes*,⁹⁰ an emphasis which has no parallel in civil centers.⁹¹

There is nothing whatever in the evidence so far discussed to suggest that the priests of these Oriental cults were attached to the units of the Roman army in the various frontier stations⁹²—except indeed in the sense that the *canabenses* were attached to them. The question whether this absence of attachment was an invariable rule has, however, been raised by new evidence from Dura.⁹³ A papyrus containing parts

⁸⁷ *C.I.L.* VIII.2637; G. Wilmanns, "Die Lagerstadt Afrikas," in *Commentationes in honorem Th. Mommseni* (Berolini, apud Weidmannos, 1877), 197, note 55.

⁸⁸ For Mithraism cf. esp. F. Drexel, *loc. cit.* (see note 34), 81.

⁸⁹ A. M. Colini, "La scoperta del santuario delle divinità Dolichene sull'Aventino," *Bull. Com.* LXIII (1935), 155, note 7. His explanation of the phenomenon is not acceptable.

⁹⁰ E.g., in the recent find at Mauer a.d. Url, Noll, *op. cit.* (see note 8), 8f., no. 3; 9, no. 4; 10, no. 5.

⁹¹ There is, e.g., no trace of Victoria among the extensive finds from the recently excavated shrine of Dolichenus on the Aventine (Colini, *loc. cit.* [see note 89], 155, note 7).

⁹² Domaszewski's assumption that this was the case (*loc. cit.* [see note 2], 64) is quite arbitrary.—Arnuphis, the Egyptian priest, to whom Dio attributes the miracle of the Marcomannian campaign, was simply in personal attendance on the emperor (*συνόντα τῷ Μάρκῳ*, Cassius Dio LXXI.8, 4; cf. W. Weber, *loc. cit.* [see note 66], 4f.).

⁹³ Professor Rostovtzeff has kindly permitted me to refer to this unpublished evidence.

of the *acta diurna* of *cohors XX Palmyrenorum*, which can probably be dated A.D. 239, includes in a group of subordinate officers of the cohort Themes, the son of Mocimus, doubtless the same man whose name appears beside his portrait on the Tribune Fresco.⁹⁴ Described as *ιερεὺς* on the fresco, he is given the title *sacerdos* in the papyrus list, in which each man's name is followed by his rank, e.g. *signifer, bucinator*.⁹⁵ The natural conclusion that Themes was in virtue of his office as *sacerdos* one of these subordinate officers of the cohort seems strengthened by the fact that on the Tribune Fresco he appears in military costume.⁹⁶ It is possible that he was a native professional priest, brought in from outside, and given an official status within the cohort and a uniform, in order better to carry out his priestly functions for the benefit of the cohort. On the other hand, it seems more likely that he was a soldier before he was a priest, that he was in fact rather like the *sacerdotes* of native cults in the army of the West, namely, ordinary professional soldiers elected by their fellow-countrymen to serve as priests of a *collegium* instituted by the group in order to continue the worship of the gods of their native region.⁹⁷ If the cohort itself appointed Themes in some such way, we have perhaps a parallel for this in the *sacerdos creatus a Palmyrenis* of the Dorstadt inscription.⁹⁸

⁹⁴ See note 64.

⁹⁵ *Dura Pap.* 9. The whole word *sacerdos* is not extant anywhere in the papyrus, but parts of it can be read in three different places and preclude all doubt as to the restoration. I have to thank Dr. J. F. Gilliam, of Yale University, to whose acuteness the readings and identification are due, for his generosity in allowing me to make use of them here.

⁹⁶ Cumont, *op. cit.* (see note 64), 113; *Atlas*, Pl. L.—This deduction is not certain so long as the reason for inclusion of this group in the list remains unknown. They may simply be officiants of one kind and another required for a ceremony connected with a festival on the day in question, such a ceremony as is depicted on the Tribune Fresco.

⁹⁷ Cf. Aur. Mucianus (*I.L.S.* 2095, probably the same man who is mentioned in *I.L.S.* 2094) and Aur. Bitus (*I.L.S.* 2055, 2094; *C.I.L.* vi.2819), priests of local Thracian gods, who serve in the praetorian cohorts.

⁹⁸ See note 82. Cumont suggests that the cults this priest served were the national cults of Palmyra (*Les religions orientales dans le paganisme romain*⁴ [Paris, Geuthner, 1929], 276, note 39), but cf. A. D. Nock, *loc. cit.* (see note 76), 110.

In either case, he is obviously treated in our evidence as a member of the cohort. Now the *acta diurna* clearly belong to the class of official documents. It would seem to follow that the office of *sacerdos*, in this case signifying without doubt priest of one or more Oriental cults, was in some sense an officially recognized one.

Even if this is so, however, it conveys no implication that the cults Themes served had become part of official, prescribed religion for the XXth Palmyrene cohort, much less for the army as a whole. Indeed, the character of the *Feriale Duranum*, which was itself the festival list of this very cohort, is quite irreconcilable with the prescription of any such cults. It dates from only the preceding reign, and there is nothing in the history of the few intervening years to make such a drastic change seem at all plausible. Themes may perhaps be compared with Lucius Septimius, *pater et sacerdos invicti Mithrae domus Augustanae*.⁹⁹ No pressure was applied to prevent Lucius Septimius from accepting the office of priest and from serving, even within the imperial palace, a cult which was popular with the *familia*, but this is very far from implying official acceptance of it by the imperial house.

Whatever the exact status of Themes, generalization from this instance would clearly be unjustified. It cannot be taken to indicate a general breakdown of traditional policy and the inauguration of a system of incorporating priests of Oriental cults in various units of the army throughout the Empire. Priests of Oriental cults in the West at a later date than this are still without any comparable connection with the detachments in nearby camps.¹⁰⁰ Nor does the case of Themes even betoken a special concession for the benefit of Oriental troops quartered in the Eastern provinces. For the same principle of tolerance is applied in the West, where, as we saw above,

⁹⁹ *C.I.L.* vi.2271 = *I.L.S.* 4270 (Septimius Severus, Caracalla, and Geta); F. Cumont, *Les mystères de Mithra*³ (Bruxelles, H. Lamertin, 1913), 88, note 1.

¹⁰⁰ Arcias Marinus, A.D. 250 (*C.I.L.* xiii.7786); M. Ulpius Chresimus, "saeculi III exeuntis" (Kan, *op. cit.* [see note 1], 75; above, p. 472). On their lack of connection with military units see above, p. 473.

the troops were allowed to appoint priests of their own native cults among themselves. Such attached priests of Oriental cults, however, as is not surprising, are attested for the Eastern provinces only.¹⁰¹ The sole direct analogy for the case of Themes comes from Egypt, where the fourth century *ιερείς λεγεῶνος* of Oriental cults¹⁰² perhaps show a later development of this policy of concession which began with the auxiliaries.¹⁰³

The status in the military sphere of those Oriental cults so far discussed may now be briefly indicated, as it has been established by the different investigations. Unrepresented in the *praetorium*, with their centers of worship outside the camps only, numbering among their worshippers civilians as well as soldiers, and having for their priests as a general rule Orientals acting on their own initiative, these cults were obviously no part of official, prescribed religion.¹⁰⁴ Their sphere of activity lay altogether outside that assigned to official religion, but so long as they confined themselves to that sphere, they were not only officially recognized, but even to some extent officially encouraged.

¹⁰¹ There would, however, be no objection in principle to the appointment of such priests by Oriental groups in the army of the Western provinces. Cf. perhaps the instance cited above, note 82.

¹⁰² Seymour de Ricci, "Bulletin épigraphique de l'Égypte romaine," *Arch. f. Papyrusforschung* II (1903), 445, no. 67. Μεγάλη τύχη τοῦ [θε]ο[ῦ]? . . . καὶ τῶν ἀνγέλων τῆς . . . ερει? . . . [ἀνε]νέωθη καὶ ἐκοσμήθη [τὸ ἱερὸν ? ἐ]πὶ Οὐικτωρίνου π(ραι)π(ωσίτου) λεγ[εῶνων γ'] Γαλλικῆς καὶ α' Ἰλλυρικ[ῆς καὶ Ἐμμεσηνῶ]ν σαγιτταρίων τῇ προ[νοί]α . . .] Βωσᾶτος ἀρχιερέως καὶ Χα[. . .] ἱερέως λεγ(εῶνος) γ' Γαλλ(ικῆς) καὶ Γατανοῦ ἱερέως λεγ(εῶνος) α' Ἰλλυρικῆς καὶ Ἀζίζου ἱερέως ἐν ὑπατίῳ Δικιννίου σεβαστοῦ τὸ Σ', κτλ. (A.D. 323). Cf. *ibid.*, 451, no. 94. That these are priests of Oriental cults is clear from the fact that they dedicate to the ἄγγελοι (for the connection of the ἄγγελοι with Syrian solar cults see F. Cumont, "Les anges du paganisme," *Rev. de l'hist. des rel.* LXII [1915], 159-82) and from the Semitic name of one of them, Azizus (W. Otto, *Priester und Tempel im hellenist. Ägypten* [Leipzig u. Berlin, Teubner, 1905], I.170).

¹⁰³ It must be noted, however, that a *ιερεὺς λεγιωνάριος* is attested at Dura in the early third century (Cumont, *op. cit.* [see note 64], 357f., no. 14). As Mr. C. Bradford Welles points out to me, it is very doubtful whether Cumont is right in taking this to refer to Themes (*ibid.*, 113), rather than to some priest attached to a legionary vexillation at Dura.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. for Mithraism the estimates of Cumont, *op. cit.* (see note 1), I.280, note 2; and M. Durry, *loc. cit.* (see note 55), 347.

It may, incidentally, be emphasized that what we have tried to reconstruct is the main lines of traditional official policy towards the Oriental cults. That that policy was so faithfully and uncompromisingly carried out by all those who had to apply it throughout the empire as to preclude all exceptions to it passes belief. It may even be that under some of the more extravagant and "un-Roman" emperors, such as Commodus or Elagabal, it was deliberately violated from above.¹⁰⁵ But these in any case would only be deviations from an established policy, which would be enforced again after these emperors had passed on to their *damnatio memoriae*. Again, in a crisis the rule might be temporarily infringed, as during the Marcomannian War,¹⁰⁶ but this too was nothing more than an exceptional case.

This strict policy of exclusion becomes readily understandable if we consider the motives behind it. Barbarization and decentralization were the twin processes which, if unarrested, could make of the army a standing menace to the security of the state. Both could be at least to some extent counteracted by Romanization, and the official campaign to further Romanization was only intensified as changes in the composition and conditions of life of the army made that process more necessary.¹⁰⁷ That religion was one of the instruments in this campaign has been strikingly illustrated by the *Feriale Duranum* with its essentially Roman character. The exclusion of the Oriental cults from this prescribed religion of the army at a time when some of these cults were already accepted into the state religion is but the negative aspect of the policy of Romanization in the religious sphere.

It was this policy which likewise dictated the exclusion of

¹⁰⁵ The support given by various emperors to the Oriental cults has, it seems to me, been overrated (Cumont, *op. cit.* [see note 1], I.281ff.; Kan, *op. cit.* [see note 1], 17f.).

¹⁰⁶ *S.H.A., vit. M. Ant. Phil.* 13, 1. For precedents in Roman history cf. J. Marquardt, *Röm. Staatsverw.* III (Leipzig, S. Hirzel, 1885), 51, note 2.

¹⁰⁷ For details cf. the forthcoming discussion in *Yale Classical Studies* VII, 'General Remarks on Official Military Religion.'

the native cults of the West from official military religion. A similar general attitude of tolerance was observed towards them,¹⁰⁸ but the same bounds seem to have been set for their activity. They were forbidden the *praetorium*,¹⁰⁹ and their temples are found only outside the camps and forts.¹¹⁰ Their priests had no official standing.¹¹¹ Dedications by prominent officials—though rarely before the third century—testify to official support,¹¹² but of more than this there is no trace.¹¹³

The later history of the Oriental cults discussed shows no sign of a change in their status in military religion. The cult of Dolichenus reached its climax in Severan times,¹¹⁴ and in the second half of the third century it began to decline in importance and did not outlast the century.¹¹⁵ On the other hand, the appeal of Mithraism, though possibly not outside Rome, only increased in the fourth century.¹¹⁶ Diocletian, Maximian, Galerius and Licinius, on the occasion of their meeting in Carnuntum, probably in A.D. 307, restored a shrine

¹⁰⁸ Cf., e.g., Durry, *loc. cit.* (see note 55), 333–39.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Fr. Koepf, "Die Weihedenkmäler," in *Germania Romana*² (see note 6), 24f., on statuettes from Xanten. Domaszewski's attribution of various gods of the Western provinces to the *sacellum* (*loc. cit.* [see note 2], 54–7) is not based on convincing evidence. H. Lehner claims to recognize in an altar with the fragmentary inscription . . . *ribus* (*Mat?*)*ribus* found in the *sacellum* at Novaesium one of the small altars to the *Matronae* ("Die Einzelfunde von Novaesium," *Bonner Jhbb.* CXI–CXII [1904], 322, no. 9).

¹¹⁰ Cf. the shrines erected, next to the temple of Aesculapius at Lambaesis by legates, to their *di patrii* (Wilmanns, *loc. cit.* [see note 87], 194). For such shrines outside *limes* forts cf., e.g., J. Collingwood Bruce, *op. cit.* (see note 34), 47 (*deus Antenociticus*); 105 (*dea Coventina*). Domaszewski places a temple of the *Matres Campestres* inside the camp at Condercum on insufficient grounds (*loc. cit.* [see note 2], 50–2).

¹¹¹ See note 97.

¹¹² Wissowa, *loc. cit.* (see note 25), 21–3.

¹¹³ Cf. the opinion of Fr. Koepf, *loc. cit.* (see note 109), 25.

¹¹⁴ Besides the evidence discussed above, it is worth mentioning that in an unpublished papyrus from Dura (*Dura Pap.* 9) the *signum* or password for one day is *Iuppiter Dolichenus s(anctus)*; (M. Rostovtzeff, "Das Militäarchiv von Dura," *Münch. Beitr. z. Papyrusforsch.* XIX [1934], 370).

¹¹⁵ F. Cumont, Pauly-Wissowa-Kroll, *R.E.*, s.v. "Dolichenus," IX.1276–78; R. Noll, "Eine neue Votivhand," *Öst. Jhft.* XXXI (1939), 75.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Cumont, *op. cit.* (see note 1), II, Index, 540.

of Mithras, and in the commemorative inscription referred to him as *fautor imperii sui*.¹¹⁷ To take this, however, as signifying the conferring of any kind of official status on Mithras would be quite unjustifiable.¹¹⁸ A festival of Magna Mater was observed by Julian while with his troops in the East, but it seems clear that this was a personal celebration of the emperor himself, in which the army did not participate.¹¹⁹

The fact is that the Oriental cults under discussion were, during the latter part of the third and throughout the fourth century, overshadowed in importance by the leading cult of the period, that of Sol Invictus. This cult was destined to succeed where they had failed, and in the end to dominate the official religion of the army, as it did that of the state.

The type of Sol Invictus—the epithet does not come till later—has an established place in the imperial coinage from the time of Septimius Severus.¹²⁰ The abortive attempt of Elagabal to give the supreme place in the official pantheon to his local aniconic cult of Invictus Sol Elagabal¹²¹ did not dispossess this other Sol Invictus. In the syncretistic solar

¹¹⁷ *C.I.L.* III.4413 = *I.L.S.* 659; Kubitschek-Frankfurter, *op. cit.* (see note 29), 24f., Abb. 11. It is significant that no names are mentioned. They refer to themselves simply as *Iovii et Herculii religiosissimi Augusti et Caesares* (E. Schwartz, "Constantin," in *Meister der Politik*, ed. E. Marcks and K. A. von Müller, I [Stuttgart und Berlin, Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1922], 186).

¹¹⁸ Cf. the protest of K. Stade, *op. cit.* (see note 4), 106f. It has been suggested (by Domaszewski) that a god accepted into the Roman circle would have been called *conservator*, not *fautor*.

¹¹⁹ Ammianus Marcellinus xxiii.3, 7.

¹²⁰ H. Usener, "Sol Invictus," *Rh. Mus.* LX (1905), 470ff.; H. P. L'orange, "Sol invictus imperator," *Symb. Osloenses* XIV (1935), 86–114.

¹²¹ Elagabal in all probability prescribed his cult for the army, which must in any case have complied with the decree giving precedence to the god in all public sacrifices (Herodian v.5, 7). Such prescription is, however, not proved by *C.I.L.* III.4300 (so Domaszewski, *loc. cit.* [see note 2], 61), a dedication by an ordinary *miles*, in which the god is not even given his official title (for which cf. Wissowa, *op. cit.* [see note 24], 366, note 2). Military *diplomata* bear the official title (*C.I.L.* xvi.139–41). The reaction against Elagabal meant expulsion of the cult, which is not mentioned in the *Feriale Duranum*.

cult¹²² which Aurelian made part of the state religion,¹²³ it was undoubtedly one element. The combination of Aurelian's god with military types on coins¹²⁴ makes it reasonable to suppose that the cult was prescribed for the army.¹²⁵ Sol Invictus in all probability remained an official military god from this time on until supplanted with the rest of the pagan pantheon by Christianity. There was some official support for him under Diocletian,¹²⁶ though the predominant emphasis of this period in official military religion as in the state cult was on Iuppiter Optimus Maximus and Hercules, the tutelary gods of the dynasty.¹²⁷ An inscription of unique interest from the reign of Licinius embodies the official prescription for the annual celebration by his army of a festival of Sol Invictus on December 19.¹²⁸ In the early years of Constantine's reign the sun cult flourished.¹²⁹ The Arch of Constantine in Rome furnishes the clearest possible indication of the reception of Sol Invictus into official military religion. Three times the golden statuettes of the god, borne by the army's standard bearers, are represented.¹³⁰ The old gods of the army no

¹²² L. Homo, "Essai sur le règne de l'empereur Aurélien," in *Bibl. Éc. fr. d'Athènes et de Rome*, no. 89 (Paris, A. Fontemoing, 1904), 189, 191; Wissowa, *op. cit.* (see note 24), 368. The distinction between this god and Mithras has been emphasized by Cumont, *op. cit.* (see note 1), I.337; II.72, and by Drexel, *loc. cit.* (see note 72), 62.

¹²³ Homo, *loc. cit.* (see note 122), 184-91.

¹²⁴ Usener, *loc. cit.* (see note 120), 474; H. Seyrig, *Antiquités syriennes* (Paris, Geuthner, 1934), I.21.

¹²⁵ Cf. perhaps the important inscription from Asturica (*C.I.L.* II.2634), which may well belong to this period. On it see Domaszewski, *loc. cit.* (see note 2), 101; Cumont, *op. cit.* (see note 1), I.260, note 5.

¹²⁶ K. Stade, *op. cit.* (see note 4), 105f.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 94-8, 104f. The newly built camp for an Egyptian cohort at Hieraconpolis is dedicated by Diocletian and Maximian to Iuppiter, Hercules, and Victoria (*C.I.L.* III.22 = *I.L.S.* 617). Cf. Iuppiter and Hercules in military scenes on the Arch of Salonika (K.-F. Kinch, *L'arc de triomphe de Salonique* [Paris, Nilsson, 1890], 32, 35f., Plates IV and V).

¹²⁸ *I.L.S.* 8940. Cf. Domaszewski, "Die politische Bedeutung der Religion von Emesa," *Arch. f. Religionswiss.* XI (1908), 232.

¹²⁹ L'orange, *loc. cit.* (see note 120), 106-12.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 106f., Abb. 9, 10, 11; *idem*, *Der spätantike Bildschmuck des Konstantinsbogens*, unter Mitarbeit von A. von Gerkan (Berlin, de Gruyter, 1939), 55, 57f. (Taf. 7b); 126-8 (Taff. 29c, 30a, 32b, c, d).

longer even challenge his supremacy. Besides Sol and Luna, the reliefs of the Arch of Constantine know only personifications, such as Victoria, Roma, river gods and seasons.¹³¹

The Augustan policy of exclusion of Oriental cults had at length broken down. A cult essentially Oriental—even though not without Roman elements and clothed in Roman forms—had been admitted into official military religion. The sun so long ago saluted by the soldiers of *legio III Gallica* before Cremona¹³² had taken its place as one of the official tutelary gods of the army. What is more worthy of note, however, is the long life of the policy of exclusion. In official military religion the Augustan norm had been applied with greater consistency and tenacity than in the state religion itself. If the East did finally achieve its triumph over the Roman gods of the army, that triumph was at least longer deferred, and when it came, was shared in by fewer cults than historians have allowed us to believe.

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¹³¹ H. P. L'orange, *loc. cit.* (see note 120), 107.

¹³² Tac. *Hist.* III.24.