

FORM AND PURPOSE OF THE SPEECHES

1. WORDING

Scholars have thought that Hadrian's speeches, meant for the ears of soldiers, were brief, forceful, and direct²⁹⁰. They are not. The long list of reasons for slack training (field 2), the rambling remarks on the value of training itself (field 3), and the lengthy description of stones in the wall (field 10) are neither brief, forceful, nor direct. They are wittingly long-winded to show the emperor's concern and understanding²⁹¹ – so much so that wherever the speeches are indeed short, they must have been ruthlessly cut to fit the available space on the stones.

The Augustan History notes that Hadrian's Latin was artful; and Fronto calls Hadrian's harangues to his soldiers ›well-spoken‹²⁹². The introduction (field 1) must be right when it says that the words of the inscription are Hadrian's own; and the emperor, who wrote poems for his horse guard²⁹³, clearly thought that soldiers liked rhetorical flourishes. The fragments newly joined and the revised readings bear this out with examples unknown heretofore.

Like his favorite poet Ennius, Hadrian indulged in alliteration, assonance, and anaphora²⁹⁴, to which one may now add the newly restored instances of *satis speciose splendetis* (field 3), *acriter alacriter* (field 25), and *umquam sunt ulla* (field 26).

Hadrian's heaping of adjectives leaps to the eye from his best-known poem, in which he calls his soul *animula vagula blandula*, echoing *loca pallidula, rigida, nubila*²⁹⁵. Removing an unwarranted *-que* in field 10, our text restores such a flourish of heaped, asyndetic adjectives in which *lapidibus grandibus, gravibus, inaequalibus* matches *fossam glaria duram, scabram*.

Bonding with the troops, Hadrian used *vos* more often than any other word in these speeches. The high command, on the other hand, was the emperor's own. Catullinus, therefore, is *legatus meus*, while a unit officer belongs to the troops and thus is *praefectus vester*²⁹⁶.

The word *veh[ementius]* in field 22,6 is a new reading. Together with *acriter, alacriter, strenue, non languide*, and *fortiter*, it shows the wealth of Hadrian's vocabulary for the unflinching exertion he expected of soldiers.

At the end of a Roman speech, purple prose is in order. A full measure of this comes in field 26 where the newly restored *facienda umquam sunt ulla quam caute*, while ending in a common Hadrianic clausula of creticus and trachee²⁹⁷, nevertheless follows the forceful double negation *non potest quin* and sounds off in the alliterating double negation of *umquam* and *ulla*²⁹⁸. No less powerful is the end of the speech in field 30, with the restored reading *sub illo viro viri estis*. Coming from a Spanish-born emperor, these are perhaps not coincidentally mannerisms characteristic of Spanish literature in its Golden Age²⁹⁹.

²⁹⁰ Campbell 1984, 77 f. – with a list of words; Voisin 2003, 35.

²⁹¹ Hadrian's attention to minute detail was to broadcast his image as an expert in everything: *Historia Augusta*, ›Hadrian‹ 14,10; 15,10–13; 20,7.

²⁹² *Historia Augusta*, ›Hadrian‹ 3,1: ›Usque ad summam peritiam et facundiam Latinis operam dedit‹. Fronto, *Principia Historiae* 11, quoted above p. 3, note 3. Eutropius 8,7,2: ›Facundissimus Latino sermone‹.

²⁹³ Speidel 2005.

²⁹⁴ Such as *videt qua vadat* (field 26), *egistis --- complestis --- estis --- bastis --- saluistis* (field 29); *aut --- aut --- aut ---*

--- autem (field 6, lines 6–7) and (ibid) *difficilior --- difficultatis --- difficilibus difficillimum*. Also *exstrucxistis --- exstruitur --- struitur* (field 10), and *lapidibus grandibus, gravibus, inaequalibus* lines 6–7 (ibid, lines 4–6), or in field 29 *et hic agiliter et heri velociter*. Anaphora: the six *quod* in field 2. For alliteration, assonance, and anaphora see Wilkinson 1966, 25–31.

²⁹⁵ HA Hadrian 25, 9, see Birley 1997, 301.

²⁹⁶ Fields 26 and 29. Cf. Voisin 2003, 28.

²⁹⁷ Berthet 2003, 156.

²⁹⁸ Compare Ennius, *Annals* 5, 170: *umquam lex ulla iuberet*.

²⁹⁹ Curtius 1961, 272–305; cf. Wilkinson 1966, 31.

2. STRUCTURE

As recorded in the inscription, none of the speeches, whether to an ala, a cohort, or a legionary battle-line, takes more than a minute to read aloud. The troops will hardly have mustered on parade and the emperor will hardly have stood ceremoniously before them for a speech lasting a mere minute. If the abovementioned length of some passages, set against the brevity of others, is not proof enough that extensive cuts were made in the speeches, the overall shortness of the inscription surely is. The speeches written on the monument thus are certainly not, as has been suggested, a stenographic recording of what Hadrian said³⁰⁰. Yet their structure nevertheless reflects that of the spoken speeches, for, as we will see, they follow the order of cavalry maneuvers set forth in Arrian's *Tactica*.

The skill and courage of their men was the officers' responsibility and pride³⁰¹. Hence at the end of most speeches, Hadrian praises the officers: first Catullinus the commander-in-chief, then the unit's commander, whether a leading centurion (field 16), or a prefect of an auxiliary unit (fields 22, 26, and 30). In field 26, however, he inserts a lengthy criticism after the praise. In this way his praise was not marred by criticism, and the effect of the ensuing critique lasted longer.

The pluperfect subjunctives denoting a condition contrary to fact such as *excusatos vos haberem si quid in exercitatione cessasset* (field 2) and *si quit defuisset desiderarem, si quit eminuisset designarem* (field 29) reflect not only a form of speech but a structure of thought. Hadrian looks at the overall picture, finds everything as it ought to be, and says so in a way that shows he has weighed the alternatives.

In criticisms he includes lengthy explanations, removing thereby some of the sting while making the point more telling (fields 6, 21, and 26).

So shortened are the speeches that we often lack the context of Hadrian's remarks. For cavalry maneuvers, however, much of the context can be found in the *Tactica* which Hadrian's governor of Cappadocia, Arrian, wrote in AD 136, eight years after the emperor's visit to Lambaesis. According to Arrian, Roman cavalry maneuvers unfold in five phases after the riding-in (*decursiones*):

1. Games of skill (*dextratio*; *Cantabricus*), performed in piebald dress using light spears (ἄκόντια; *hastae*) (34–40).
2. Shooting exercises by individuals wearing cuirasses, using heavy spears (λόγγα; *lanceae*) (41–42).
3. Maneuvers with special weapons such as cross-bows, javelins, rocks, slings, *contus*-lances, and swords (43).
4. Exercises of jumping onto horses (43).
5. Maneuvers newly learned from foreigners like Persians, Sarmatians, and Germani (45)³⁰².

Some of Hadrian's puzzling remarks become understandable in the context of Arrian's phases. Thus in field 6, Hadrian says legionary horsemen should not have thrown spears while wearing cuirasses. This critique would be nonsense for phase 2 maneuvers, for all Roman horsemen fought in cuirasses. In the context of phase 1 maneuvers, however, it makes sense, for the games were performed in colorful light dress with the objective of achieving elegance. Another example is found in field 26 where Hadrian scorns counterwheelings that do not allow one to see where he goes. This would seem to contradict

³⁰⁰ Thus Gag  1952.

³⁰¹ Vegetius 2,9,7: *Ad praefecti laudem subiectorum redundare virtutem*. Speidel 1994, 109–116.

³⁰² Kiechle 1964 overlooks that by Κελτοί, Arrian means Germani; see Cheesman 1914; Speidel 1994, 113. *Dextratio*: Th. LL, s.v. Speidel 1996, 60.

Arrian's emphasis on the many figures the horsemen are to ride blindly following the leader's standard. But Arrian speaks of phase 1 maneuvers, while Hadrian is reviewing those in phase 3, for which his criticism is sound. Seen thus, Hadrian's rules for cavalry maneuvers are the same as Arrian's³⁰³.

In speeches on fields 25, 26, 29 and 30, Hadrian takes up Arrian's phase 3, training with special weapons such as lances, *missilia*-javelins, and stones hurled with slings. In doing so, his remarks follow the same sequence as Arrian's.

Phase 4, jumping onto the horses is for Arrian the last part of traditional maneuvers³⁰⁴. Hadrian too mentions it after the other phases of a maneuver (fields 29 and 30). More than any other piece of evidence, this proves that the African army followed the maneuver sequence set forth in Arrian's treatise³⁰⁵.

Phases 3 and 4 consist of traditional maneuvers, rightly so called by Arrian³⁰⁶. They are not, as some have said, a recent addition by Hadrian to make maneuvers more warlike³⁰⁷. Indeed the whole sequence of maneuvers –riding in with speed or artful wheeling, circling right and left for spear throwing, wielding heavy spears, hurling stones – was in place already in Augustus' time³⁰⁸. Emperors, however, prescribed only phases 1 and 2 for all units, leaving individual troops to choose the phase 3 and 4 skills in which they wanted to excel. This explains why Hadrian says in field 30 ›you added rock-slinging and dart-throwing‹. The Roman army clearly was not over-regulated in its fighting techniques: there was room for initiative and innovation, which seems to be one reason for its success.

Phase 4, charging with a very long thrusting *contus*-lance³⁰⁹, may have been more appropriate for troops on the northern and eastern frontiers, but the African army trained in such attacks as well: fragment 38 (field 25) mentions the weapon. It was very likely a charge with the *contus* that Hadrian wanted to see unmarred by counterwheelings (fields 25–26). The men he criticised there failed not at a prescribed standard maneuver –how could they! – but at an additional maneuver chosen by their commander.

Even though horse, like foot, also went on field maneuvers (field 10), both Arrian's *Tactica* and Hadrian's speeches describe only their formation and shooting skills on the training ground, not their field maneuvers³¹⁰. The reason for this may be that cavalry drill was best seen from the grandstand at the parade ground, while infantry field maneuvers were best watched from horseback in the field³¹¹. It may be for the same reason that we hear much of the infantry's dramatic field maneuvers but nothing of their formation or shooting drills on the parade ground.

³⁰³ Bosworth 1993, 259: ›Striking agreement in content, notably the concealed approach (*e tecto*) and the so-called ›Cantabrian attack‹. Contra: Kiechle 1964, 91 and 123 ff.; Perez-Castro 1982; Bishop 1990, note 47. Cf. Voisin 2003, 33 f.

³⁰⁴ Arrian, *Tactica* 43, 3 and 4.

³⁰⁵ Horsmann 1991, 159 f.

³⁰⁶ Arrian, *Tactica* 43,1; 44,1.

³⁰⁷ Contra Kiechle 1964, 103; 105.

³⁰⁸ Tibullus 3,8, 91–97.

³⁰⁹ Arrian, *Tactica* 43,2: ἐπελαύνουσιν.

³¹⁰ Even the attack maneuvers of field 26 were done on the parade ground.

³¹¹ Arrian's cavalry maneuvers are also watched from a grandstand (*Tactica* 34,1: βῆμα), while Hadrian's coin for the Mauretanian army shows him on horseback, speaking to troops on foot.

3. PURPOSE

The inscription shows Hadrian fulfilling a Roman commander's duties, which were, according to Pliny, to ›look after construction works, be present at maneuvers, and see that men, weapons, and walls work‹³¹². His speeches were to heighten the skill and morale of men and officers. Tireless training of body and mind was always the Roman army's main source of strength³¹³, but Hadrian, more than any other emperor, strove for all-round combat-readiness through *disciplina*, a broader concept than today's ›military discipline‹, for it stressed skill rather than behavior³¹⁴. It seems to have worked. Hadrian's cult of *Disciplina* kept his army focused on battle readiness, unlike parallel exercise games in Han China that became ritualized performances seeking sanction and help from the gods³¹⁵.

Having rewritten Augustus' empire-wide standards for maneuvers³¹⁶, Hadrian held the troops to these standards. Hence, when he came to inspect the African army, officers and men must have done their outmost to put the parade grounds in shape, to hone their skills, to outfit themselves, and to perform for the emperor at a very high level. Indeed, Hadrian found field maneuvers so crucial to battle readiness that he himself marched the prescribed twenty miles under arms as an example to his men³¹⁷. He looked upon maneuvers as training for what had to be done against the foe: *tamquam adversus hosti facienda* (field 26). And though the prescribed standard maneuvers (Arrian's phases 1 and 2), were not mock battles but games, Hadrian had them done with battle in mind. He praises a maneuver for being an image of battle (field 26), as does Arrian in his *Tactica*³¹⁸. While Hadrian would not beset a training field with pitfalls or hidden trenches to forestall counterwheelings, he nevertheless wanted officers to be aware of traps and trenches as they designed the maneuvers.

Even the elegance Hadrian sought (fields 9 and 29) is not so much the mark of hellenizing taste, as has been said, than a tool for efficiency – as it was in military exercises in the Republic, in Han China, and among ancient Germanic warriors³¹⁹. Everywhere training led to skill, and skill to grace³²⁰. Hence striving for grace heightened skill. The same goes for spit and polish of which Hadrian speaks as highly as he speaks of deft action (field 3): it too heightened fighting efficiency, Hadrian's main purpose, which he truly achieved.

³¹² Pliny, *Panegyric* 18,1: ›Instant operibus, adsunt exercitacionibus, arma, moenia, viros aptant‹. Fronto, *Principia Historiae* 8 (Van den Hout 19): ›Spectandis in campo militibus operam dare‹.

³¹³ Quintilian 3,14,55: ›Non enim nobis aut multitudo maior est quam ceteris gentibus aut vebementiora corpora quam vel his ecce Cimbris aut maiores opes quam locupletissimis regnis aut mortis contemptus facilius quam plerisque barbaris causam vitae non habentibus; principes nos facit severitas institutorum, ordo militiae, amor quidam laboris et cotidiana exercitatione assidua belli meditatio‹. Horsmann 1991. For the relation of *virtus* and *disciplina* in earlier times see Lendon 2005. Josephus, *Jewish War* 3,72–75 and many other sources refute Levi's 1994 opinion that Hadrian was the first to institute intensive peacetime training, cf. Speidel 1994, 109–116.

³¹⁴ Cassius Dio 69,9,3; 78,27,1–28,1; 80,4; *Historia Augusta*, *Hadrian* 10; Eutropius 8,7,2. Le Bohec 1989b, 120 ff. Horsmann 1991, 184; Ziolkowski 1992.

³¹⁵ ›Ritualized‹: Bishop 1990, 25. China: Lewis 1990, 137–163.

³¹⁶ Horsmann 1991, 103.

³¹⁷ *Historia Augusta*, ›Hadrian‹ 10: *Exemplo virtutis suae ceteros adhortatus cum etiam vicena milia pedibus armatus ambularet*. Twenty or 24 miles: Vegetius 1,9,3; 1,27,2.

³¹⁸ Arrian, *Tactica* 42,5; cf. Josephus, *Jewish War* 3,75; Vegetius 1,13,2. The relation between sports game and war maneuver is well described by Kiechle 1964, 127.

³¹⁹ Hellenizing: Le Glay 1977, 556. Efficiency: Valerius Maximus 2,3,2: ›Armorum tractandorum meditatio a P. Rutilio consule Cn. Malli collega militibus est tradita: is enim nullius ante se imperatoris exemplum secutus ex ludo C. Aureli Scauri doctoribus gladiatorum arcessitis uitandi atque inferendi ictus subtiliorem rationem legionibus ingeneravit uirtutemque arti et rursus artem uirtuti miscuit, ut illa impetu huius fortior, haec illius scientia cautior fieret‹. Kiechle 1964, 106. Republic: Livy 44,9,5: ›Simulacrum decurrentis exercitus erat, ex parte elegantioris quam militaris artis, propiorque gladiatorum armorum usus‹. China: Kolb 1991, 156 f. Germanic warriors: Speidel 2004, 117 and see next note.

³²⁰ Tacitus, *Germania* 24,1 ›exercitatio artem paravit, ars decorem‹. Cf. Quinilian 9,4,8.