

PRAETORIANS FROM PISAURUM AND FANUM FORTUNAE
IN NORTHERN UMBRIA*

By

IRENEUSZ ŁUĆ

Praetorians, as Tacitus wrote, were the sons of Italy, a truly Roman youth¹. This statement is unequivocally confirmed by the analysis of the epigraphic material concerning the soldiers of the praetorian cohorts. On this basis it was possible to establish that until the 190s AD the overwhelming number of praetorians came from the area of Italy. One of the regions which was the place of origin for many soldiers of this military formation was Umbria². This area has one of the most dense networks of towns which provided recruits for the praetorian cohorts. Many of these towns were located along the Roman road *via Flaminia*. On this road, in the area of Northern Umbria, along the Adriatic Sea, there are two towns in proximity: Pisaurum, now Pesaro, and Fanum Fortunae. The former was established at the mouth of the Foglia River (ancient Pisaurus). Pisaurum was a maritime colony (*colonia maritima*) which was established in 184 BC in the area of *aeger Gallicus*³. The task of its inhabitants was to protect the route running along the Adriatic Sea and connecting Cisalpine Gaul, Rome and the south of Italy⁴. The subsequent establishment of the colony in Pisaurum was carried out on the initiative of Mark Antony, whose officers directly supervised the whole

* I would like to express my gratitude for translating this paper to Dr Katarzyna Sokołowska. The article was prepared thanks to the grant of the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education (N 108 043 32/2002).

¹ Tac. *Hist.* I 84 (“Italiae alumni et Romana vere iuventus”); Chilver 1979: 152.

² Tac. *Ann.* IV 5 (“Etruria ferme Umbriaque delectae aut vetere Latio et coloniis antiquitus Romanis”); Bohn 1884: 251, 253, 256; Durry 1938: 239 f.; Passerini 1939: 151; Chilver 1979: 152; Łuć 2004: 24–26, 158–160.

³ Liv. XXXIX 44, 10 (“coloniae duae, Potentia in Picinum, Pisaurum in Gallicum agrum deductae sunt”); Vell. I 15, 2; Kubitschek 1889: 74.

⁴ Each of the “colonists” received six *iugera* of land. The second colony, which was established in 184 BC, was Potentia (presently S. Maria di Potenza) in Picinum: Liv. XXXIX 44, 10; Salmon 1969, pp. 104 f.; Brunt 1971: 281; Harris 1971: 152; Howarth 1999: 287 f.