

# THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE ROMAN WORLD

A SCIENTIFIC PROGRAMME OF THE EUROPEAN SCIENCE FOUNDATION

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VOLUME 2

STRATEGIES OF DISTINCTION



# M STRATEGIES OF DISTINCTION

*The Construction of Ethnic Communities, 300-800*

EDITED BY

WALTER POHL

WITH

HELMUT REIMITZ



BRILL  
LEIDEN · BOSTON · KÖLN  
1998

217828

M42622 cc

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Strategies of distinction : the construction of the ethnic communities, 300-800 / edited by Walter Pohl with Helmut Reimitz.  
p. cm. — (The Transformation of the Roman world, ISSN 1386-4165 ; v. 2)  
Includes bibliographical references and index.  
ISBN 9004108467 (alk. paper)  
1. Ethnicity—Europe—History. 2. Ethnology—Europe—History.  
3. Europe—History—392-814. I. Reimitz, Helmut. II. Series.  
GN575.S88 1998  
305.8'0094—dc21

97-40123  
CIP

**Die Deutsche Bibliothek - CIP-Einheitsaufnahme**

Strategies of distinction : the construction of ethnic communities, 300 - 800 / ed. by Walter Pohl. With Helmut Reimitz. - Leiden ; Boston ; Köln ; Brill, 1998  
(The transformation of the Roman world ; Vol. 2)  
ISBN 90-04-10846-7

ISSN 1386-4165  
ISBN 90 04 10846 7

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Danvers MA 01923, USA.  
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PRINTED IN THE NETHERLANDS

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This volume is the result of a series of meetings held by an international group of scholars in the course of the ESF project "Transformation of the Roman World" between 1994 and 1997, including participants from many European countries and the USA. I am grateful to all who took part in the discussions and made this intellectual venture so exciting and fruitful. If some of the spirit of these encounters is captured in the present volume, the credit goes to the contributors who accepted a much more complex process of discussion, editing and, in some cases, translation, than is usual. Ian Wood, Peter Heather and Ann Christys devoted much of their time to correct the English, and Stéphane Lebecq to check the French. Furthermore, I am deeply grateful to Herwig Wolfram for his support in the course of the project. The *Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften* as my employer has given me every liberty to devote my energy to the project, and the *Institut für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* has let me use its unique facilities. My thanks also go to the European Science Foundation and its member organisations for making this project possible, to Max Sparreboom, Vuokko Lepistö, Geneviève Schauinger and Jane Freshwater who helped to organise it, and to the coordinators Javier Arce, Evangelos Chrysos and Ian Wood.

Walter Pohl

## INTRODUCTION: STRATEGIES OF DISTINCTION

Walter Pohl

For centuries, most inhabitants of the mediterranean world, and many in the northern world beyond it, strove to be Romans, or at least to be like Romans in certain respects. Jewellery, weapons, costume, names, life-style and luxuries should express resemblance to Roman ways, even in the forest wilderness far beyond the frontiers of the Empire. Romanness, even for those who reached this goal, did not cancel regional and ethnic identities. But it swiftly imposed a political discourse in which asserting these particular identities could not become a basis for legitimate rule over a civilised *res publica*. Only barbarian tyrants strove for power in the name of ethnic communities, and they did so as enemies of the Roman order. When, towards the end of the first century A.D., the Roman officer of Batavian origin with the programmatic name Civilis joined a rebellion of Gauls and Germans, he grew his hair and dyed it red. After the rebellion had failed, the Batavians realised that "by one nation, the servitude of the whole world could not be shaken off", and Civilis reinterpreted his deeds in the context of imperial power politics, as support for Vespasian and against Vitellius.<sup>1</sup>

From the late fourth century onwards, ethnicity began to return to the power struggles within the Roman world. On the surface, it might seem that the enemies of Rome had finally imposed their political concept that differed radically from the Roman imperial tradition.<sup>2</sup> Soon, long-haired kings held more or less what, four centuries before, the Gallic allies of Civilis had called the *imperium Galliarum*. The new rulers of Gaul had the title of *rex Francorum*, combining the royal dignity that the Romans had seen as the symbol of tyranny<sup>3</sup> with the name of their barbarian *gens*. But at a closer look, the new

<sup>1</sup> Tacitus, *Historiae* 4, 59 (oath *pro imperio Galliarum*), 4, 61 (hair), 5, 25–6 (*nec posse ab una natione totius orbis servitium depelli*). For the context, see, most recently, Elton, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, pp. 44–54.

<sup>2</sup> This view was also held by Wenskus, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung*, p. 2: *der "Gentilismus" der landnehmenden Stämme war als Denkform politisch stärker als das römische Reichsbewußtsein der Provinzialen*. Cf. Pohl, "Gentilismus".

<sup>3</sup> Wolfram, *Intitulatio* 1, pp. 32–36.

ethnic kingdoms of the Franks, Goths or Lombards had grown, and could only grow on Roman territory. They were not "wandering states" whose alien forms of organisation were transplanted to imperial territory, but rather, as Patrick Geary has put it, "the most successful creation of the political-military genius of Rome".<sup>4</sup> The new forms of integration that ethnic communities offered, especially among the military, were shaped within the Roman world. The "highly compartmented structures of the late Roman state"<sup>5</sup> favoured the growth of ethnic loyalties within the armed forces, whose ethnic units could serve as a focus for the aggregation of larger armies under ethnic designation, soon to act separately under their own kings.<sup>6</sup> Biblical discourse and Latin political terminology shaped forms of royal representation in which distant emulation of the emperor and close acquaintance with what was expected from the highest officials of the Empire merged with barbarian codes of honour.

In many respects, the new military elites of the fifth and sixth centuries resembled the old ones, or at least tried to do so. But they did not become just another group of barbarian officers who (or at least whose children) eventually became good Romans. They kept asserting their difference, not only from the Romans, but also from other barbarian *gentes*. Ethnic discourse became the key to political power: Names, narratives and laws affirmed the separate existence of an ethnic group with an exclusive claim to power over certain parts of the ancient *res publica*.<sup>7</sup> In retrospect, it may seem natural that Franks, Goths or Lombards "apportioned the Roman Empire among themselves".<sup>8</sup> Medieval and modern historiography has taken it for granted that solid ethnic communities formed the basis of the states that carried their names. But what exactly accounted for their diversity, apart from their competition for comparable privileges in sub-Roman societies? What, for instance, was the difference between Visigothic, Burgundian, Ostrogothic and Frankish warriors in Southern Gaul, and what set them apart from the armed retinue of any Gallic aristocrat? And what were the consequences of the frequent shifts in their rule in the sixth century? For a long time, scholars have seen it as

<sup>4</sup> Geary, *Before France and Germany*, p. vi. Cf. Wood, *Merovingian Kingdoms*, pp. 66–70.

<sup>5</sup> Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom*, p. 88.

<sup>6</sup> Wolfram, *Das Reich und die Germanen*, p. 171.

<sup>7</sup> For a fuller discussion and further literature, see Pohl, "Tradition, Ethnogenese und literarische Gestaltung".

<sup>8</sup> Procopius, *Bella* 7, 34.

an extraordinary achievement of more or less barbarian peoples how quickly they managed to rule Roman provinces. But maybe it was an even greater achievement that those who had come to rule Roman provinces managed to become a people. Clovis, for instance, was not unique in that he, as a Frank, became administrator of a Roman province (Belgica II), but because he was the one Roman official who was most successful in creating a powerful Frankish kingdom.

The cohesion of barbarian armies, and even barbarian peasants, was traditionally weak, and generations of Roman generals had faced the problem how to maintain the discipline of their auxiliary units, or had exploited the disunity of their barbarian adversaries. Gothic, Frankish, Alamannic or Hunnic warriors had always fought for and against the Romans at the same time, often enough on the same battlefield. How did the barbarian kings of the fifth and sixth century tackle this problem? Their peoples were of widely different origin, even if we consider only the military elites of some tens of thousands of specialised warriors. In turn, they were confronted with an overwhelming majority of civil population, whose loyalty to any particular kingdom was seldom a matter of ancient ethnic ties. Our evidence makes it hard to comprehend that scholars ever found the principle of cohesion of these kingdoms in the blood of their subjects. When Theoderic's army settled in Italy, the number of individuals whose grandparents had already been Ostrogoths cannot, by any reasonable guess, have amounted to more than one percent of the total population, and quite likely to considerably less.<sup>9</sup> But on the other hand, many early medieval kingdoms reached quite a remarkable degree of unity in their political expressions. Their polyethnic basis was, at least notionally, transformed into a singular ethnic identity, expressed in the name of the kingdom. Roman specialists not only helped with the task of governing. Often, they also constructed the ethnic discourse designed to stress the new political identities. Cassiodorus, probably the most conspicuous example, both rose to the highest ranks in Ostrogothic civil administration and devised high-sounding ethnic rhetoric about the origin of the Goths.

This is not to say that ethnicity only existed in the late Roman world because authors like Cassiodorus had created it. To distinguish groups of people by their ethnic names was a common practice in

<sup>9</sup> For a discussion of numbers, see Wolfram, *Das Reich und die Germanen*, pp. 163 f.

ancient ethnography, it was part of the biblical world-view, and both of these strands were fused and turned into an influential system by Isidore of Seville. It is quite likely that such views corresponded to widespread feelings of identity among barbarians. But these feelings were mostly rooted in small, face-to-face groups. What we have to understand is that the large ethnic communities that late Romans called Franks, or Goths, are in no way natural facts. They are highly abstract, culturally constructed ways of categorising people who might differ a lot among each other, and might not be so different at all from people who do not fall into that category. To achieve such a construct in theory is a remarkable achievement in itself; and to build political institutions, like a *regnum Francorum*, on it even more so. The basis for such an institution still lay more or less in a face-to-face-group: those whom our texts call *Franci* or *Gothi* in the full sense, and who come together regularly for war and political business. One may debate whether, and in what cases, "Gothicness" or "Frankishness" was a matter of a *Traditionskern* of a few dozen, a few hundred, or of an army of some thousand men.<sup>10</sup> But any schematic answer would miss the point. One was a Goth, or a Frank, in the full sense as long as one maintained direct participation in the affairs of the *gens*. In this sense, for instance, *omnes Franci* can come together to discuss political matters, *sicut mos Francorum est*; or the *universa multitudo gentis Francorum* departs on a military expedition.<sup>11</sup> It is clear that "all the Franks" in this sense is a notional statement and not a clear definition. We may hypothesise a theoretical boundary between those whose participation would have been accepted, and those who would not have been considered as Franks even if they had been there. But for all practical purposes, only those who took part really counted. And that was a rather flexible criterion and depended on the relative strength of the forces of integration. Ostrogothic Italy, unlike the Frankish Kingdom in the eighth century, could rely on a much more elaborate administration to encourage, facilitate or even enforce participation in war and peace. Other ethnic units had much looser structures, like the early Slavs; unfortunately, we know next to nothing about their sense of identity, but it seems that it was strongly rooted in local or regional communities. Peter Heather's contribu-

<sup>10</sup> See Heather, *The Goths*, pp. 166–78; cf. his contribution in this volume.

<sup>11</sup> *Liber Historiae Francorum* 37; 43. Cf. Wood, "Defining the Franks"; Pohl, "Zur Bedeutung ethnischer Unterscheidungen in der frühen Karolingerzeit".

tion in this volume presents a specific case: ethnic groups under foreign rule. They often preserved their identity over centuries. But Rugians in Ostrogothic Italy or Gepids under Avar rule were again rather small groups with strong common interests (to preserve their way of life in a foreign environment) and without the dynamic social change that threatened more successful *gentes*. Any theory of early medieval ethnicity has to take this wide range of ethnic phenomena into account. But the form in which ethnicity became relevant for European history were the ethnic kingdoms: ethnic identities as a basis for power and a key to privilege, and a force of integration in the new christian kingdoms.

Early medieval ethnicity, therefore, had a double function of integration and of distinction. This paradox may explain some of the controversial debates in modern scholarship. Clearly, ethnicity is about being different. The point of being a Goth or a Frank was being distinct from everybody else, and being proud of it. But how was this being different perceived, and expressed? That clear ethnic differences in language, law, costume, weapons and customs existed has usually been taken for granted. But several of the contributions in this volume suggest that identities were not linked with a clear set of outward signs in any systematic way. A Frank who lived in a village along the Maas may have recognised a man from the southern Gaul as a stranger. But would he have been able to tell from his appearance whether he was a Frank, a Goth, a Burgundian or a Roman? Our Latin authors could not offer clear criteria about the *habitus* of the barbarians, and it is unlikely that they were the only ones. In any case, the written evidence tells us relatively little about how members of different ethnic communities could actually be distinguished (see my contribution, below). But it gives a lot of clues about how this notion was used to turn a confusing multitude of different ways of life into an orderly universe of us and them, of kingdoms and nations. Thus, ethnic identities were reshaped as a basis of huge political entities like the Frankish or the Gothic kingdoms. I have called these efforts *Strategies of Distinction* in the title of this book. Connoisseurs of the work of Pierre Bourdieu may be surprised about the use of the term. In his view, *la distinction* was a way in which actors in a social field strove to set themselves apart vertically from others.<sup>12</sup> He does not use it to describe the distinctions between different groups on a

<sup>12</sup> Bourdieu, *La distinction—critique sociale du jugement*.

horizontal level. But at a closer look, ethnic identities had a lot to do with status in the *regna*. Being a Goth or a Frank meant to establish a claim of superiority over the Roman population, and over the members of other ethnic networks risen to power within the framework of the late Roman *res publica*.

There is another element in which Bourdieu's category can help to understand the way in which ethnic distinctions could enhance social status. Recognition of superiority does not necessarily require cognition, or understanding, of the distinctive features it is based on.<sup>13</sup> The categories by which status in Roman society was defined gradually changed as barbarians and their *connaissance sans concept* of what accounted for status acquired growing prestige within the Empire. One could tell noble from ignoble ancestry, a good from a bad king, a great hero from a daring villain. To a certain extent, these categories defied ethnic boundaries so that Attila-Etzel could become a hero of the *Nibelungenlied*, Alboin's deeds were sung among Alamans and Bavarians, and Widath glorified the Goth Eormanric and the Lombard Aelfwine. But at the same time, ethnic communities claimed collective excellence that was based on God's (or, originally, a god's) predilection, noble origins, heroic exploits, and successful kings.<sup>14</sup>

Achieving a distinguished position for barbarian *gentes* and their kingdoms was, however, not an easy task. The art of distinction lay in propagating a continuum of features that made one ethnic group special without too obviously excluding groups of different origin that had, or were about to, become part of its kingdom. Ethnic identity had to be exclusive, because the privileges of ethnic rule could not be shared indefinitely, and at the same time open enough to accommodate those who had recently been won over, or even those whose support might be desirable in the future. It should not bar a compromise with civil elites on the basis of late Roman *civilitas*, but it should prevent cultural assimilation from leading to a loss of political cohesion.<sup>15</sup> Most of all, it should mark clear boundaries among competing groups

<sup>13</sup> Bourdieu, *La distinction*, p. 543: *une opération de distinction qui n'est pas (ou pas nécessairement) une connaissance distincte, au sens de Leibnitz, puisqu'elle assure la reconnaissance (au sens ordinaire) de l'objet sans impliquer la connaissance des traits distinctifs qui le définissent en propre. Les schémas de l'habitus, formes de classification originaires, doivent leur efficacité propre au fait qu'ils fonctionnent en deçà de la conscience et du discours, donc hors des prises de l'examen et du contrôle volontaire.*

<sup>14</sup> The literary genre in which such claims could be stated was the *origo gentis*, regardless of its historical accuracy; cf. Wolfram, "Origo et religio".

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Heather, "Theoderic, king of the Goths".

of warriors, and persuade barbarian and Roman subjects of the kingdom alike that "the nation of their days was a wonder from ancient days", as the Ostrogothic king Athalaric, in the words of Cassiodorus, told the Roman senate.<sup>16</sup> Such wonders were not the result of an unchanging and authentic ancient tradition, and in fact even Cassiodorus had to "learn from his reading what the hoary recollections of our elders scarcely preserved". But his constructions were not pure fantasy either, they had to take into account what these elders believed, and they were part of a complex effort to construct an identity. The *connaissance sans concept* of the "elders" was interpreted in terms of Roman and biblical knowledge to draw wider, and more complex, politics together. The strategies designed to affirm the miraculous distinctions between one *gens* and everybody else, the forms of self-assertion of a relatively small ethnic community, were what "made" an early medieval people. Texts and archaeological evidence that have come down to us represent only a fraction of these efforts, but they are more than its distant reflections.

This volume discusses the process of construction of ethnic identities in detail. It is the result of a series of workshops in which an international group of historians and archaeologists combined their expertise to arrive at a deeper understanding of the way in which ethnic communities were shaped in late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages. The companion volume, "Kingdoms of the Empire—the Integration of Barbarians in Late Antiquity" has concentrated on the way in which the Empire dealt with organised groups of barbarians and sought to accommodate them within an imperial sphere of power, and on the emergence of ethnic states on the territory of the *res publica*. This volume takes a closer look at the ethnic factor in this process. The problem is more complex and involves a much wider range of questions than the legal and economic aspects of accommodation the first volume dealt with. Furthermore, the subject is still loaded with a long history of national ideologies and prejudices, and scholarly views have often differed widely. Early medieval ethnogenesis is still seen as the root and essence of modern national identities in too many countries, however much scholars have disproved such simplifications. But an international consensus on the role of ethnicity in medieval state formation has not yet been achieved.

<sup>16</sup> Cassiodorus, *Variae* 9, 25.

The European Science Foundation project on the "Transformation of the Roman World" has, however, brought decisive progress in clarifying how approaches in different countries and between different academic schools still differ, and in establishing certain fundamental views that can be shared. Thus, the contributions collected here after a careful discussion, while being detailed studies of specific times and places, also break new ground in dealing with ethnicity in general in a balanced way.

Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages with their diversity of ethnic processes and their relatively broad documentation provide an interesting testing-ground for models of ethnicity. In this field, extensive work has been done, although most of it in the description of specific ethnic processes and their political context.<sup>17</sup> Methodological questions, typologies and models or theoretical consequences have rather been sketched than fully discussed.<sup>18</sup> In the series of workshops that lie at the basis of this book, a number of aspects have been further developed. Many of the contributions still reverberate with the excitement of debates that were enlivened by the unique opportunity to be more than the ritual exchange of points of view that international conferences usually offer. What differences remain in the interpretations proposed in the contributions of this book are for the most part deliberately so, in recognition of alternative models that other scholars have chosen. Some basic views, however, have been shared by all.

The most fundamental point is that ethnic communities are not immutable biological or ontological essences, but the results of historical processes, or, as one might put it, historical processes in themselves. Thus, the transformation of the Roman world was also a transformation of an ethnic landscape, and of the role ethnicity played in it. There was a broad range of possibilities as to what ethnicity meant, what forms of cohesion and social integration it could offer, what

<sup>17</sup> For instance Wolfram, *Goths*; Pohl, *Awaren; Typen der Ethnogenese*.

<sup>18</sup> Wenskus, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung*, is most successful in his refutation of traditional biological views and presents a great number of interesting points, but still argues within the traditional model of *Germanische Stammeskunde* without discussing the Roman context. A number of shorter articles sketch advanced models of ethnic processes in the early Middle Ages: among them, Wolfram, "Shaping of the early medieval kingdom"; id., "Origo et religio"; Daim, "Gedanken zum Ethnosbegriff"; Geary, "Ethnic identity as a situational construct"; Wood, "Ethnicity and the ethnogenesis of the Burgundians"; Amory, "Meaning and purpose", Pohl, "Tradition, Ethnogenese und literarische Gestaltung".

outward expressions it found and in what way the texts propagated it. Between the fourth and the eighth century, a number of "experimental" communities had to create new forms of legitimacy and organisation to overcome a Roman world based on Empire, city and tribe. In the course of time, a new world developed that relied on Christendom, kingdom and people to pull an increased variety of local communities together. Of these three factors, the ethnic one certainly is the most elusive. One methodological implication seems clear, and lies at the basis of the present volume: The various forms in which ethnicity was expressed cannot simply be treated as clues to a basically well-known form of social integration, whether it is called people, tribe, nation or race. They have to be studied separately, and the specific significance of each for the community that produced it has to be analysed. What did names, law, language, costume, burial rites, rhetoric, culture, royal representation or ideology mean, and to whom? This is the question that is common to the papers assembled here. Even though they span several centuries, and a geographic area from the Iberian peninsula to the Black Sea steppes, they all deal with the ways how ethnic distinction became a political factor in the post-Roman world.

Ancient and modern authors have defined ethnicity by a set of features like language, customs and costume. What is our evidence that these criteria were actually used to distinguish between ethnic groups, or to express their identity? The first contribution, "Telling the difference: Signs of ethnic identity", takes a look at language, weapons, dress and hairstyles to analyse in what way these signs contributed to ethnic identities. All of these features, in a number of instances, could be counted as distinctive for some groups, and this is what has led many to believe that they were more or less universally valid. But in most cases, their use is surrounded by a halo of uncertainties and contradictions. Language, weapons and costume could all be changed without any perceivable crisis of identity, and contemporary authors usually did not find the fact worth mentioning. Western Franks, Lombards or Visigoths could abandon their Germanic language without changing their names. And Paul the Deacon was surprised to learn from old paintings in Theodelinda's palace that the Lombards had completely changed their costume, mistaking the *osae* they now wore for a typically Roman dress. Even specific examples like the Frankish *francisca* or the long beards of the Lombards derive their significance from certain texts or narratives,



and cease to become a distinctive sign if taken on their own. Thus, the evidence tells us relatively little about how members of different ethnic communities could actually be distinguished. Everybody knew that foreigners looked different. But whenever this alterity is actually taken as an expression of ethnic identities, the picture becomes blurred, and only vague concepts remain.

How were names related to ethnic identities? An interdisciplinary project currently developed in Germany by historians and philologists proposes a systematic answer to the old question whether personal names allow an ethnic classification, and is presented in Jörg Jarnut's contribution. Often, origin and etymology of personal names have been taken as a clue to the identity of the individual, so that, for instance, Paulus would be a Roman and Arichis a Lombard (in the case of Paul the Deacon, we happen to know that they were brothers, Arichis was to inherit the family estates, and Paul was to become a cleric). Of course, the principle has a certain statistical value; all but one Lombard king had Germanic names, although most of these names were also used by Franks, Burgundians or others. Only a systematic and all-inclusive collection and analysis of the total material can really help to establish viable criteria, as Jarnut argues. Presently, the project is on its way, although with insufficient funding; a workshop at Bad Homburg in December 1995 has discussed the propositions presented in the article in this volume.<sup>19</sup>

A lot of our evidence shows how fleeting ethnic identity in the early Middle Ages could be, and that no more than a generation was needed to make a people disappear from the sources (for instance the Avars), or to establish it as a first-rate political factor (for instance the Bavarians). But this should not lead us to underestimate the possible cohesion of ethnic communities, especially on a smaller scale. Archaeological evidence usually shows that change of populations was much more gradual than written sources imply.<sup>20</sup> Smaller groups could maintain their identity over a long time. How can ethnic continuity be preserved under foreign rule? This is Peter Heather's question as he discusses the evidence about disappearing and reappearing tribes, for instance the Rugi in Ostrogothic Italy. Their Danubian kingdom had

<sup>19</sup> *Nomen et gens*, eds. Geuenich and Jarnut (forthcoming).

<sup>20</sup> See, for instance, Bierbrauer, "Das Reihengräberfeld von Altenerding in Oberbayern und die bajuwarische Ethnogenese—eine Problemskizze", pp. 7–25, for the Bavarians.

been destroyed by Odovacar in 487/88, and they joined Theoderic's army on his march to Italy, after which they disappear from our sources. Almost fifty years later, in the turmoil of the Gothic war, they reappear to support a bid to Ostrogothic kingship by their leader Eraric. Procopius, who relates this ultimately futile attempt to return to the political scene, underlines that these Rugians had consciously sought to preserve the cohesion of their community by endogamy. This is a valuable example showing that ethnic identity was not a natural condition but the result of social practice, and had to be actively promoted and preserved. But Heather's examples also demonstrate that ethnic identities did not need to conform to political power.

The spiny question of identity and law receives an especially careful treatment by Hagith Sivan, Dietrich Claude, Wolf Liebeschuetz and Brigitte Pohl-Resl. For a long time, historians believed that early medieval communities were shaped by the principle of the personality of the law, as it was known from Carolingian texts like Agobard of Lyon's famous diatribe against the *Lex Gundobada*.<sup>21</sup> Recently, it has become likely that this was not a Germanic principle that the ninth century inherited, but a relatively new method of jurisdiction in the multiethnic Empire of the Carolingians. Brigitte Pohl-Resl's re-examination of the Lombard evidence, especially private charters, shows that professions of law only began with the Carolingians and reached their height in the eleventh century. Even the distinction between Roman and Lombard law had gradually become blurred in the Lombard kingdom. In this light, it is not surprising that only the late Carolingian Regino of Prüm introduces law as a distinctive feature for ethnicity, whereas previous definitions, for instance Isidore of Seville, do not mention it.

Still, in the sixth to eighth centuries, Roman and barbarian law existed alongside each other. Was this regarded as a key to ethnic identity? An exceptional case study of Visigothic Spain attempts an answer in the joint efforts of an archaeologist, two ancient and one medieval historians, who all discuss the question what the terms "Goth" and "Roman" meant in the Visigothic kingdom. Specific attention is devoted to the marriage ban between Romans and barbarians taken from a law in the Theodosian Code and introduced into Visigothic legislation by Alarich II. Was this a key mechanism to preserve Gothic

<sup>21</sup> Agobard, *Adversus legem Gundobadi*, ed. van Ecker; Wood, "Ethnicity and the ethnogenesis of the Burgundians", pp. 53–5.

identity? Hagith Sivan argues that a Visigothic king would not have defined his Goths as barbarians, and that the law is specifically directed against Frankish influence in the crucial years before 507. Thus, the abolishment of the ban in the 580s was simply a grand gesture without pragmatic consequences. But even Dietrich Claude and Wolf Liebeschuetz, who do not exclude that the marriage ban was intended to keep Gothic and Roman elites apart, come to a similar conclusion, acknowledging that it did not work that way. As it turns out, the ethnic terms gradually came to signify a marker of social distinction, designing the ruling elite of the kingdom irrespective of actual ethnic origin, language or custom. In this context, the question of ethnic interpretation of archaeological evidence is also raised. Gisela Ripoll's treatment of sixth-century "Gothic" material from Spain is juxtaposed with Michel Kazanski's discussion of fourth-century Goths north of the Black Sea; in both cases, the problem of synthesising *les données archéologiques* with textual sources is addressed, and in spite of extensive discussions in the workshops, the careful reader may still notice some differences in methodological approach. Falko Daim's contribution proposes some general methodological principles for the use of archaeological data in research on ethnic groups on the basis of the central European evidence. If we assume that ethnicity is largely a subjective phenomenon, depending on the *Wir-Gefühl* within a group, what are the consequences for archaeology? Falko Daim explores ways to reconstruct mentalities and identities on the basis of material remains, taking the Avars as an example.

It has often been assumed that ethnic identity was part of what had been barbarian about the barbarians, and therefore essentially previous to their entry into the Roman world. The methods of analysis employed both by archaeologists and historians have easily lent themselves to this impression. From the totality of texts and finds that firmly place the post-Roman *regna* within the late Roman world, they have sought to distil what was typical and therefore authentic about the barbarians. For the purposes of ethnic identification, the bulk of objects that did not give any ethnic clues and were often Roman import or imitations was more or less left aside, which gave ethnically distinctive objects and circumstances a contingency that they did not have. The same principle was applied to the analysis of texts. If we leave out everything that Jordanes says about the construed Scythian and Getic past of the Goths, we are left with some passages about Gothic origins from Scandinavia and with Amal genealogies.

This may provide valuable clues to what Cassiodorus had not found in his books but heard from the elders of the Goths; but it also obscures the way in which the Gothic past was really constructed in the sixth century.<sup>22</sup> The third part of this volume, dealing with rhetoric and representation in early medieval *regna*, re-establishes this context for the discourse of ethnicity in a few decisive cases.

Dick Harrison gives an overview of political rhetoric and representation in Lombard Italy, briefly surveying the different fields in which the Lombard kingdom sought to achieve its coherence. He looks at legislation, charters, ceremonies, coinage, royal insignia and buildings and tries to distinguish Roman or christian influences on these forms of expression. But he concludes that Christianity, Roman influences and purely Lombard traditions cannot simply be separated from an analytical point of view, but that the texts, for instance the prologues of Lombard laws, were "the result of a complex political and literary process incorporating several elements that were commonplace in late antique and early medieval Mediterranean civilisation".

Royal representation and the objects used for it are treated by a historian and an archaeologist from their respective points of view. Matthias Hardt presents results of a major study of royal treasures from late Antiquity to the high Middle Ages. Treasures were, functionally and symbolically, a prerequisite for successful rule, and losing them threatened kingship or symbolised its fall. Most of the objects were not at all specific, having been acquired through plunder and as gifts from foreign rulers. But many of them acquired their significance through narratives that linked them to a specific people, a dynasty or a single ruler. The question in what way precious objects from the imperial court could become part of the representation of barbarian kings is also at the heart of Michael Schmauder's contribution. With a careful technical and stylistic analysis of, among others, a certain type of fibula (the *Kaiserfibel*) found in a hoard of precious objects north of the Danube, he discusses the distinction between Roman insignia and their barbarian imitations. But only the trained eye of a modern archaeologist can detect the non-Roman technical details of what, for a contemporary, must have appeared as a formidable late Roman prestige object which a barbarian ruler north of the Danube could be proud of.

<sup>22</sup> Pohl, "I Goti d'Italia e le tradizioni delle steppe"; Wolfram, *Goths*, pp. 3 ff.

Taken together, the contributions in this volume illuminate, from different angles, the process through which large and relatively stable *gentes* were formed as a result of the consolidation of successor kingdoms on Roman territory. But their stability and ethnic cohesion did not last; all post-Roman ethnogeneses failed in the long run, and thus today there are no Visigoths in Spain, no Lombards in Italy, no Anglo-Saxons in England, no Avars in Hungary, and even Frankish identity changed fundamentally. On the other hand, the Merovingian Franks, but also other established names and models remained influential, and could be used for the “strategies of distinction” of very different groups that came later. Thus, today the English, the French, or the Lombards preserve the names of early medieval *gentes*, however fundamentally the linguistic and political situation has since been transformed. And not only are specific identities being re-used by specific communities. Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages quite generally shaped the ways in which ethnicity was perceived. Ethnic discourse based on classical ethnography and biblical ontology became the way in which the occidental civilisation explained cultural differences throughout the world, without ever abandoning the perspectives of universalism offered by the Roman Empire and the Church. Indeed, the “strategies of distinction” used by early medieval kingdoms became so successful that even modern nationalism used them once again to legitimate nations of a very different kind. Therefore, if one deals with today’s problems of nationalism, it is not enough to study the history and ideology of the last two centuries. One has to go back to the development of ethnic rhetoric and representation between late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages. A lot of comparative study is still needed. Could it be that the way in which modern nationalism claimed moral superiority and a specific root in universal values for each nation goes back to the Roman and christian foundations of early medieval kingdoms? The “Transformation of the Roman World”, in this sense, is not over yet. Two hundred years ago, Edward Gibbon’s “Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire” was discussed as a fundamental contribution to understanding his own time—would the British Empire be able to withstand a new resurgence of nations? Today, we might ask different, though ultimately related, questions. How should the European Union respond to the renewed challenge of nationalism? It might help to realise that neither “universal” nor “ethnic” communities are the “natural” way in which human society has to be organised. Both forms are the

results of history, and their interplay goes back to the day when ethnic kingdoms were formed on Roman territory. Maybe the ESF project that has come back to Gibbon’s problem at the end of the 20th century will be able to create some resonance beyond the academic circles that have devoted their joint expertise to it.

TELLING THE DIFFERENCE:  
SIGNS OF ETHNIC IDENTITY

Walter Pohl

How can peoples be distinguished? From late antique ethnography to modern ethnology, answers to this question, different as they were, have been taken from more or less the same set of criteria. Virgil's Aeneid pictures defeated barbarians "as different in language and appearance as in costume and in arms".<sup>1</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus observed that in spite of consisting of numerous tribes, the Alans were all called by that name "because their character, their wild way of life, and their weapons are the same everywhere".<sup>2</sup> Augustine knew that "in a wide world, which has always been inhabited by many differing peoples, they have had, in their time, so many different customs, religions, languages, forms of military organisation, and clothing"—although he immediately went on to stress that all this multiplicity fell in only two basic categories, the *civitas terrena* and the City of God.<sup>3</sup> Menander Protector, in the late sixth century, explains why the Utigurs hesitated to attack their Cutrigur neighbours at Justinian's instigation: "For they not only speak our language, dwell in tents like us, dress like us and live like us, but they are our kin, even if they follow other leaders".<sup>4</sup> According to Isidore of Seville, Germanic peoples differed in the variety of arms, different colours of dress, the dissonance of languages (*gentes variae armis, discolores habitu, linguis dissonae*), and, of course, the diversity of names.<sup>5</sup> Elsewhere, Isidore stresses that "peoples have originated from languages, not languages from

<sup>1</sup> Virgil, *Aeneis* 8, 722–3: *Incedunt victae longo ordine gentes, / quam variae linguis, habitu tam vestis et armis*. Almost the same wording is found in the Paderborn Epos *Karolus Magnus et Leo papa* (a. 799; vv. 496 f.).

<sup>2</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res gestae* 31, 2, 17, ed. W. Seyfarth: *summation omnes Halani cognominantur ob mores et modum efferatum vivendi eandemque armaturam*.

<sup>3</sup> Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 14, 1: *Ut cum tot tantaeque gentes per terrarum orbem diversis ritibus moribusque viventes multiplici linguarum, armorum, vestium sint varietate distinctae, non tamen amplius quam dua quaedam genera humanae societatis existerent*. Cf. Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom*, p. 53.

<sup>4</sup> Menander, ed. Blockley, fr. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Isidore, *Etymologiae* 9, 2, 97.

peoples".<sup>6</sup> Almost three centuries later, Regino of Prüm (ca. 850–915) stated that peoples differed by origin, custom, language and law (*diversae nationes populorum inter se discrepant genere, moribus, lingua, legibus*).<sup>7</sup> Law, absent from most early medieval lists, had already been mentioned by Orosius: *Quaerque provincia suis regibus, suis legibus suisque moribus utebatur*.<sup>8</sup>

None of the authors of the first millennium A.D. was so attentive to ethnic distinctions as Tacitus. Among his criteria, there were outward appearance, the *habitus corporum*, culture, customs, habits and religions (*mores; cultus; instituta ritusque*), language (*sermo; lingua*) and weapons (*patria arma*).<sup>9</sup> He strove to present both what was remarkable (*insigne*) for the Germans on the whole and for parts of them. Repeatedly, he asked himself whether one of the tribes he discussed was Germanic or not. Language and culture decided that Marsigni and Buri belonged to the Suebi, language and the fact that they accepted paying tribute were the reason why Cotini and Osi could not be Germans (c. 43). In the case of the Aesti who were *ritus habitusque Sueborum, lingua Britannicae propior*, he did not reach a decision (c. 45). Tacitus also voiced his doubts in the case of the Peucini, who "acted like Germans in language, culture, settlement and house forms", but who were dirty, and their appearance had changed through intermarriage with the Sarmatians (c. 46). The Veneti were also often counted among the Germans because of their houses, their use of shields and their propensity for walking (c. 46). Tacitus was unique in his flexible handling of a set of criteria for ethnic identity and allowed for assimilation or even conscious emulation. On the whole, he used this ethnographic method so convincingly that modern scholars have often accepted its principles, however much they have tried to improve his taxonomy in detail. In our context, we do not have to go into the debate about the *Tendenz* of the *Germania*, its questionable range of information and its *topoi*.<sup>10</sup> What matters here is the way in which Tacitus employed his criteria. Obviously, they do not add up

<sup>6</sup> Isidore, *Etymologiae* 9, 1, 14: *ex linguis gentes, non ex gentibus linguae exortae sunt*.

<sup>7</sup> Regino, *Epistula ad Hothonem archiepiscopum*, ed. F. Kurze, MGH SS Rer. Germ. 50, p. XX.

<sup>8</sup> Orosius, *Historiae* 5, 1, 14.

<sup>9</sup> Tacitus, *Germania* 4 (*habitus corporum*), 10 (*patria arma*), 27 (*instituta ritusque*), 28 (*sermo instituta moresque*), 43 (*sermo cultusque*), 45 (*ritus habitusque—lingua*). Tacitus had die ethnische Charakterisierung außerordentlich vertieft: Timpe, "Entdeckungsgeschichte", p. 379.

<sup>10</sup> Cf., for instance, *Beiträge zum Verständnis der Germania des Tacitus*, eds. Jankuhn and Timpe; Lund, *Zum Germanenbild der Römer*; Müller, *Geschichte der antiken Ethnographie* 2.

to any transparent method or logical order. Language and culture repeatedly appear as decisive criteria. But then, an impressive set of linguistic and cultural features do not suffice to count the Peucini among the Germans because of some specific aspects of their *habitus* which are ultimately based on a genetic (and climatic) criterium. That Cotini and Osi cannot be Germans because they pay tribute is also characteristic. For the Romans, love of liberty was an existential part of Germanic identity, which may be understood as an essence expressed through various outward signs that are derivative and accidental.<sup>11</sup> Especially broad terms like *Germani* or *Scythae* were not the result of analytical methods, but *a priori* categories that were filled with empirical data where it seemed possible. It is not quite clear to what extent they reflect self-perceptions of the people thus classified or up to which point their Roman use constituted and later shaped these identities. But even generic terms like *Germani* are not simply arbitrary constructions or ethnographic fictions. The Mediterranean World had developed several ways to deal with ethnic identity that, more or less successfully, accompanied the integration of *gentes* into the Roman world, and the rise of large-scale ethnic polities in the early Middle Ages.

Thus, the aim of this article is not to discuss in detail once again how accurate and up-to-date the information used by Tacitus and other ethnographers was. It looks rather at the way in which ethnographic material was selected to become a significant element in a variety of ethnic discourses. Recent scholarship has greatly improved our understanding of how ethnographic perceptions between Antiquity and the early Middle Ages were shaped by set models and previous texts. On this basis, we can take a closer look at ethnographic knowledge (or imagination) in action. When and where did ethnic distinctions matter? Rather than simply reflecting a world of consistent ethnic diversity, they are traces of a complex communication about communities on the periphery of the ancient, and later christian, world. What were the cognitive and the political strategies that made use of and created distinct ethnic identities? How diffused were clear notions of ethnic identity inside and outside the communities in question? Which criteria were most commonly used to distinguish between ethnic groups, and what forms of social cohesion did they put

<sup>11</sup> Timpe, "Ethnologische Begriffsbildung", esp. pp. 32; 38.

into the foreground? This paper concentrates on the most frequently mentioned signs of identity. It does not deal with practices like customs and law that were also used for ethnic distinctions, sometimes in very marked form, like the Bavarian custom to pull witnesses by their ears.<sup>12</sup> But the question of law is treated in several other contributions to this volume.

Modern scholars have, for a long time, tried to define ethnicity, like ancient ethnographers, by objective features like language, culture and customs, territory or political organisation, although their relative importance has been debated.<sup>13</sup> This corresponds with diffused popular notions. A supplement to the Spanish newspaper "El Pais" in 1994 presented a *Retrato del mundo*, introducing families from thirty different countries, each photographed with all their *señas de identidad*, including furniture, kitchen utensils and pets.<sup>14</sup> For most of the objects listed, only the context made the difference. In scholarly debates, the fact had to be faced that none of the features on the various lists could be proven to be valid for all ethnic distinctions. Peoples speaking several languages as the Swiss, not living on a common territory as the Jews, comprising several cultures or sharing them with other peoples, provided too many obvious exceptions for any simple model of ethnicity to be applicable. "Since language, culture, political organisation, etc., do not correlate completely, the units delimited by one criterion do not coincide with the units delimited by another".<sup>15</sup> A solution that was gradually accepted among historians was to assume that the subjective factor, the belief of belonging to a group with

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Wolfram, *Grenzen und Räume*, p. 330. For recent discussions of ethnicity and law, see, for instance, Amory, "The meaning and purpose of ethnic terminology in the Burgundian law"; Halsall, *Settlement and social organisation*, 26–32.

<sup>13</sup> See, for instance, Bromley, "The term *ethnos*", esp. p. 66; W. Isajiw, *Definitions of Ethnicity*; Smith, *Ethnic Origins of Nations*, pp. 22–30, with a list that mixes objective and subjective features (collective name, common myth of descent, shared history, distinctive shared culture, association with specific territory, sense of solidarity); Heather, *The Goths*, p. 7. In general see *Ethnicity*, eds. Hutchinson and Smith; Heinz, *Ethnizität und ethnische Identität*; for late Antiquity, Wenskus, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung*, pp. 14–107, with a critical discussion of assumed features of "tribes" (*Abstammungsgemeinschaft*, *Heiratsgemeinschaft*, *Friedensgemeinschaft*, *Rechtsgemeinschaft*, *Siedlungsgemeinschaft*, *politische Gemeinschaft*, *Traditionsgemeinschaft*, *Sprach- und Kulturgemeinschaft*). For the Middle Ages, cf., for instance, the contributions in Forde (et al., eds.), *Concepts of National Identity in the Middle Ages*; and *Peoples au Moyen Age: Problèmes d'Identification*, eds. Carozzi (et al.).

<sup>14</sup> *El Pais*—*Semanal*, n. 186, 11.9. 1994.

<sup>15</sup> Moerman, "Who are the Lue: ethnic identification in a complex civilization", p. 1219; cf. Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, p. 11.

common origins, was decisive.<sup>16</sup> Concepts that explained the relationship between the sense of belonging to a community and its outward expressions were also proposed. Objective features of ethnicity could be seen as symbols, explained by myths or "traditions".<sup>17</sup> Smaller, high-status groups, as could be shown, propagated this sense of belonging and its symbolic forms of expression throughout larger communities, and legitimised rulership and norms of behaviour by myths and claims to ancient tradition.<sup>18</sup>

Social anthropologists currently see ethnicity as "constituted through social contact", where "systematic distinctions between insiders and outsiders" have to be applied.<sup>19</sup> It is not a primordial category, but a negotiated system of social classification.<sup>20</sup> Difference only matters, as Pierre Bourdieu has argued, as long as there is somebody capable of "making the difference"; it is a relational category.<sup>21</sup> Thus, communication plays a key role, of which the early medieval texts that have come down to us are important traces, not just chance reflections.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, they can only be understood properly if we do not see them as evidence for the natural existence of ethnic communities, but as part of strategies to give shape to these communities. To make ethnicity happen, it is not enough just to be different. Strategies of distinction have to convince both insiders and outsiders that it is

<sup>16</sup> Shirokogoroff, "Grundzüge einer Theorie vom Ethnos", p. 258; Mühlmann, "Ethnogenie und Ethnogenese"; Wenskus, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung*, p. 12; Wolfram, *Goths*, p. 22; Geary, "Ethnic identity as a situational construct".

<sup>17</sup> J. Armstrong, *Nations before Nationalism*; Smith, *Ethnic Origins of Nations*, pp. 14–16 ("myth-symbol complex", "mythomoteur"); Wenskus, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung*, pp. 54–77 ("Tradition").

<sup>18</sup> Wenskus, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung*, pp. 64–5 (*Traditionskern*); Wolfram, *Goths*, who demonstrated the connection between myths, traditional norms and political rule in the case of the Goths; Heather, *The Goths*, esp. pp. 167–78; Pohl, "Tradition, Ethnogenese und literarische Gestaltung", for a summary of the discussion and a fuller development of the argument.

<sup>19</sup> Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, p. 18. Cf. also Barth (ed.), *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Cultural Difference*.

<sup>20</sup> Comaroff, *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination*, pp. 52–54. I owe this reference to Michael Maas and Tanya Dunlap. For a summary of different, "primordialist" views see Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, pp. 11–13.

<sup>21</sup> Bourdieu, *Raisons pratiques*, p. 24: *une différence, une propriété distinctive (. . .) ne devient une différence visible, perceptible, non indifférente, socialement pertinente, que si elle est perçue par quelqu'un qui est capable de faire la différence*. Cf. also Pierre Bourdieu, *La distinction. Critique sociale du jugement*.

<sup>22</sup> Pohl, "Tradition, Ethnogenese und literarische Gestaltung", esp. pp. 20–1. For the connection between "vestimentary markers" and communication, see Schubert, *Kleidung als Zeichen*, pp. 47 ff.

significant to be different, that it is the key to an identity that should be cherished and defended. A Pathan proverb quoted by Frederick Barth says: "He is Pathan who does Pashto, not merely who speaks Pashto".<sup>23</sup> Especially where ethnic identities imply prestige, they do not come naturally; one has to make an effort to live them. Successful strategies of distinction create a multiplicity of possible outcomes for those who are not as successful, which results in broad areas of ambiguity and of contrasting identities for those who fail. Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages offered a particularly wide range of successes and failures, of options and ambiguities: to confront the provincials of the *Vita Severini* as Rugians or *scamarae*, to be a Roman officer, a Gepid or a Hun like Attila's grandson Mundo, to serve Burgundian kings as Burgundian or Gallic aristocrats, to be a Frank or a citizen of the *civitas* of Tours in the day of Gregory, to be seen as Anglian or *Scottus* by the Carolingian Franks.<sup>24</sup> Even today, an "individual may have many 'selves' according to the groups he belongs to".<sup>25</sup> Although these options were limited—an Anglo-Saxon monk might be seen as *Scottus* or a Frank, but hardly as a Rugian or a Hun—they clearly forbid us to think that ethnic identity was automatic or natural, always "already there". Distinctive features might not always be chosen on purpose, but somebody had to make a conscious effort to regard them as such.

#### LANGUAGE

In this light, let us look briefly at the some of the features that defined ethnicity, according to late antique and early medieval authors. Most of the writers I quoted at the beginning—Virgil, Augustine, Isidore and Regino—listed language among their criteria. Indeed, the diversity of languages was one of the main concerns of christian writers; Arno Borst's multi-volume study *Der Turmbau von Babel* (1957–63) contains a remarkable wealth of material. The biblical narrative of the Tower of Babylon served as a matrix to explain both the multitude of lan-

<sup>23</sup> Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, p. 119.

<sup>24</sup> Mundo: Pohl, "Die Gepiden", p. 292; Anglo-Saxon monks seen as Scotti by Franks: *Vita Alcuini* 18; cf. Pohl, "Ethnic names and identities in the British Isles".

<sup>25</sup> Lal, "The Chicago School of American Sociology, symbolic interactionism, and race relations theory", esp. p. 290. For a discussion of the concept of identity, cf. Handler, "Is identity a useful cross-cultural concept?"

guages and the conflicts among peoples; the dialectic in which this fundamental disunity could be resolved within the united people of God, as symbolised by the miracle of the Pentecost, was what worried generations of medieval authors. The question had both a theological and a practical side; what was the language in which the Word of God could, and should, be preached? But the Bible also provided a different model for the origin of ethnic diversity with the genealogy of the sons of Noah: *Ab his divisae sunt insulae gentium in regionibus suis, unusquisque secundum linguam suam et familias suas in nationibus suis*, as everybody knew from the Genesis (Gn 10, 5). That peoples were divided "according to language" was, however, not unequivocal. Until they built the Tower of Babylon, the inhabitants of the earth were *unus populus et unum labium omnibus* (Gn 11, 6), and only afterwards were their languages confused. *Populus* and *gens* (or *natio*) represent different concepts in Jerome's translation of this passage, just as they repeatedly, though not always, did in late Antiquity: one christian *populus* faced a multitude of, initially pagan, *gentes*.<sup>26</sup> Isidore shared the view that before the Tower of Babylon, "there was one language of all nations", and that was Hebrew.<sup>27</sup> But this means that the diversity of nations had existed before the diversity of languages, and is an open contradiction to Isidore's statement in the same chapter (9, 1, 14) that the *gentes* had their origin from the languages and not vice versa, again a current idea. A further observation complicates Isidore's view (9, 1, 1): "In the beginning, there were as many *gentes* as languages, but then more *gentes* than languages; for from one language, several *gentes* have sprung." Augustine had made this observation before: "The number of *gentes* has grown much more than that of languages".<sup>28</sup> This means that not even in Isidore's synthesis, peoples can always be distinguished by their language; and consequently, in his discussion of single peoples, their names and their specific features, language is hardly mentioned. The context in which Isidore, after presenting so many *gentes* as closely related whose languages

<sup>26</sup> The distinction between *populus* and *gens/natio* is only sometimes upheld against a tendency to use all of these terms in stylistic variation; Jerome's translation of Gn 10 does not differentiate clearly. See, for instance, Zientara, "Populus—Gens—Natio"; Brühl, *Deutschland-Frankreich* pp. 243–67; cf. also Adams, *The Populus of Augustine and Jerome. A Study of the Patristic Sense of Community*.

<sup>27</sup> Isidore, *Etymologiae* 9, 1, 1: *Una omnium nationum lingua fuit*. Cf. Gn 11, 6.

<sup>28</sup> Augustinus, *De Civitate Dei* 16, 6: *Auctus est autem numerus gentium multo amplius quam linguarum*.

have nothing to do with each other, mentions diversity of language among the criteria of ethnic diversity, has gone largely unobserved: it is the case of the *Germanicae gentes*. Obviously, he does not see them in any way as related to each other by their language, and far less to the Goths or Lombards whom he, as is usual in Antiquity, does not count as Germans (9, 2, 89–101). The concept of a common vernacular, as opposed to Latin, only appears late in the eighth century; Paul the Deacon was one of the first to remark that Bavarians and Saxons basically shared a common language.<sup>29</sup> This *lingua teodisca*, language of the people, a term that appears at the end of the eighth century as well, included the vernacular spoken by Anglo-Saxons and Southern Italian Lombards before it became limited to the German language.<sup>30</sup> But what modern philology has accustomed us to see as one family of languages or even a single language was, with all its variants, not an instrument by which all its native speakers could easily comprehend each other; the same holds true for the early Romance languages.<sup>31</sup> One should not automatically take the “Pseudovölker der Linguistik” (Mühlmann) as historical entities.<sup>32</sup>

From Isidore's point of view, it must have been a logical conclusion to use language as a criterium for ethnicity in the case of the Germans; for it was among the barbarians where the diversity of languages made itself felt, not in the Roman world where Latin and Greek constituted unfailing means of communication among different *gentes* that had been drawn into the Roman orbit. Late antique authors might debate to what extent the Roman Empire had ended the conflicts among the *gentes* and *nationes* it comprised within a single *populus* or *civitas*.<sup>33</sup> But Isidore's list clearly shows that he did not consider the inhabitants of the Empire, whether in its classical form or in his own day, simply as a Roman *gens*. His *Romani* are listed with Sabines, Sicilians, Tuscans, Umbrians and Marsians (9, 2, 84–87), in much the same sense as in the *Liber Pontificalis*, where *natione Romanus* means a pope born in the city of Rome, as opposed to *natione Tiburtinus*,

<sup>29</sup> Paulus Diaconus, *Historia Langobardorum* 1, 27: *Alboin . . . tam apud Baiariorum gentem quamque et Saxonum, sed et alios eiusdem linguae homines . . . in eorum carminibus celebratur.*

<sup>30</sup> Most recently, Jarnut, “Teotischis homines”, with bibliography of the extensive discussion on the origin of the term.

<sup>31</sup> Wright, *Late Latin and Early Romance*.

<sup>32</sup> Mühlmann, “Ethnogenic”, p. 15. Cf. the general discussion in Wenskus, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung*, pp. 96–102.

<sup>33</sup> Cf., for instance, Prudentius, CSEL 61, p. 268; Eucherius of Lyons, PL 50, col. 721.

*natione Campanus* or *natione Afer* (from Africa).<sup>34</sup> Little wonder that Isidore's model had to provide for more than one people speaking the same language; for it did not consider the possibility that different peoples might merge into one (although the idea of a people of mixed origin was not totally unknown in the period). In the genealogical perspective that the Bible shared with most classical authors, peoples could only be destroyed, wander to far-away lands or change their name, for instance to confuse their enemies.<sup>35</sup> The Roman and the christian *populus* had not removed ethnic distinctions. A true synthesis was only possible on the level of the soul where all human differences became pointless. The New Testament offered a phrase coined by Paul that was frequently quoted, and modified, throughout the Middle Ages: . . . *ubi non est gentilis et Iudaeus, circumcisio et praeputium, barbarus et Scytha, servus et liber, sed omnia et in omnibus Christus*.<sup>36</sup> Agobard of Lyon, in the ninth century, gave contemporary flavour to the sentence by writing: *ubi non est gentilis et Iudaeus, circumcisio et praeputium, barbarus et Scitha, Aquitanos et Langobardos, Burgundio et Alamannus . . .*<sup>37</sup>

Thus, it is hard to imagine that Isidore considered language as a practical criterion according to which peoples could actually be distinguished. Tacitus had done so more easily in a number of instances. The world Isidore lived in did not conform to his own model. Most early medieval kingdoms were at least bilingual, and Visigoths, Lombards and Franks gradually abandoned their Germanic tongue without any perceptible crisis of identity; no contemporary author even found that change worth mentioning. Even a trained grammarian and careful observer like Paul the Deacon, who repeatedly refers to the *lingua propria*, the *sermo barbaricus* or the *patria verba* of the early Lombards, gives us no information about the language the Lombard elite really spoke in the eighth century, or why he was given a Latin name and his brother a Germanic one.<sup>38</sup> Around the time when the

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Pohl, “Zur Bedeutung ethnischer Unterscheidungen in der frühen Karolingerzeit” (forthcoming).

<sup>35</sup> Barbarian peoples changing their names: Synesios of Cyrene, *Oratio de regno ad Arcadium imp.* 11; peoples disappearing: Orosius, *Historiae adversum paganos* 7, 32; Agathias, *Historiae* 5, 11, 4.

<sup>36</sup> *Epistula Pauli ad Colossenses* 3, 11; cf. Ambrosius, *De fide* 5, 14, 61; Augustinus, *De civitate Dei* 14, 1; Hieronymus, *Adversus Iovinianum* 1, 16; Beda, *Quaestiones super Genesim*, PL 114, col. 431, among many others. Cf. also Scott, *Paul and the Nations* (a reference I owe to Michael Maas, Houston).

<sup>37</sup> Agobardus Lugdunensis, *Adversus legem Gundobadi* 3, ed. van Acker, p. 20; I owe this reference to Helmut Reimitz, Vienna.

<sup>38</sup> Paulus Diaconus, *Historia Langobardorum* 1, 13; 1, 15; 1, 19; 1, 20; 2, 9. The



Strasburg oaths demonstrate an increasing awareness of the difference between speakers of Romance and Germanic vernacular, Haimo of Auxerre could count *Romani, Itali, Aquitani, Franci, Burgundiones, Gothi* among the peoples speaking the *lingua Romana*.<sup>39</sup> Clerical writers, at least before the ninth century, were not interested in any but the holy languages, Hebrew, Greek and Latin; Isidore discussed what language God and the angels spoke, and he worried about the corruption of Latin *per soloecismos et barbarismos*, but what language Goths or Franks used was not his concern.

Diplomats and generals had to be more pragmatic and know which interpreters to use on which occasion; early medieval historiographic sources contain a great number of references to interpreters and their role in negotiations or the inquisition of captives. A number of political leaders spoke two or more languages, and only in exceptional cases is this fact mentioned in our sources. That the Romans Syagrius-Burgundio in the fifth and Cyprianus in the sixth century spoke perfect Gothic was criticised or appreciated as a political attitude.<sup>40</sup> The seventh century Duke Raduald of Benevento, who had grown up in Friuli, could speak with Slavic raiders who had come by boat across the Adriatic "in their own language", and that was obviously much more exceptional in Southern Italy than it had been near the frontier in his native Friuli.<sup>41</sup> The Bulgar leader Mavros who had escaped from the Avar khaganate in the late seventh century spoke four languages: Greek, Latin, Slavic and Bulgarian, and this versatility made his secret plots against Thessalonica so dangerous.<sup>42</sup> Rudimentary knowledge of foreign languages must have been quite diffused. We hardly ever hear of communication problems. One of the few exceptions is the Armenian officer Gilakios who fought in the Gothic war; when he was captured by the Goths, he could neither respond in Greek nor Latin nor Gothic, but only repeated his title *strategos* over

tenth-century *Chronicon Salernitanum* 38 remarks that the Lombards once spoke the *lingua Todesca*.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Wenskus, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung*, p. 209; Geary, "Ethnic identity", p. 20. See also *Aspekte der Nationenbildung im Mittelalter* (Nationes 1), with the contributions by K.H. Rexroth and M. Pfister.

<sup>40</sup> Sidonius Apollinaris, *Ep.* 5, 5, 3; Cassiodorus, *Variae* 5, 40; 8, 21; Wolfram, *Goths*, p. 324. On the knowledge of foreign languages in Antiquity: Rochette, "Grecs et Latins face aux langues étrangères"; *Zum Umgang mit fremden Sprachen in der griechisch-römischen Antike*, eds. Müller et al.; Lee, *Information and Frontiers*.

<sup>41</sup> Paulus Diaconus, *Historia Langobardorum* 4, 44.

<sup>42</sup> *Miracula Sancti Demetrii* 2, 5, 291, ed. P. Lemerle; cf. Pohl, *Awaren*, p. 224.

and over again.<sup>43</sup> There are instances when foreign, barbarian languages are ridiculed, from Sidonius Apollinaris' derision of noisy Burgundians to Lupus of Ferrières who complains about the "vernacular harshness" of Germanic names, or Notker Balbulus who recounts the bragging of a veteran of the Avar wars that he sometimes carried seven or eight enemies on his lance while they were murmuring incomprehensible rubbish.<sup>44</sup> It is not surprising that somebody could be recognised as a foreigner, or depreciated as a barbarian, because of his language. But after Tacitus, we have no evidence that beyond these very broad stereotypes, language was used to find out an individual's specific identity or to define an ethnic group. Among the literate, Latin was probably too important as the language of education and the Scriptures, and it certainly defied any ethnic categorisation.

#### ARMS AND WAYS OF FIGHTING

*Arma virumque cano*, is the familiar beginning of Virgil's *Aeneid*; it is an old idea that arms make the man. Ancient observers therefore often distinguished barbarians by the way they fought, so it comes as no surprise that Virgil, Ammianus, Augustine and Isidore enumerate arms as a distinctive feature. Late antique historiographers and panegyrists even symbolised barbarian *gentes* by a certain type of arms. In Jordanes' description of the Nedao battle (454), he depicted "the Goth fighting with lances, the Gepid raging with the sword, the Rugian breaking the missile in his wound, the Suevian daring on foot, the Hun with the arrow, the Alan ordering the line of battle in heavy armour, the Herul in light armour."<sup>45</sup> Claudian has the young emperor Honorius play with Scythian bows, Gelonian belts, a Dacian javelin and the bridles of the Suevians.<sup>46</sup> Sidonius Apollinaris, in his

<sup>43</sup> At least, this is what Procopius, *Bella* 7, 26, wants to make us believe; see, however, Pohl, "Social language, identities and the control of discourse".

<sup>44</sup> Sidonius Apollinaris, *Carm.* 12, vv. 1 ff.; Lupus of Ferrières, *Vita S. Wigberti*, Proemion; Notker, *Gesta Karoli* 1, 12.

<sup>45</sup> Jordanes, *Getica* 50: *spectaculum, ubi cernere erat contis pugnantes Gothum, ense furentem Gepida, in vulnere suo Rugum tela frangentem, Suavum pede, Hunnum sagitta praesumens, Alanum gravi, Herulum levi armatura aciem strui*. Some manuscripts (classes O and B) misread *contis* for *cunctis*, which makes the Goths use the sword and thus changes the whole series of attributes; this version appears even in recent editions, as in the Latin-Italian edition by Elio Bartolini (Milano 1991).

<sup>46</sup> Claudianus, *Panegyricus de III cons. Honorii*, vv. 27 f., MGH AA 10, p. 142: *Scythicas arcus, cingula Gelonis, iaculum Daci, frenata Susti*.

poem on a victory by Aetius, records how "the Herul was defeated in running, the Hun with javelins, the Frank in swimming, the Sarmatian with the shield, the Salian on foot, the Gelonian with the sickle."<sup>47</sup> The inclusion of peoples that had long disappeared (like the Gelonians) already demonstrates that these lists were conventional, although attributes often changed. Only some images, like the Hun with bow and arrow, emerge from these lists with sufficient clarity.

More pragmatic is the information given in military treatises, like the *Strategikon* attributed to Maurice and written around 600. It distinguishes between the "blonde peoples" like Franks and Lombards who "are armed with shields, lances and short swords", the "Scythians" like Avars and Turks who specialise in cavalry attacks, and the Slavs carrying two small javelins each, some also large shields and small bows and poisoned arrows.<sup>48</sup> Such handbooks could rely on centuries of military experience and numerous intelligence reports.<sup>49</sup> When Caesar planned his expedition to Britain, he asked about "the size of the island, what and how many peoples inhabited it, what ways of war they had and what institutions they used".<sup>50</sup> One of the tablets discovered at the Roman fort of Vindolanda, on Hadrian's Wall, contains a piece of detailed information, probably dating back to the end of the first century A.D.: "The Britons are (not?) unprotected by armour. There are very many cavalry. The cavalry do not use swords nor do the *Brittunculi* take up fixed positions in order to throw javelins."<sup>51</sup> The text demonstrates how well prejudice—the derogatory term *Brittunculi*—goes along with accurate observations that, in the army, were a matter of survival. One may wonder how little of that type of information made its way into the rhetoric of panegyrist and historiographers, but this difference between the pragmatic knowledge available in the army and the material used by historians and geographers can generally be noted.<sup>52</sup> Perhaps this was not so much

<sup>47</sup> Sidonius Apollinaris, *Carm.* 7, vv. 236–7: *vincitur illic cursu Herulus, Chimus iaculis, Francusque natatu, Sauromata clipeo, Salius pede, falce Gelonus.*

<sup>48</sup> Maurice, *Strategikon* 11, 2–4, eds. Dennis and Gamillscheg, CFHB 17.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Lee, *Information and Frontiers.*

<sup>50</sup> Caesar, *De bello Gallico* 4, 20, 4: *insulae magnitudo, quae aut quantae nationes incolerent, quem usum belli haberent, quibus institutis uterentur.*

<sup>51</sup> Vindolanda, T32, ed. Birley, p. 44: *Ne nudi (si)nt Brittones, nimium multi equites. Gladis non utuntur equites nec residunt Brittunculi ut iaculos mittant.*

<sup>52</sup> See, for instance, Timpe, "Entdeckungsgeschichte", p. 370: *Interesse und öffentliches Wissen gingen aber weit auseinander, nachdem kaum noch Feldherrenberichte oder Gesandtenverhandlungen in die Senatöffentlichkeit und Zeitgeschichtsschreibung gelangten.*

due to late antique authors' lack of interest or blurred perceptions, but to the fact that all the details did not add up to a clear overall picture. Other *Brittunculi* must have used swords and thrown javelins, otherwise the report would not have cared to mention it. Our evidence shows how difficult it was to arrive at a clear ethnic typology of the ways in which barbarians fought. But still, scraps of information like this one enabled some Roman specialists, and to a lesser degree the Roman public, to see barbarians in a context that was far broader than any barbarian could envisage.

An old and fundamental distinction was that between the Western peoples, Celts and later Germans, who fought on foot, and the Scythians, later Goths, Huns, and Avars, who fought on horseback. Tacitus, among many others, used it to tell whether the Veneti were Germans or Sarmatians.<sup>53</sup> As a general rule, this had some probability, as steppe riders in the east had always been masters of cavalry. But a look at the three lists cited above shows that not even rhetoric stuck to this principle. Jordanes has the Suevians fight on foot, whereas Claudian symbolises them by the bridle. Sidonius pictures the Heruls in running combat, although they were generally considered a "Scythian", eastern people. Greek authors sometimes counted Juthungi and Alamans among the Scythians and even underlined their excellent cavalry.<sup>54</sup> Early Roman authors, like Caesar and Strabo, had presented a scythicising view of the Germans, until the gradual increase in knowledge had sharpened the distinction between Germans and Scythians; but Greek authors even in late Antiquity sometimes continued using the old stereotypes.<sup>55</sup> In the *Notitia Dignitatum*, cavalry units comprise Alamans, Franks, Marcomans, Batavians and Juthungi.<sup>56</sup> In reality, of course, most Western peoples used both infantry and cavalry. To fight on horseback rather implied social distinction, as becomes clear from the account Ammianus Marcellinus gives of the battle of Argentoratum against the Alamans in 357, when the Alamannic infantry insisted that their leaders should dismount so that they could not flee too easily.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Tacitus, *Germania* 46. In general, cf. Todd, *The Early Germans*, p. 38; Steuer, "Bewaffnung".

<sup>54</sup> Dexippos, *Skylthika* fr. 6, 1 ("the ability of the Scythian Juthungi in fighting on horseback is well known"); Zosimos 1, 37, 2 (Scythian Alamanni).

<sup>55</sup> Timpe, "Entdeckungsgeschichte", pp. 366–372 ("Entskythisierung" Germaniens).

<sup>56</sup> *Notitia Dignitatum*, ed. Seeck, oc. 6; 7; or. 31; 32; 33; 36.

<sup>57</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res gestae* 16, 12, 34: *Alamannorum pedum frenibus indignationi*

Eastern cavalry again fell into two basic categories, light cavalry mostly equipped with reflex bow and arrows with three-sided heads—the “Scythian” type—and heavy, armoured cavalry that relied on the thrust of a long lance, *contus*, a technique used by the Sarmatians. As recent excavations show, not even the distinction between Scythians and Sarmatians is absolutely clear, for hundreds of pieces of armour and lances were found in Scythian graves, and numerous bows in Sarmatian graves.<sup>58</sup> The Roman army built up units of *kataphraktarioi* and *clibanarii* cavalry following the Parthian model; in late Antiquity, these two types were often identified, although the *Notitia Dignitatum* maintains the terminological difference.<sup>59</sup> Germanic peoples, for instance the Quadi, also adopted this type of cavalry; Ammianus Marcellinus maintained that along the Pannonian border, “Sarmatians and Quadi were united by vicinity and the similarity of customs and armour”.<sup>60</sup> North of the Black Sea, the Ostrogoths adopted heavy cavalry and the use of the *contus*, still attested by Jordanes and Procopius. The Visigoths only changed their fighting habits towards the end of the fourth century and made the heavy cavalry their main unit. When Ulfila translated the Bible into Gothic a few decades before that, there had not even been a Gothic word for the *contus*.<sup>61</sup> In the seventh century Isidore, in his Gothic History, gives a differentiated picture of the Visigoths: “On horseback, they do not only fight with lances (*hastis*), but also with javelins, and they do not only use cavalry, but also infantry, although they trust more in the quick run of the rider.”<sup>62</sup> On the other hand, the *contus* was widely diffused; Gregory of Tours mentions it not only in connection with Visigoths, but also with Burgundians, Lombards and Frankish *comites*.<sup>63</sup>

*mixtus auditus est unanimi conspiratione vociferantium relictis equis secum oportere versari regales, ne si quid contigisset adversum, deserta miserabili plebe facilem discedendi copiam reppererent.*

<sup>58</sup> Černenko and Zubar in *Gold der Steppe—Archäologie der Ukraine*, pp. 209–14.

<sup>59</sup> For a description, see for instance Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae* 16, 10, 8. Cf. the reconstruction in Symons, *Costume of Ancient Rome*, p. 47.

<sup>60</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae* 17, 12, 1: . . . *permixtas Sarmatas et Quados, vicinitate et similitudine morum armaturaequae concordēs*. He goes on to describe their equipment: *quibus . . . hastae sunt longiores et loricae ex cornibus rasis et levigatis plumarum specie linteis indumentis innexae*.

<sup>61</sup> Wolfram, *Goths*, p. 174.

<sup>62</sup> Isidore, *Historia Gothorum* 59: *Non solum hastis, sed et iaculis equitando configunt, nec equestri tantum proelio, sed et et pedestri incedunt, verumtamen magis equitum praepeti cursu confidunt*. The *hasta*, always according to Isidore (*Etymologiae* 18, 7, 1), was a *contus cum ferro*.

<sup>63</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 2, 37 (Visigoths); 3, 6 (Burgundians); 10, 3 (Lombards); 5, 36; 5, 48 (Franks).

In reality, most armies had to rely on various types of troops, and often also on many warriors who could not afford the full equipment, a problem repeatedly addressed in Lombard laws or Carolingian capitularies.<sup>64</sup> And although some people employed certain types of armour and the related strategies more successfully than others, they were hardly ever the only ones to use them. Furthermore, the Roman, and later Byzantine, army was always quick to copy its enemies. Both phenomena tended to obscure any ethnic distinctions. Of course, steppe peoples always maintained their skills in fighting on horseback, the number of horses at their disposal and their quick manoeuvres that required large open spaces. Unlike the heavy cavalry, the reflex bow that needed a rather dry climate for optimal function and the three-sided arrow-heads remained more or less limited to steppe warriors. Although Huns, Avars and Magyars all used them, their western neighbours never adopted reflex bows in significant quantities. But, although only gradually, they copied another advance in riding technique that the Avars brought to Europe: the stirrup.<sup>65</sup> In any case, although steppe peoples retained their specific and recognizable ways of fighting over centuries, this was not an ethnic but an environmental characteristic. Ancient and medieval European observers may have taken it as evidence that all of these peoples were Scythians, or later, Huns; but as ethnic categories these terms were so vague that the ways in which fifth- and sixth-century authors employed them varied widely, variously including or excluding Goths, distinguishing Scythians from Huns or identifying them.<sup>66</sup>

In the Frankish world, the standard weapons were shield and spear, a minimal equipment that was so common that it turned into a fixed formula for a man's arms, reinforced by its assonance. But in the course of time, the actual forms of these weapons changed considerably.<sup>67</sup> Uniformity was a concept maintained in the sphere of significance, for epic poetry or law, but not on a visual level where types of weapons could actually guarantee recognition. For neither were shield and spear exclusively used by Franks or even Germanic peoples (whatever their definition), nor can we detect any privileged use of shield and spear when the Franks went to war. The general model allowed

<sup>64</sup> Last, “Bewaffnung der Karolingerzeit”, p. 469.

<sup>65</sup> Pohl, *Awaren*, pp. 170–73.

<sup>66</sup> See Pohl, “Goti d'Italia”, pp. 242–45.

<sup>67</sup> Hüpper-Dröge, *Schild und Speer*, p. 393.

for a wide sphere of idiosyncrasies, for instance in the runes found on shields or spears. They individualise single arms by giving them names like "frequent rider" or "evildoer", but do not imply any community, ethnic or otherwise, which the warrior and his arms might represent.<sup>68</sup> There are a few hints that the shields were painted more uniformly; Sidonius Apollinaris describes Prince Sigismer's Frankish retinue carrying shields with white rim and reddish-yellow umbo.<sup>69</sup> This has often been connected with Tacitus' assertion that the Germans "distinguish their shields with choicest colours". But apart from the methodological problem of using Tacitus as evidence for the early medieval Franks, he does not say that the distinction was between *gentes*; the context rather suggests that he meant social or individual distinctions. Observers might use brightness or darkness of shields as an atmospheric detail, according to the old topos of the *splendor armorum*.<sup>70</sup> In the early Middle Ages, there is no evidence for the use of painted shields for ethnic identification; and indeed, it is hard to envisage a major Gothic or Frankish army all carrying shields of the same colour, whereas it seems likely enough that a princely retinue like Sigismer's sought to distinguish itself by specific shields, reminiscent of the signs worn by Roman army units.<sup>71</sup> This would correspond with the observation of Hydatius that the fifth century Visigoths came together for a formal reunion carrying spears (*hastae*) of different colours.<sup>72</sup>

With all this in mind, we need not be surprised that Isidore must

<sup>68</sup> Hüpper-Dröge, *Schild und Speer*, pp. 162–72. Cf. the inscription on a sword mentioned in the *Visio Karoli Magni*: Geary, "Germanic tradition and royal ideology in the 9th century", p. 290.

<sup>69</sup> Sidonius Apollinaris, *Ep.* 4, 20: *clipeis . . . quorum lux in orbibus nivea, fulva in umbonibus*; Sigismer came to the Burgundian court for a bride and might have been a Frank. It should, however, be noted that this might not refer to paint but to the metal of the umbo.

<sup>70</sup> Tacitus, *Germania* 6: *scuta tantum lectissimis coloribus distinguunt*. Cf. Tacitus, *Annales* 2, 14: *tenuis et fucatas colore tabulas*. Wenskus, "Bewaffnung", p. 461, takes this as a proof that "für einzelne Stämme besondere Kennfarben" were used, taking evidence from Plutarch's description of the bright shields of the Cimbri (Marius 25, 9) and Tacitus' (*Germania* 43) remark that the Harii paint their bodies and their shields dark and fight at night. Underlining the more likely association of the latter practice with *Totenheer* rites: Wenskus, "Religion abâtardie", p. 226. Decorated shields in the Roman army: Southern and Dixon, *The Late Roman Army*, p. 103.

<sup>71</sup> Sidonius' description of Sigismer's warriors still plays a fundamental role in histories of Frankish dress, see, for instance, Beaulieu, *Le costume antique et médiéval*, p. 70.

<sup>72</sup> Hydatius, *Chronica* a. 243; Banaskiewicz, "Les hastes colorées des Wisigoths d'Euric".

have found it hard to give shape to the theoretical principle that arms defined ethnic identities. Indeed, in the chapter where he discusses arms he hardly gives any indication which peoples used them, and does not, for instance, mention the Goths when he discusses the *contus* (18, 7, 2). The only exception in which Isidore attributes a type of weapon to a specific people has etymological reasons: the famous *francisca*. "Axes are the signs that were carried in front of consuls; the *Hispani* call these from the use of the Franks *francisca* by derivation."<sup>73</sup> This would make one think of a "symbol of ethnic identity" par excellence, and many scholars have interpreted it that way, especially as axes, together with the *ango*, a short barbed spear, are frequently mentioned as weapons used by the Franks in the fifth and sixth centuries, both by outside observers like Sidonius Apollinaris or Procopius and by insiders like Gregory of Tours.<sup>74</sup> Axes are also frequent in archaeological material—almost a thousand of them have been found in Frankish graves—, although the chronological distribution is limited; the most obvious type, called *francisca* by the archaeologists, only appears in the late fifth and the first half of the sixth century.<sup>75</sup> All axe types taken together, the percentage of axes among weapons found in graves has been calculated at 26% in the sixth century, as opposed to about half the percentage in Alamannic graves.<sup>76</sup>

This is not the only reason why the example is problematic. It is not easy to tell what exactly the *francisca* was. In the texts that mention it, the *francisca* is variously explained as *securis* or *bipennis*. According to the classical distinction, found in Vegetius, the *bipennis* was a double axe.<sup>77</sup> But it is reasonable to ask whether later authors (for instance Gregory of Tours) do differentiate between the two terms at all.<sup>78</sup> Double axes do not appear in the archaeological evidence, but scholars use the term "francisca" to distinguish the majority of axes with

<sup>73</sup> Isidore, *Etymologiae* 18, 6, 9: *Secures signa sunt quae ante consules ferebantur; quas Hispani ab usu Francorum per derivationem Francisca vocant*.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Dahmlos, "Francisca—bipennis—securis. Bemerkungen zu archäologischem Befund und schriftlicher Überlieferung"; id., "Franziska—Historisches"; Bracher, *Waffen im Frühmittelalter*, pp. 253–71; Southern and Dixon, *The Late Roman Army*, pp. 115 f.

<sup>75</sup> Werner, "Bewaffnung und Waffenbeigabe", pp. 331–34; Hübener, "Franziska—Archäologisches", pp. 472–6; Halsall, *Early Medieval Cemeteries*, p. 60.

<sup>76</sup> Siegmund, "Kleidung und Bewaffnung der Männer im östlichen Frankenreich", pp. 703–05.

<sup>77</sup> Vegetius 5, 15: *Bipennis est securis habens utraque parte latissimum et acutissimum ferrum*.

<sup>78</sup> Schmidt-Wiegand, "17. Bericht des Münsterer Sonderforschungsbereiches 7", p. 711, has even shown that in some cases, *bipennis* may refer to a sword.

curved blade from other types.<sup>79</sup> Isidore called the *francisca* a *securis*, and identified it with the lictor's axe. Only in retrospect, the definition of *francisca* as *bipennis* became standard. Modern scholars have sought various ways to explain away these contradictions, either by minimising the value of the sources that speak of double axes, or by assuming that for some ritual reasons double axes were not put in graves.<sup>80</sup>

The *francisca* is a methodological example that demonstrates the chances and pitfalls of a search for signs of ethnic identity. We have several disparate groups of sources. Grave finds demonstrate that axes, mostly with one curved blade, were one of the standard weapons Frankish warriors were buried with in the era of Clovis and his sons; this massive block of evidence very likely constitutes the point of reference for all contemporary observations. Sidonius Apollinaris observes that noble Frankish warriors carried axes.<sup>81</sup> Well-informed sixth century Byzantine authors like Procopius and Agathias confirm that Frankish troops in Italy threw axes; Agathias clearly speaks of double axes.<sup>82</sup> Gregory of Tours describes how Clovis's warriors who present themselves in the "splendour of their arms" on the marchfield<sup>83</sup> each carry a lance, a sword and a *securis*. The evidence is different for his own time. He mentions the *securis* in several occasions, but it is never used in battle and never thrown; and he never calls it *francisca*. Usually, it serves to murder or execute somebody, very often treacherously, even during meals.<sup>84</sup> It is not only used by Franks but also by Romans, for instance by a cleric hired by the archdeacon of Lisieux

<sup>79</sup> Hübener, "Franziska—Archäologisches", p. 472, with illustration.

<sup>80</sup> Zöllner, "Francisca bipennis", pp. 27–33; Dahmlos, "Francisca—bipennis—securis", p. 158, both trying to eliminate evidence for double axes; Wenskus, "Religion abâtardie", p. 203, arguing (with Raddatz, "Bewaffnung", p. 433) that the *francisca* as double axe might be a more archaic sign of ethnic identity (for which there is no evidence) or that double axes were not to be put in graves.

<sup>81</sup> Frankish warriors throwing *bipennes*: Sidonius Apollinaris, *Carm.* 5, v. 246; Prince Sigismar and his retinue carrying *securis*: Sidonius Apollinaris, *Ep.* 4, 20.

<sup>82</sup> Procopius, *Bella* 6, 25: "Each man carried a sword and a shield and one axe. The iron head of this weapon was thick and exceedingly sharp on all sides, while the wooden handle was very short. And they are accustomed to throwing these axes at one signal in the first charge and thus shatter the shields of the enemy and kill them", which need not necessarily indicate a double axe, unlike Agathias, 2, 5, who clearly envisages a double axe. Bury, *History of the Later Roman Empire* 2, p. 280, n. 1, simply comments, according to the traditional view: "The axe was called *francisca*".

<sup>83</sup> For a critique of the concept of "marchfield" see, however, Springer, "Jährliche Wiederkehr oder ganz anderes: Märzfeld oder Marsfeld?"

<sup>84</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae*, e.g. 2, 27; 2, 40; 2, 42 (as a weapon used by Clovis's men); 6, 36; 8, 16; 8, 19; 8, 36; 9, 35; 10, 27 (used for murder or execution). Cf. Weidemann, *Kulturgeschichte*, p. 257.

to kill his bishop: the man followed Bishop Aetherius with his *bipennis* for so long, waiting for an opportunity, that the victim became suspicious.<sup>85</sup> The implication is that axes were used as tools, and a cleric carrying one was not an unfamiliar sight in the cities of Gaul. There is no attempt in Gregory's *Historiae* to establish any distinction between different types or functions of axes, and no trace of its role as a sign of Frankish identity.

The first Frankish author, and the first text altogether after Isidore's *Etymologies*, to mention the name *francisca* at all is the anonymous author who wrote the *Liber Historiae Francorum*, presumably in 727. Among other material borrowed from Gregory of Tours, he retold the famous story in which Clovis and one of his warriors quarrel about a piece of booty, until the warrior destroys it with his battle axe. Only at the next marchfield, Clovis has his revenge: "He took the man's axe and threw it to the ground. When he bowed down to pick it up, the king raised his hands and struck that man's head with his axe. "This is", he said, "what you did to that ewer at Soissons." To this story that revolves so dramatically around axes, the *Liber Historiae Francorum* added the synonym: "*francisca*, that is *bipennis*".<sup>86</sup> This version of the story was copied faithfully, more than a century later, by Hincmar of Reims in his *Vita Remigii*, and again a century later by Flodoard.<sup>87</sup> By that time, axes had long ceased to be a favourite weapon among the Franks. Retrospectively, they were probably pictured as double axes, as one of the illustrations in the Utrecht Psalter indicates.<sup>88</sup> This is all the evidence there is from Franks about the *francisca*: A single legend about Clovis to which an eighth-century author added an extra term for an instrument that Gregory and Fredegar had just called *securis* and *bipennis*. One might assume that the word a proud nation had for their favourite weapon had finally surfaced; but it is easier to conclude that the author of the *Liber Historiae Francorum* took the term from Isidore. His etymology for the name "Franks" is probably also derived from the *Etymologies*.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>85</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 6, 36: *Locum clericum, qui eum bipenne percussit.*

<sup>86</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 2, 27; *Liber Historiae Francorum* 10, MGH rer. Mer. 2, p. 253: *franciscam eius, quod est bipennis*; cf. *ibid.*, 17, p. 267.

<sup>87</sup> Hincmar, *Vita Remigii* 11, MGH rer. Mer. 3, pp. 292–3; Flodoard, *Historia Remensis Ecclesiae*, MGH SS 13, p. 424.

<sup>88</sup> Utrecht Psalter fol. 2r; also in the Harley Psalter, fol. 2r; and in the Eadwine Psalter fol. 6v; see *The Utrecht Psalter in Medieval Art*, p. 127. Cf. Wenskus, "Religion abâtardie", p. 203.

<sup>89</sup> *Liber Historiae Francorum* 2: *Francos Attica lingua, hoc est feros*. Isidor, *Etymologiae* 9,

It remains significant that the axe was regarded, in early seventh-century Spain, as a weapon especially used by the Franks. However, in Isidore's eyes, it was not a "genuine" Frankish weapon but of Roman origin. Archaeological and written evidence confirm that its form was as varied as its use for throwing or striking, as a weapon or as a tool.<sup>90</sup> The contradictions between the axes found in Frankish graves and the recurring descriptions of the Frankish axes as double axes shed valuable light on early medieval perceptions of barbarian warriors. Basically, information could be quite accurate, but it was shaped by visual memories and analogies that confused the picture. It is very likely that the ancient and numinous licitor's axe, whose pictorial representations were so diffused, impinged on the way Roman authors perceived such a weapon. Double axes had been venerated in northern Europe since the Neolithic, a cult that may have survived into the Christian age.<sup>91</sup> Insular Celts used double axes in the early Middle Ages, as, for instance, some pieces in the British Museum show. But the far-reaching ritual and mythological associations of the double axe do not help to establish it as a symbol of Frankish identity, as the connections with sixth-century Frankish warriors remain purely hypothetical, and most certainly it was not specifically Frankish. As the story about Clovis and the obstinate warrior shows, it may have been regarded as a rulership symbol, but again, not only among the Merovingians.<sup>92</sup>

In any case, one should rather drop the misleading term *francisca* from the discussion. The observation that it was a typical Frankish weapon was made by outsiders; the name is only attested in Visigothic Spain, and there is no evidence that its use contributed to a feeling of Frankish identity or was seen as a deliberate sign. Even when, in retrospect, a cleric introduced Isidore's designation of *francisca* into

2, 101: *Franci (...) a feritate morum (...)*. For the early distribution of manuscripts of Isidore see Bischoff, "Die europäische Verbreitung der Werke Isidors von Sevilla", esp. pp. 325-6 (eighth century mss. at Tours and Corbie); Schindel, "Zur frühen Überlieferungsgeschichte der Etymologien Isidors von Sevilla".

<sup>90</sup> This was also underlined by Frans Theuvs in an unpublished paper at the Leeds International Medieval Congress 1997.

<sup>91</sup> Most recently, Wenskus, "Religion abâtardie", p. 202; cf. Herbert Jankuhn, "Axtkult", p. 563.

<sup>92</sup> For another example, see Wallace-Hadrill, *The Long-Haired Kings*, p. 183, referring to a story about Clovis throwing his axe to mark out a donation in the *Vita Genovevae* (MGH rer. Merov. 3, p. 237); this element of the story is, by the way, not to be found there but in the *Liber Historiae Francorum* 17, p. 267. But see also, for example, Paulus Diaconus, *Historia Langobardorum* 3, 30, about King Authari's axe (*securicula*).

Frankish literature, this had no idiosyncratic effect. Although it was included in a programmatic story about one of the most famous Frankish kings in a rather widely distributed work of historiography, the term never made it beyond the story it had come with. Thus, even the weapon with the clearest ethnic specification in the name does not quite fulfill our ethnographic expectations.

This is also true for another name for a weapon that was related to an ethnonym, the *sax*, from which the name of the Saxons is usually thought to have come.<sup>93</sup> But the appearance of the short, one-edged sword in the course of the fifth century was not specific to the Saxons in any way.<sup>94</sup> The name first appears in Frankish sources.<sup>95</sup> Isidore (9, 2, 100) mentions all sorts of swords, but not the name *sax*, and seems to explain the name of the Saxons from the Latin *saxum*. Only Widukind in the tenth century connects the name of the Saxons with that of the sword.<sup>96</sup> Purely imaginary are some etymologies in which Isidore does explain ethnonyms by fighting habits, for instance that of the Gepids from their habit of fighting on foot (*Gîpedes*), or that of the Sarmatians from their habit to ride out fully armed (*S-armatae*).<sup>97</sup>

These examples show that there is hardly any proof that barbarian peoples regarded their own arms as signs of their ethnic identity, or recognised each other by their use. But we have ample evidence that, in some way or other, types of arms and fighting habits shaped outside perceptions of the *gentes*. There was a number of ways in which Roman images were reinforced or might even turn into stereotypes. Paintings of defeated barbarians were sent home and exposed to the public in Rome;<sup>98</sup> triumphal arches and columns like those of Marcus Aurelius marked the barbarians by stereotyped dress and arms,

<sup>93</sup> Rùbekeil, "Völkernamen Europas", p. 1337.

<sup>94</sup> Wenskus, "Bewaffnung", p. 457; Werner, "Bewaffnung und Waffenbeigabe", p. 336 (both arguing that the *sax*, or at least its narrow form, had been adopted from the Huns). Seen as a continuation of earlier Germanic weapons: *Die Germanen. Ein Handbuch* 1, p. 349; Siegmund, "Kleidung und Bewaffnung der Männer im östlichen Frankenreich", p. 701.

<sup>95</sup> *Liber Historiae Francorum*, MGH rer. Mer. 2, p. 303 (*scramsaxis*).

<sup>96</sup> Widukind, *Res gestae Saxonicae* 1, 6-7: *Fuerunt autem et qui hoc facinore nomen illis inditum tradant. Cullitelli enim nostra lingua "saks" dicuntur, ideoque Saxones nuncupatos, quia cullitelli tantam multitudinem fudissent*. Cf., most recently, Demandt, "Die westgermanischen Stammesbünde", p. 396.

<sup>97</sup> Isidore, *Etymologiae* 9, 2, 92-4.

<sup>98</sup> Herodian 7, 28; *Historia Augusta, Maxim.* 12, 10: *Iussit praeterea tabulas pingi ita, ut erat bellum ipsum gestum, et ante curiam proponi*.

although categories remained rather broad. Specific weapons as well as the Phrygian cap, the Suevian knot or the Germanic trousers figure as visual markers in triumphal iconography.<sup>99</sup> More importantly, barbarian units of the Roman army were specially built up to develop the barbarians' various ways of fighting. In the armies of Justinian ethnic units were still known for their special skills according to which they were employed: the Antes were experienced in combat on rough territory, while the Slavs were experts at laying ambushes.<sup>100</sup> The *Strategikon*, a military handbook written around 600 A.D., lists a number of objects the Roman army had adopted from barbarians whose ethnic background was still known; "according to Avar pattern", the Byzantines had "cavalry lances having straps attached to the middle", "circular gorgets (. . .) in the form of strips of linen outside and of wool inside", coats that covered the rider's knees, armour for the horses and tents. It also mentions the Gothic tunic, Gothic shoes, Bulgarian coats and Herulian swords.<sup>101</sup> Roman generals had always sought to copy barbarian military skills, as much as the barbarians had quite naturally learnt from the Romans and used Roman weapons. Probably more than in any other field, a fundamental distinction between Roman and barbarian weapons, or the idea that there is a continuous and independent development of Germanic arms from the first to the fifth century, does not make sense. The difficulty of distinguishing between Byzantine, "Germanic" and "nomadic" archaeological material in the fifth or sixth century demonstrates how much military elites on all sides had in common.

The Roman army had not only accommodated both barbarian soldiers and barbarian weapons and tactics, it had also often preserved their ethnic name and context. The *Notitia dignitatum*, by the names of the units of the Roman army listed in it, displays over half a millennium of ethnography: from the Galatae, the Teutonici, the Arverni, the Sequani, the Chamavi to the Alamans, Franks, Saliens and Goths. When Sidonius Apollinaris mentions the Franks' white shields with reddish-yellow umbo, this might as much be connected with the round insignia of units of the Roman army as with the statement of Tacitus that Germans distinguished their shields by

<sup>99</sup> Cf. *Die Germanen—ein Handbuch* 1, p. 337.

<sup>100</sup> Procopius, *Bella* 7, 22; 6, 26.

<sup>101</sup> Maurice, *Strategikon* 1, 2, pp. 78–83; XIIB, 1–4, 419–21; translation by J.E. Wiita, *The Ethnika in Byzantine Military Treatises*, p. 140. Cf. Pohl, *Awaren*, p. 171; Kolias, *Byzantinische Waffen*.

painting them in different colours.<sup>102</sup> It is not unlikely that "ethnic" units in the Roman army contributed to shaping ethnic identities of larger groups; for instance, the much-discussed name of the Saliens might have been spread through a unit established by the emperor Julian.<sup>103</sup> This flexibility was one of the reasons for the astonishing success of the Empire. When ethnic groups became a basis for political power from the late fourth century onwards, the ethnic language that had been current within the Roman army became an instrument to grasp the new realities of barbarian groups within the Empire. This is why late antique writers automatically regarded weapons and military tactics as an ethnically distinctive feature. Outside the well-balanced structure of the Roman army, the accuracy of such descriptions was, however, blurred. The time for specialisation and ethnic idiosyncrasies passed quickly as regular units or federates of the Roman army formed the core of new, heterogeneous kingdoms. Uniform attire ceased to be their concern; rather, they had to enforce minimal standards and coordination. Gothic, Frankish or Saxon armies may still have differed from each other, but none of them was homogeneous. That would still have left room for symbolic strategies to make one specific weapon or military practice a liminal sign. The signs of identity used by units of the Roman army, the distinct character that made steppe riders' attacks so frightening for their enemies, Isidore's remark about the *francisca* or Totila's order in the battle at Tadinæ to use only the *contus* show that this option existed. Late antique and early medieval authors wanted to employ strong and emotionally charged visual images to characterise what was behind the many different names of barbarian peoples. But the indications that such images became common and were consciously used are few, and we may conclude that early medieval military elites were too international in their outlook and too flexible in their tactics

<sup>102</sup> Sidonius Apollinaris, *Ep.* 4, 20, see above; *insignia: Notitia dignitatum*, ed. Seeck, pp. 128–9.

<sup>103</sup> In this respect, the hypothesis proposed by Springer, "Salier—Eigenname oder Begriffswort?", seems worth considering: Julian may have misunderstood the Germanic term "comrades", ohg. *sellun* (an etymology proposed by N. Wagner), as a self-designation of warrior groups for an ethnonym when he established the unit of this name. This fits in with the ideas of Anderson Jr., "Roman military colonies in Gaul: Saliens ethnogenesis and the forgotten meaning of Pactus Legis salicae 59.5". For a different explanation of the name see Wenskus, "Religion abâtardie", pp. 190–92 (from the Roman priestly *collegium* of the Sali), with a cursory discussion of alternative ideas. For a fuller bibliography and discussion, see Pohl, *Die Germanen*, forthcoming.

to express ethnic "corporate identities" in their military equipment in any systematic way.

#### COSTUME

In the medieval epic "King Rother", the appearance of strangers in foreign garments stirs curiosity: "How I would like to know/where they come from/their dress is particular".<sup>104</sup> That costume serves as a sign that expresses the social position of its bearer is by now common place in the social sciences.<sup>105</sup> The structural-semiotic approach developed by Petr Grigorevic Bogatyrev in the 1930s sees dress as a distinguishing marker for a considerable number of social functions.<sup>106</sup> Expressing group identification is only one of these functions. In this respect, modern perceptions have been distorted by the concept of "national costume", *Volkstracht*, that ascribed to each tribe, people or nation its specific way of dressing that, unlike urban fashion, was practically immobile and directly expressed the cultural identity, the *Volkseele*, of an ethnic group. However, recent research has made clear to what degree not only the concept, but often also the "national" costume itself was a creation of nineteenth-century romantic and national movements.<sup>107</sup> Ethnic distinction becomes important when elites also display their ethnic diversity, for instance the Ottoman Turks in the Balkans. Otherwise, dress serves as a social marker rather than for ethnic distinction, that is vertically (and this is also what really mattered in high medieval epic poetry, like the "King Rother"). Horizontally, it rather distinguishes small communities, for instances villages, in a neighbourhood that falls within the limited horizon of most of its members.<sup>108</sup> This does not mean that it is impossible to detect similarities in the way larger groups dress. But these "theoretical classes" are often scholarly constructs that should not be con-

<sup>104</sup> *König Rother*, eds. Frings and Kuhnt, pp. 253-5: *we gerne ich daz wiste/wannen sie kumen weren/ir gewant is seltsene*.

<sup>105</sup> See, for instance, Loy, *Symbolique du vêtement, selon la Bible*; Raudszus, *Die Zeichensprache der Kleidung*, pp. 2-7, pp. 178-228; Schubert, *Kleidung als Zeichen*, pp. 3-69.

<sup>106</sup> Bogatyrev, *The Function of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*; Schubert, *Kleidung als Zeichen*, pp. 31-35.

<sup>107</sup> Schubert, *Kleidung als Zeichen*, pp. 9-17.

<sup>108</sup> Schubert, *Kleidung als Zeichen*, p. 12. A survey of dress in medieval German epic shows that ethnic differences are hardly important, cf. Raudszus, *Die Zeichensprache der Kleidung*.

founded with real social groups. To become a social reality, they have to be decoded by others as meaningful differences.<sup>109</sup>

For the analysis of ethnically-specific dress-habits in the early Middle Ages, this means that the wide range of typological differences in the archaeological material, for instance in types of fibulae, cannot always be taken as significant. Typologies established by modern archaeologists do not necessarily reflect late antique perceptions and are often hard to synthesise with the terminology known from our sources (as the example of the francisca, discussed above, shows). Regional material cultures can only be defined statistically, and give no direct clues as to an individual's ethnic identity.<sup>110</sup> Often, the categories that emerge most clearly from archaeological evidence do not correspond to ethnic units (like Franks, Huns, Visigoths) but to broader populations. In modern terminology, these are often called "western" and "eastern Germans" or "Nomads", which fits in more or less with the ancient ethnographic categories "Germani", "Gothi/Getae", "Scythae". But these were cultural terms in spite of the ethnic vocabulary used to describe them, and allowed only broad orientation.<sup>111</sup> Some groups of archaeological finds correspond with these categories, for instance the eastern European Černjachov culture of the fourth century in which Goths and related peoples can hardly be distinguished, but which a contemporary observer would certainly have identified as Scythian.<sup>112</sup> Other early medieval archaeological cultures even cut across these broad categories, for instance the "mode Danubienne" current in and beyond Attila's empire,<sup>113</sup> the sixth century *östlich-merowingischer Reihengräberkreis* (stretching from "Germanic" Franks to "Gothic" Gepids), or the so-called "Germanic Animal Style II" (also found in the Avar empire) that continued into the seventh century.

On the other hand, local and even individual particularities, below the "ethnic" level, were sometimes maintained over generations.<sup>114</sup>

<sup>109</sup> Bourdieu, *Raisons pratiques*, pp. 24-5; *Kodierungs- und Dekodierungsgemeinschaften*: Schubert, *Kleidung als Zeichen*, pp. 38-41.

<sup>110</sup> Cf. the contribution of Falko Daim in this volume; id., "Gedanken zum Ethnosbegriff", pp. 69-71; Härke, "Intentionale und funktionale Daten"; in general see *Archaeological Approaches to Cultural Identity*, ed. S. Shennan.

<sup>111</sup> See Timpe, "Ethnologische Begriffsbildung in der Antike".

<sup>112</sup> Bierbrauer, "Archäologie und Geschichte der Goten", pp. 98-120.

<sup>113</sup> Bierbrauer, "Das Frauengrab von Castelbolognese in der Romagna (Italien)", esp. p. 586; Kazanski, "Les Goths et les Huns".

<sup>114</sup> A good example is the region between Rhine and Elbe from the sixth to the eighth centuries, see the forthcoming volume *Franken und Sachsen vor 800*, eds. Jarnut and Wemhoff.



Only sometimes, archaeological cultures seem to correspond to ethnic categories. In the case of the Avars, the extraordinarily rich evidence (about 70,000 excavated graves, many of them with grave goods) and a relatively uniform material culture more or less confined to the Avar territory as described by texts give us very good clues as to what an Avar might look like in what period, and in what ways his appearance differed from that of other peoples. But the polyethnic structure of the Avar realm that is not clearly reflected in the material creates problems here. Avar belts and weapons in a grave might as well have belonged to a person who spoke Slavic and considered himself a Bulgar, especially in the periphery of the khaganate.<sup>115</sup>

The question of archaeological evidence for costume and its possible ethnic connotations cannot be discussed adequately here. Historians should just be warned not to take the interpretation of grave finds as an alternative shortcut to "hard facts", which they have become used not to expect from their texts. Ethnic identification has become so widely accepted as the place where texts and material culture meet that the far-reaching assumptions necessary for this approach often go unnoticed. Lack of interest for or information on "vestimentary markers" in contemporary texts, and even more their misunderstandings, should warn us that decoding ethnic particularities of dress was perhaps not such a natural and universal interest in early medieval society. The evidence that costume marked social distinctions is overwhelmingly stronger than its significance in displaying ethnic identities, and this is true for archaeological evidence as well as for texts. But on the other hand, a certain number of textual examples demonstrate that costume as ethnic sign was not unknown. It has to be discussed, as far as possible, in the context of symbolic codes and its social function.

After winning a battle against the Gepids, Paul the Deacon writes, the Lombard king Audoin sent his son Alboin to the Gepid king to become his son of arms. Alboin was received according to the laws of hospitality, but in the course of the banquet a Gepid prince began to mock the Lombards, because they wore white bands under the calves, similar to the mares whose feet are white up to the shins, and said: "The mares you look like stink". Then one of the Lombards responded thus: "Go", he said, "to the *Asfeld*, and there you will

<sup>115</sup> Cf. Pohl, *Awaren*, esp. pp. 282-7.

doubtlessly find out how valiantly those you call mares can lash out, for there your brother's bones are dispersed on the field like those of some vile pack animal".<sup>116</sup> Stereotypes like this are not uncommon; the Goths mocked the Gepids by connecting their name with the word *gepanta*, lazy, and the Goths themselves were ridiculed by a story that they had once been slaves and had later been bought off for the price of a Goth, i.e. a single horse.<sup>117</sup> In prejudice the perception of differences is distilled; most frequently, names become the objects of ridicule; historical misfortunes or physical and intellectual inadequacies also play an important part.<sup>118</sup> Dress or outward appearance in general, as in Paul the Deacon's story, only exceptionally serves as the basis for stereotypes; and indeed, as the Lombard's answer demonstrates, such a stereotype can easily be turned against the offender.

There is another passage in which Paul the Deacon writes about the way in which the Lombards dressed. When he describes the paintings in Queen Theodelinda's palace at Monza, he states that from these pictures, he knew about the Lombards' dress and hairstyle. "Their garments were wide and mostly made of linen, as the Anglo-Saxons usually have them, adorned with broader braids and woven in various colours. Their shoes were almost open to the tip of the toe and fastened by interwoven straps. Later they began to use leggings (*osae*), over which they put *tubrugos birreos* when riding. But this was taken from Roman custom."<sup>119</sup> Whatever exactly that riding

<sup>116</sup> Paulus Diaconus, *Historia Langobardorum* 1, 23: *Tunc regis alter qui aderat filius Langobardos iniuriis lacessere coepit, asserens eos, quia a suis inferius candidis utbantur fuscoculis, equabus quibus crure tenuis pedes albi sunt similes, dicens: "Fetidae sunt equae, quas simulas". Tunc unus e Langobardis ad haec ita respondit: "Perge", ait, "in campum Asfeld, ibique procul dubio poteris experiri, quam valide istae quas equas nomina praevaleant calcitrare; ubi sic tua sunt dispersa ossa germani quemadmodum vilis iumenti in mediis pratis". For coloured calf-bands (*Wadenbinden*) as a part of Germanic costume see *Die Germanen - ein Handbuch* 1, p. 339; Siegmund, "Kleidung und Bewaffnung der Männer im östlichen Frankenreich", p. 693, who also points to representation in miniatures.*

<sup>117</sup> Jordanes, *Getica* 94-5 and 38; Wolfram, *Goths*, p. 37.

<sup>118</sup> Meyvaert, "Voicing national antipathy"; Brühl, *Deutschland-Franke*, pp. 244 f.; 272-76.

<sup>119</sup> Paulus Diaconus, *Historia Langobardorum* 4, 22: *Vestimenta vero eis erant laxa et maxime linea, qualia Anglisaxones habere solent, hornata instibus laboribus vario colore contextis. Calcei vero eis erant usque ad summum pollicem pene aperti et alternatim laqueis corrigiarum retenti. Postea vero coeperunt osis uti, super quas equitantes tubrugos birreos mitabant.* The *osae* initially covered the lower part of the leg—van der Rhee, "Die germanischen Wörter in der *Historia Langobardorum* des Paulus Diaconus", p. 284; *laudore*, *Etymologiae* 19, 34, 9, lists *osae* under the heading *De calciamentis* (shoes), as opposed to the short

costume looked like, some conclusions are clear. Paul the Deacon knew the costume of earlier Lombards only from wall paintings; it had changed since without any visible consequence for the identity of the Lombards. At least in Paul's view, it had not differed very much from the way the Anglo-Saxon pilgrims dressed. Paul attributed the change to Roman influence which is certainly correct as a broad statement about acculturation; the *osae* (trousers or rather leggings), however, were not at all a Roman garment, as Paul thought, for even the word is a Germanic loanword. A slightly different view is found in later southern Italian king-lists where Theodelinda's son, King Adaloald, is listed with the remark: *Iste primum calcauit osam partitam*.<sup>120</sup> Here, Parthian origin is assumed for the leggings worn by Lombard kings.

A few decades after Paul the Deacon, Einhard devoted a whole chapter of his "Life of Charlemagne" to the emperor's way of dressing, distinguishing between the *vestitus patrius, id est Francicus* that the emperor wore (including a silk-lined tunic, which added a touch of luxury to the Frankish simplicity), and the *peregrina indumenta*, the foreign dress that he disliked, for instance the shoes shaped *Romano more* and the *chlamys* that he only put on for a meeting with the pope.<sup>121</sup> A

trousers which were usually called *bracae*; but in Paul's day, *osae* could mean trousers, leggings or gaiters (see Du Cange, vol. 6, pp. 70–71). In any case, as the term suggests they are of Germanic origin. The description of the shoes would suggest something like the Roman *crepidae*, cf. Symons, *Costume of Ancient Rome*, p. 58; but shoes of a similar type, reminiscent of Roman models, are also found in the *Germania* of the first centuries, cf. *Die Germanen—ein Handbuch* 1, pp. 341 f. For Anglo-Saxon dress, see Owen-Crocker, *Dress in Anglo-Saxon England*. The exact meaning of *tubrugos birreos* is doubtful. Christie, *The Lombards*, p. 43 translates: "Later on they put on thigh boots, over which they put woolen greaves when out riding". Capó (1992) has *gambali di panno* (cloth leggings), Bartolini (1982) "calzoni di panno rossiccio" (trousers from reddish cloth). Isidore, *Etymologiae* 19, 22, 30 defines: *Tubrucos vocatos quod tibias bracasque legant*—they cover trousers and shins. It is also unclear whether by *birrei*, Paul means the *birrus*. In classical Latin, this was "a rectangular cloak usually made of thick, coarse wool with a long, raised nap" (Symons, *Costume of Ancient Rome*, p. 20; cf. Beaulieu, *Le costume antique et médiéval*, p. 61; see also *Codex Theodosianus* 14, 10, 2). Ultimately, the word was derived from the Greek *pyrrhos*, a reddish colour, which may be a second option for a translation. Isidore, *Etymologiae* 19, 24, 18, does not give a clear definition for *birrus*, but lists it under types of cloaks. Thus, Paul might mean a riding gear consisting of both gaiters or leggings and overcoat, with the "and" omitted.

<sup>120</sup> This remark is both found in the *Codex Casinensis* 175 (10th century) and in the *Vaticanus latinus* 5001 (c. 1300, copied from a 10th century manuscript).

<sup>121</sup> Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni* 23. For Carolingian clothing, see Riché, *Daily Life in the World of Charlemagne*, pp. 161–5.

similar statement about Louis the Pious' moderation in dress is found in Thegan's biography of the emperor.<sup>122</sup> He also describes the stylish "Gascon" garments Louis wore, on Charlemagne's orders, at the time when he was king in Aquitaine.<sup>123</sup> It seems that writers of the Carolingian period were more perceptive of ethnic differences in dress than the contemporaries of the Merovingians, just as they paid more attention to differences in law or customs. The difference between traditional Roman and/or Byzantine costume and the ways people dressed in the successor states was often observed under the Carolingians. What they regarded as Frankish was, of course, the product of a long process of acculturation. But one could go back to Greek and Roman authors who had always made the distinction between Greek/Roman and barbarian dress. Now it came to be seen as a merit to be dressed in simple, unpretentious Frankish garments that differed little "from common and plebeian dress", *a communi ac plebeio*, just as Roman writers of the late republic and the principate had preferred the traditional Roman costume to pretentious oriental garments and imported luxuries.

The concern of Carolingian writers like Paul the Deacon, Einhard and Thegan with dress codes and their specific ethnic context was a new phenomenon, hardly found in early authors like Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, or Bede. Apart from the moralising distinction between Roman, barbarian and oriental dress, ancient ethnography had offered relatively little material to exemplify that one could distinguish among barbarians according to their costume. Of course, it was obvious that some barbarians were more savage than others.<sup>124</sup> These were often pictured as going naked, at least to the waist,<sup>125</sup> or

<sup>122</sup> Thegan, *Vita Hludovici* 19.

<sup>123</sup> Thegan, *Vita Hludovici* 4: *occurrit ad Patrisbrunam, habitu Wasconum cum coaevis sibi pueris indutus, amiculo scilicet rotundo, manicis camisae diffusis, cruralibus distentis, calcaribus caligulis insertis, missile manu ferens; haec enim delectatio voluntasque ordinaverat paterna.*

<sup>124</sup> Cf. Dauge, *Le Barbare*, pp. 481–6, about *niveaux d'évolution* of barbarians; Timpe, "Rom und die Barbaren des Nordens" (*Kulturgefälle*).

<sup>125</sup> E.g. Caesar, *De bello Gallico* 6, 21, 5: *locis frigidissimis neque vestitus praeter pelles habeant quicquam, quarum propter exiguitatem magna est corporis pars aperta*; Polybios 2, 28, 8 (Gaisates); Pomponius Mela, *De chorographia* 3, 3, 26 (young men) and 3, 6, 56 (Panotii have large ears they use instead of dress); Seneca, *De providentia* 4, 15: *intecta corpora*; Paulus Diaconus, *Historia Langobardorum* 1, 20 (Heruls fighting naked except for a loincloth); Agathias 2, 5 (about the troops of Butilinus and Leuthari fighting naked to the waist). On the other hand, fourth century Goths could be shocked into submission by a Saracen in Roman service attacking them "wearing nothing but a loincloth", Ammianus Marcellinus 31, 16, 6—so the stereotype could also be turned

only wearing animal skins.<sup>126</sup> Wearing pelts in southern countries led to terrible odours.<sup>127</sup> Some even wore "the skins of field mice stitched together" as the Huns did according to Ammianus.<sup>128</sup> But these examples were usually set far beyond the regions from which reliable information could be expected. For some authors, even remote provinces of the Empire were exceedingly barbarian; Cassius Dio, who had been governor of Pannonia for some time in the third century, believed that the Pannonians "led the most miserable lives of all mankind".<sup>129</sup> On the other hand, embroidery and colourful ornaments were soon seen as typically barbarian.<sup>130</sup> Tacitus could furnish some information about the way the Germans dressed—their most typical garment was the *sagum*, the rectangular cloak held together by a fibula.<sup>131</sup> The Celts had also worn the *sagum*, and consequently Isidore considered it as a *Gallicum nomen*.<sup>132</sup> Frankish men continued to wear it, as, for instance, Gregory of Tours and Einhard attest.<sup>133</sup> There is little specific information about Germanic costume in the *Germania*.

Isidore tried to synthesise centuries of ancient ethnography in his chapter *De proprio quarundam gentium habitu*, introduced with the general assumption that "many nations each have their own dress", and

around. Naked Slavs: Procopius, *Bella* 6, 14, 26; *Chronicon paschale* a. 626. Nudity might also have a ritual or signal function, cf. Raudszus, *Die Zeichensprache der Kleidung*, pp. 217–9.

<sup>126</sup> Caesar, *De bello Gallico* 4, 1, 10, about the Suebi: *neque vestitus praeter pelles habeant*; Tacitus, *Germania* 46: the Fenni *vestitui pelles*; similarly Paulus Diaconus, *Historia Langobardorum* 1, 5, about the Scritobini: *hirtis pellibus sibi indumenta preparant*.

<sup>127</sup> Sidonius Apollinaris, *Ep.* 1, 2, 4; 7, 9, 19; Rutilius Namantianus, *De reditu suo* 2, 49 ff.; cf. Wolfram, *Goths*, p. 211. Modern historiography has often taken these poetic images as proof that the Aquitanian Goths still wore their "national costume": *An ihrer nationalen Tracht hielten die Goten bis in spätere Zeit fest*. (Schmidt, *Die Ostgermanen*, p. 526).

<sup>128</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus 31, 2, 5: *indumentis (...) ex pellibus silvestrium murum consarcinatis*.

<sup>129</sup> Cassius Dio, *Romaike Historia* 49, 36. He remarked that they had the name from the type of coats they wore which simply was an *interpretatio Romana* (from *pannus*) but excluded some of the cruder stereotypes.

<sup>130</sup> E.g. Olympiodorus fr. 27, ed. Blockley; cf. also Zeller, "Tracht der Frauen", p. 683.

<sup>131</sup> Tacitus, *Germania* 17: *Tegumen omnibus sagum fibula aut, si desit, spina consertum*. He maintained that only the rich also had underwear that was not loose like that of the Parthians and Sarmatians but *stricta et singulos artus exprimente*. The *sagum* was a thick woollen cloak of military origin: Symons, *Costume of Ancient Rome*, p. 20.

<sup>132</sup> Isidore, *Etymologiae* 19, 24, 13: *Sagum autem Gallicum nomen est: dictum autem sagum quadratum eo quod apud eos primum quadratum vel quadruplex esset*.

<sup>133</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 9, 35; Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni* 23 (Charlemagne *sago veneto amictus*).

a list of examples: "the Parthians their baggy breeches (*sarabarae*), the Gauls their *linnae*, the Germans pelts (*renones*), the Hispanians their *stringes*, the Sardinians their sheepskin (*mastruca*)".<sup>134</sup> In this list, the *stringes* stand out as an addition from the author's native country, and a word unfamiliar from classical literature, though probably of Latin origin. Otherwise, the material is purely conventional, as becomes clear when Isidore goes on to quote his sources: the prophet Daniel, Publilius, Cicero, Plautus and Sallust, all of them at least 600 years old when Isidore used them. Some further examples include exotic peoples like the Seres, the Indi, the Armenians, (Caucasian) Alans, Persians, and Arabs. The only peoples still existing in Western Europe that Isidore mentions are the Alamans (*sagati*, wearing the ancient Celtic *sagum*) and the Scotti (Irish), "badly covered and with barking speech". Otherwise, he only assembles detailed information about a millennium of Greek and Roman garments. It might not have been Isidore's primary concern to collect contemporary information; but it is remarkable that in his extensive discussion in which every known term for types of dress is listed accidental detail is virtually absent, and he does not even care to explain his remark about the *stringes*. His repeated affirmation that "peoples are thus recognised as different in their appearance as in their dress" obviously was hardly supported by many practical observations.

There is no doubt that dress could be regarded as foreign or, from a Roman point of view, barbarian. Trousers (*bracae*), for instance, were for a long time seen as typically barbarian.<sup>135</sup> Agathias observed that the Franks wore trousers.<sup>136</sup> But were the Germanic trousers wide, as in Roman iconography, or tight-fitting, as Tacitus says?<sup>137</sup> In late Antiquity, the habit began to spread over the Empire, although it is hard to say to what extent. When Honorius in 397 forbade to wear trousers in the city of Rome, this measure only made sense if the large majority of inhabitants did not wear trousers.<sup>138</sup> On the

<sup>134</sup> Isidore, *Etymologiae* 19, 23, 1–2. *Linnae* are a form of *sagum* (*sago quadra et mollia*, as Isidore puts it).

<sup>135</sup> Cf. Polybios 2, 28, 7; Diodorus 5, 30, 1; Pomponius Mela 3, 26. Symons, *Costume of Ancient Rome*, p. 22; *Die Germanen—ein Handbuch* 1, p. 339.

<sup>136</sup> Agathias 2, 5, 3. Cf. Beaulieu, *Le costume antique et médiéval*, pp. 70–73.

<sup>137</sup> Tacitus, *Germania* 17. Bodies found in bogs also wore rather tight-fitting trousers: *Die Germanen—ein Handbuch* 1, p. 339.

<sup>138</sup> *Codex Theodosianus* 14, 10, 2—regardless of whether he wanted to keep out barbarians or prevent Romans from wearing barbarian costume, or both. Cf. Demandt, *Spätantike*, p. 338.

other hand, Diocletian's price edict already included tailors who made trousers, therefore they cannot have been an unfamiliar sight.<sup>139</sup> Sometimes, other types of barbarian dress became fashionable in the cities of the Empire.<sup>140</sup> Procopius strongly disapproved of the way the circus factions dressed in his day: "They all insisted on being very well clad in fine garments, clothing themselves in raiment too pretentious for their individual rank (. . .). And the part of the tunic which covered the arms was gathered by them very closely about the wrist, while from there to each shoulder it billowed out to an incredible breadth (. . .). Also their cloaks and their drawers and especially their shoes, as regards both name and fashion, were classed as "Hunnic".<sup>141</sup> It is hard to imagine that this means these fashion freaks in the capital really dressed the way the Huns did, and this is not what Procopius, who knew all sorts of Huns from his experience in Belisar's army, actually says. It rather demonstrates the flexibility of stereotypes; Huns could not only be pictured in rodents' skins, as Ammianus did, or as covered with filth, as in Procopius's own account, but also in fine and pretentious garments, as no doubt many of the Hunnic ambassadors who came to the capital.<sup>142</sup> A seventh-century papyrus from Egypt lists a "Hunnish silk dress"; in this case, "Hunnish" perhaps denoted the ultimately central Asian origin of this type of silken dress.<sup>143</sup> Still another way to present a Hun was the description Priscus gave of Attila at a banquet: dressed in a very simple way, but immaculately clean.<sup>144</sup>

It was easy enough to classify different dress habits as barbarian; but quite another matter to give an accurate description of the ways in which barbarians really dressed, and how they could be distinguished from each other, beyond the Phrygian cap and the Germanic trousers. The interference between the *interpretatio Romana*, with both its wealth of information and ethnocentric prejudices, and the ways in which barbarians expressed their being different should not

<sup>139</sup> *Edictum Diocletiani* 7, 42; 7, 44.

<sup>140</sup> E.g. Sidonius Apollinaris, *Ep.* 5, 7, 4. Cf. Wolfram, *Goths*, p. 462, n. 12.

<sup>141</sup> Procopius, *Anecdota* 7, 11-14, ed. H.B. Dewing, p. 81.

<sup>142</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus 31, 2; Procopius, *Bella* 7, 14, 28-9, where he describes the Slavs as utterly barbaric, to conclude that they "preserve the Hunnic character in all its simplicity".

<sup>143</sup> P. Vindob. G 1.132: ἀλκονάριον ὀλοσικριὸν Οὐννικόν; see Diethart, "Bulgaren und Hunnen in Ägypten", pp. 256 f.

<sup>144</sup> Priscus fr. 8, ed. Müller. Cf. Maas, "Fugitives and ethnography in Priscus of Panium", esp. p. 148, for the variety of images of the Huns in Roman texts.

make us simply dismiss all Roman perceptions as misrepresentations. From the fourth century onwards, Romans, at least in the west, were not distant observers any more, they were parts of communities in which differences in dress might or might not matter. But it requires more than an addition of respective passages in the sources and the elimination of contradictions to find out how barbarians dressed and what that may have meant.

The problem for both contemporary and modern perceptions is that late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages saw some fundamental changes in the way people dressed. Innovation in dress often expresses more fundamental changes in society, and usually goes along with actual or intended social advancement of new groups.<sup>145</sup> This was certainly the case with western European barbarians in the fourth to sixth centuries. Basically, garments that were wrapped around the body and fixed by fibulae or pins gradually disappeared, and trousers and tailored tunics or shirts came to be used.<sup>146</sup> In the fourth and fifth centuries, Western Germanic women abandoned the ancient *peplos*-type of dress, a rectangular piece of cloth that was wrapped around the body and fixed by fibulae on the shoulder, for a tunic.<sup>147</sup> It is typical that such a fundamental change went unnoticed by all our sources and can only be reconstructed by the position of the fibulae in the graves. A Roman observer initially might not even have realised whether the women wore a tunic or not, because for a while the traditional position of the fibulae on the shoulder was maintained as an ornament, although they did not serve to fix the garment any more. But in ceremonial costume at least, a necklace was attached to it as before with the *peplos*. Only in the course of time did fibulae and other ornaments come to be fixed to the belt.<sup>148</sup> These changes involved Franks, Alamans, Thuringians, Lombards and others, and thus do not allow any ethnic differentiation, although Gothic women in general kept the traditional style, at least for burial. Further romanisation, for instance of the Lombards in Italy, soon led

<sup>145</sup> Schubert, *Kleidung als Zeichen*, pp. 19-20.

<sup>146</sup> Cf. Arnold, *A Handbook of Costume*, Owen-Crocker, *Dress in Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 28; Siegmund, "Kleidung und Bewaffnung der Männer im östlichen Frankenreich", p. 691.

<sup>147</sup> Martin, "Tradition und Wandel"; id., "Fibel und Fibeltracht"; Zeller, "Tracht der Frauen"; Vallet, "Weibliche Moden im Westteil des merowingischen Königreiches"; cf. also *Die Germanen—ein Handbuch* 1, p. 337.

<sup>148</sup> Martin, "Schmuck und Tracht".

to the complete disappearance of fibulae from the graves, whether that was due to a change of burial practices or of dress styles, or both.<sup>149</sup>

Frankish men in the Merovingian period and later also wore tunics; they might wear linen shirts and trousers under it, and a mantle over it.<sup>150</sup> Gregory of Tours' reference to the specific styles of hair and dress of the Bretons unfortunately remains vague.<sup>151</sup> Most of our textual evidence is about royal robes, liturgical vestments or the garments of holy men. In archaeological material, one of the most conspicuous signs of identity is the belt, or rather its fittings, which are often preserved. Its prestige value may be derived from Roman use as a sign of office or status. In most of western Europe, belts were very similar around 500; but fashion changed quickly.<sup>152</sup> In the sixth to eighth centuries, multiple belts with several side straps became fashionable in central Europe. In its most elaborate form, with ornamental bronze fittings, it was used by the Avars.<sup>153</sup> The highly specific types of belt fittings that are relatively uniform across the area of Avar settlement, for instance the griffins current for part of the eighth century, allow the hypothesis that this was an Avar sign of identity, and that the court of the khagan had some part in its distribution. I have argued that Avar identity was closely linked to the khaganate, and thus the ethnic sign was at the same time a political statement, demonstrating that the bearer was or wished to be part of the ruling elite of the khaganate. But the multiple belt, originally termed "Nomadengürtel", was not an Avar invention; it has now become clear that it was also used in, and diffused by, Byzantium. Even the relative of a pope in an eighth-century fresco at S. Maria

<sup>149</sup> Cf. Martin, "Fibel und Fibeltracht".

<sup>150</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 4, 32; cf. Weidemann, *Kulturgeschichte*, p. 363; Girke, *Die Tracht der Germanen in der vor- und frühgeschichtlichen Zeit*; Beaulieu, *Le costume antique et médiéval*, pp. 72-3; Siegmund, "Kleidung und Bewaffnung der Männer im östlichen Frankenreich"; Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni* 23—as already attested by Gregory for the Merovingian period, Charlemagne wore a shirt and trousers under his tunic.

<sup>151</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 10, 9: Fredegund, who secretly supports the Bretons against the Frankish duke Beppolen, sends them *Saxones, iuxta ritum Brittanorum tonsos atque cultu vestimenti compositos*. Weidemann, *Kulturgeschichte*, p. 364, concludes from this passage that *die einzelnen germanischen Stämme trugen unterschiedliche Kleidung*. But it only refers to specific dress and hairstyles the Bretons had, and may also be a conventional element of the story. To our disappointment, Gregory was much more attentive to eccentric dress habits of ascetic pilgrims than of different *gentes*.

<sup>152</sup> Leitz, "Gürtel und Bewaffnung des frühen Mittelalters", pp. 72-80; Beaulieu, *Le costume antique et médiéval*, p. 62; Siegmund, "Kleidung und Bewaffnung der Männer im östlichen Frankenreich", pp. 695-99.

<sup>153</sup> Pohl, *Awaren*, pp. 184; 288-9.

Antiqua in Rome is depicted as wearing one.<sup>154</sup> A Bulgarian belt is mentioned on a seventh century papyrus fragment.<sup>155</sup> It was also used by Lombards and Bavarians, among others, although its form changed over time.<sup>156</sup> On the whole, in the late-Roman and barbarian culture of the successor kingdoms, belts do not help in many cases to establish ethnic distinctions.

#### HAIRSTYLES AND BODY SIGNS

Although hairstyle is not explicitly listed under the categories of ethnic identity by classical authors, it is certainly implied in the *habitus*, and specific examples for differences in hairstyle are more abundant than for weapons or style of dress.<sup>157</sup> Isidore remarks: *Nonnullae etiam gentes non solum in vestibus sed et in corpore aliqua sibi propria quasi insignia vindicant: ut videmus cirros Germanorum, granos et cinnibar Cotorum, stigmata Brittonum*.<sup>158</sup> That the Goths had reddish hair and pigtails is a singular piece of information. The next sentence, in which the Getae *flavent capitibus intectis*, confuses the picture, because Isidore identifies Goths and Getae (9, 2, 89), but attributes reddish hair to the first and fair hair to the second. This is only one of the contradictions about the *insignia* worn on the body.

One of the best-known cases of ethnically specific hairstyles is that of the Suebi. Tacitus is very explicit about them: "A sign of the *gens* is to comb the hair sideward and tie it into a knot: thus the Suebi are distinguished from the other Germans, and the free Suebi from the slaves."<sup>159</sup> In his description, the Suebi are not a single *gens*, but a loose union of several tribes who enjoy special prestige; their hairstyle, which makes them look larger, is supposed to intensify the enemies' horror in war. But at a closer look, the example becomes problematic. Firstly, Tacitus gives two different descriptions of the

<sup>154</sup> See Falko Daim, in this volume, and Daim, "Byzantinische Gürtelgarnituren des 8. Jahrhunderts", forthcoming.

<sup>155</sup> Diethart, "Bulgaren und Hunnen in Ägypten", pp. 254-56, with illustration 5.101.

<sup>156</sup> Leitz, "Gürtel und Bewaffnung", p. 75; Christie, *Lombards*, pp. 136-7.

<sup>157</sup> Thus, Wenskus, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung*, pp. 137 f., states: *Häufig sind es gerade die in den Funden schwer erkennbaren Teile der Tracht (wie z.B. die Haartracht), die die Stammesgenossen verbindet*.

<sup>158</sup> Isidor, *Etymologiae* 19, 23, 7. Cf. Claude, in this volume.

<sup>159</sup> Tacitus, *Germania* 38: *insigne gentis obliquare crinem nodoque substringere: sic Suebi a ceteris Germanis, sic Sueborum ingenui a servis separantur*.

knot in the same chapter. In the beginning, he says that they comb the hair sideways and then fix it into a knot (*obliquare crinem nodoque substringere*); and then, he goes on to describe how the hair is combed backwards, and the knot is formed on top of the head (*horrentem capillum retro sequuntur ac saepe in ipso vertice religant*).<sup>160</sup> Secondly, Tacitus immediately supplements his ethnic definition with one of status: the knot also serves "to distinguish the free Suebi from the slaves" (*Sueborum ingenui a servis*). And thirdly, Tacitus also observed the dialectic of such signs, for other Germans often imitated it, although not, as the Suebi did, until old age.<sup>161</sup> The Suebian knot is an example of a widely known sign of identity, and it was used in pictorial representations of Germans; it is also attested by finds of bodies in swamps.<sup>162</sup> But its ambiguities in form and function have to be taken seriously; and it seems obvious that status, not ethnic identity, was the primary concern of those who wore it.<sup>163</sup>

In general, Greeks and Romans considered long hair to be typical of barbarians; thus, the new Gallic provinces subdued by Julius Caesar came to be called *Gallia comata*. Romans, on the other hand, were supposed to cut their hair short. Such distinctions were echoed far away in Ireland when the newly converted came together at the "First Synod of St. Patrick" to rule that clerics should cut their hair the Roman way (referring to a particular type of tonsure).<sup>164</sup> Pictorial representations usually show Germanic warriors with long hair, and also with long beards—although male bodies in bogs never wear beards.<sup>165</sup> Sometimes long hair is associated with specific practices, as in Tacitus' account of the Chatti who let hair and beard grow until they have slain an enemy, and only then "reveal their forehead".<sup>166</sup>

<sup>160</sup> Tacitus, *Germania* 38. Lund, "Suebenbegriffe in der taciteischen Germania", pp. 626–30, proposes several emendations of the text to resolve the contradiction, and argues that the second form was used as a sign of social distinction by some Suebian warriors.

<sup>161</sup> Lund, "Suebenbegriffe in der taciteischen Germania", pp. 626–30, concludes that not the first type which was an ethnic sign of distinction (the side knot), but the second type which distinguished the warriors (the knot on top of the head) was imitated. But the text does not suggest such a clear functional typology, and rather implies a diffuse sign of identity that was at once ethnic and social.

<sup>162</sup> *Die Germanen—ein Handbuch* 1, pp. 343 f.; Todd, *The Early Germans*, p. 113. Cf. also Martial, *Spect.* 3, 9.

<sup>163</sup> This was already observed by Wenskus, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung*, pp. 261–64.

<sup>164</sup> Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom*, p. 84.

<sup>165</sup> *Die Germanen—ein Handbuch* 1, p. 344 (suggesting that there might be ritual reasons why bodies in bogs were shaven).

<sup>166</sup> Tacitus, *Germania* 31.

Gregory of Tours had similar information about feuding Saxons who "would not cut their beards nor hair before they had taken their revenge".<sup>167</sup> But apart from such stories that underline the potentially dangerous connotations of long hair, it was simply part of the barbarian stereotype. Suetonius, in an ironical story about a mock triumph organised by Caligula, explains how to create barbarians: The emperor selected tall and handsome Gauls, "and forced them not only to die their hair reddish and let it grow long, but also to learn the Germanic language and to bear barbarian names".<sup>168</sup> Germanic hair-colour is part of their image; and this has turned into a popular modern stereotype about blonde and blue-eyed Germans that has even survived its propagation by Nazi ideology. But the Roman image was more ambivalent. Were the Germans fair-haired or rather reddish, *flavus/ξανθός* or *rutilus/πόρρας*? At the end of the second century A.D., the famous doctor Galenus argued against the view that the Germans had fair hair, insisting that it was reddish.<sup>169</sup> *Rutilae comae* had also been Tacitus' description of the Germans' hair.<sup>170</sup> Jerome associated this colour more specifically with the Franks, who were beginning to be identified as the Germans par excellence.<sup>171</sup> Yet the *flava Germania*, or the *ξανθὰ ἔθνη*, remained stock phrases in late Antiquity.<sup>172</sup> But the fair or reddish hair-colour had already been a prominent feature associated with the Celts and would later also be applied to the Slavs.<sup>173</sup> Galenus even included Sarmatians and Scythians among the peoples with "thin, smooth, reddish hair".<sup>174</sup> In his view, this was a question of climate like many other bodily and psychological features, an influential physiological theory that systematised observations and prejudices in a very general model that must

<sup>167</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 5, 15: *nullus se eorum barbam neque capillos incisarum, nisi prius se de adversariis ulciserent*.

<sup>168</sup> Suetonius, *Caligula* 47. Cf. Pohl, "Barbarenkrieger: Wahrnehmungen und Wirklichkeiten", p. 161.

<sup>169</sup> Galenus, *Comm. in Hippocratem* 3, 6.

<sup>170</sup> Tacitus, *Germania* 4: *habitus corporum, tanquam in tanto hominum numero, idem omnibus: truces et caerulei oculi, rutilae comae, magna corpora*.

<sup>171</sup> Hieronymus, *Vita Hilarionis* 22: *Candidatus Constantii imperatoris, rutilus coma et candore corporis indicans provinciam—inter Saxones quippe et Alamannos gens eius non tam lata quam valida; apud historicos Germania, nunc Francia vocatur* ("A bodyguard of the Emperor Constantius—his ginger hair and his bright skin indicating his province...").

<sup>172</sup> E.g. Rufius Festus Avienus, *Descriptio orbis terrae*, v. 421; Isidore, *Etymologiae* 9, 2, 98 for the Suevi (after Lucanus 2, 51); Maurice, *Strategikon* 9, 4 (Franks and Lombards as *xantha ethne*).

<sup>173</sup> E.g. Diodorus, *Bibliotheca* 5, 28, 1; Livius, *Ab urbe condita* 38, 17, 4.

<sup>174</sup> Galenus, *De temperamentis* 2, 5.

have shaped perceptions considerably. It may also have blurred the view of specific practices associated with the colour of the hair. Pliny remarked that the Gauls had invented a method to dye their hair with a soap made of tallow and the ashes of beechwood, which the Germans (men rather than women) had taken over.<sup>175</sup> Martial calls this the "Chattic" or "Batavian" soap, known to make hair flaming red, and used by many Romans.<sup>176</sup> From a casual remark of Ammianus Marcellinus we can guess that some Alamans "habitually dyed their hair reddish".<sup>177</sup> And when the Batavian officer in the Roman army, Civilis, rebelled towards the end of the first century A.D., he not only let his hair grow but also dyed it in reddish colour.<sup>178</sup> These examples are too remote from each other to draw any general conclusions, but it seems clear that the colour of the hair could be an object of symbolic strategies, without any hint of a specifically ethnic connotation.

We owe a number of observations about barbarian hairstyles to Sidonius Apollinaris, who certainly was not an impartial observer, but one who, unlike Tacitus or even Ammianus, had the barbarians he talked about in his vicinity. He complained, in a famous phrase, how hard it was to write "being among the long-haired hordes, and having to endure Germanic words, and to praise with a sour face what the voracious Burgundian sings, who pours rancid butter on his hair".<sup>179</sup> The rancid butter, rarely attested elsewhere, has become a favourite in modern popular historiography. Sidonius also described the Franks whom Maiorianus had subdued: "Drawn down from a reddish head, the hair hangs down onto the forehead, and the bared neck shines from lack of hair . . . and as their faces are shaved every-

<sup>175</sup> Plinius 28, 191.

<sup>176</sup> Martial, *Epigrammata* 14, 26: *Chattica Teutonicos accendit spuma capillos*; cf. 8, 33, 20: *et mutat Latias spuma Batava comas*. Cf. Goetz and Welwei, *Atles Germanien* 1, pp. 196-7.

<sup>177</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae* 27, 2, 2; Iovinus chances upon a group of Alamans by a riverside who are bathing or *comas rutilantes ex more*.

<sup>178</sup> Tacitus, *Historiae* 4, 61: *Civilis barbaro voto post coepta adversus Romanos arma propexum rutilatumque crinem*. He only cut it after victory. The ritual significance of this vow can only be guessed at (cf. Tacitus' remark about the Chatti in the *Germania*, c. 31), but it shows that dyeing one's hair could have a symbolic context. For the context of Civilis' revolt, see Elton, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire* pp. 44-54.

<sup>179</sup> Sidonius Apollinaris, *Carm.* 12, vv. 3-7: *Inter crinigeras situm catervas/et Germanica verba sustinentem,/laudantem tetrico subinde vultu,/quod Burgundio cantat esculentus/infundens acido comam butyro?* Plinius, *Naturalis Historia* 11, 239, remarks that barbarians rub their skin with butter.

where, they pass the comb through the thin hair on top of their heads instead of the beards."<sup>180</sup> And the Saxons are represented with another specific and quite elaborate hair-style: "The scissors are not content with limiting their cuts to the upper tips at the parting and lift the margin of the hair; thus, with the hair cut back to the skin, the top of the head decreases and the face becomes larger".<sup>181</sup> It is hard to tell whether this information can be generalised. Gregory of Tours gives examples of Franks with beards, for instance Childeric, a nobleman under king Sigibert, who was punished by a miracle and lost his hair and beard.<sup>182</sup> We may assume that the hair-styles Sidonius had observed characterised specific groups of warriors and not all of the Franks or Saxons, and changed in the course of time.<sup>183</sup>

In Procopius' account quoted above, the circus factions in Constantinople also copy "ethnic" hairstyles: "The mode of dressing the hair was changed to a rather novel style by the Factions; for they did not cut it at all as the other Romans did. For they did not touch the moustache or the beard at all, but they wished always to have the hair of these grow out very long, as the Persians do. But the hair of their heads they cut off in front back to the temples, leaving the part behind to hang down to a very great length in a senseless fashion, just as the Massagetae do. Indeed for this reason they used to call this the "Hunnish fashion."<sup>184</sup> This hairstyle was not only unlike that of the other Romans, but altogether "without *logos*", yet it could be compared with that of the Persians and of the Huns (also called Massagetae), and it was a deliberate statement by those who wore it. However, this differs completely from the description Priscus had given in the previous century about Attila's Huns, who had their hair cut all around and carefully kempt.<sup>185</sup> Barbarian hairstyles had already been copied centuries before, it seems, also for aesthetic reasons, as

<sup>180</sup> Sidonius Apollinaris, *Carm.* 5, vv. 238-242: *... rutili quibus arce cerebri/ad frontem coma tracta iacet nudataque cervix/saetarum per damna nitet, tum lumine glauco/albet aquosa acies ac vultibus undique rasis/pro barba tenuis perarantur pectine cristae*.

<sup>181</sup> Sidonius Apollinaris, *Ep.* 8, 9, 5, 23-27: *cuius verticis extimas per oras/nom contenta suos tenere morsus/alliat lamina marginem comarum,/et sic crinibus ad cutem recisis/decrevit caput additurque vultus*.

<sup>182</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Liber in Gloria Confessorum* 70; cf. *ibid.*, 83 where even a bishop has a beard.

<sup>183</sup> Most scholars take Sidonius' statements as attesting to a general practice; see, most recently, Demandt, "Die westgermanischen Stammesbünde", p. 397 (*Haartracht als ethnisches Kennzeichen ist vielfach bezeugt*).

<sup>184</sup> Procopius, *Anecdota* 7, 8-10.

<sup>185</sup> Priscus fr. 8, ed. Müller.

Seneca's statement implies: "Why do you comb your hair so diligently? Whether you let it flow after Parthian habit or fix it the Germanic way or spread it out like the Scythians do—in any horse's mane it will be denser, bristle more beautifully in the lion's neck".<sup>186</sup>

Byzantine authors of the sixth century were especially attentive to differences in hairstyles. Agathias compared the long hair of the Frankish kings to that of the Avars and Turks that was "unkempt, dry and dirty and tied up in an unsightly knot". He also remarked that only the Frankish kings were allowed to grow their hair long: "Custom has reserved this practice for royalty as a sort of distinctive badge and prerogative. Subjects have their hair cut all round, and are strictly forbidden to grow it any longer."<sup>187</sup> Seldom do we find statements that are as outspoken about signs of ethnic identity as this one is about signs of status. The Avars' hairstyle must have caused a lot of discussion in Constantinople. Agathias wrote his *Histories* only a few years after they had appeared for the first time, and their hair is the only thing he mentions about them. Theophanes is more detailed, although his description is quite different: "The whole city ran together to watch them, for such a people had not been seen before. They wore their hair very long behind, wound with bands and braided, whereas the rest of their costume was similar to that of the other Huns".<sup>188</sup> A trace of the braids Avar men used to wear are the metal slides found in a number of graves, although they still only represent a small percentage of all male graves. At the first glance, the Avars therefore seem to represent an unusually clear example of outward signs that were perceived as specific, and modern scholars have found ways of agreeing on a compromise solution. But was this "national hairstyle" in fact tied in an unsightly knot, wound with bands into braids or fixed with metal slides? Thus, whatever function braids may have had for the Avars, either the hairstyle or its perceptions, and probably both, were far from uniform.

Paul the Deacon's description of the Lombards depicted in Theodelinda's palace also contains a description of the way in which they cut their hair: "... they shave the neck to the back of the head down

<sup>186</sup> Seneca, *Epist.* 124, 22: *Quid capillum ingenti diligentia comis? Cum illum vel effuderis more Parthorum vel Germanorum modo vinxeris vel, ut Scythae solent, sparseris, in quolibet equo densior iactabitur iuba, horrebit in leonum cervice formosior.*

<sup>187</sup> Agathias, *Histories* 1, 3, 4. Cf. the frequent references to the Merovingian kings' *caesaries* in Gregory of Tours, *Historiae*, for instance 6, 24; 8, 10.

<sup>188</sup> Theophanes, *Chronographia* AM 6050; cf. Pohl, *Awaren*, p. 18, with further sources.

to the skin, the hair hangs down in the face to the mouth, being divided in two at the parting."<sup>189</sup> The parted hair seems to be confirmed by some iconographic evidence, for instance the Agilulf plate (in the Bargello in Florence) or the golden cross from the so-called tomb of Gisulf at Cividale.<sup>190</sup> The Lombards' beards, of course, are remarkable because they represent an interesting example of an ethnically specific body sign. In this case, Isidore's explanation of the name seems obvious: "The Lombards, according to popular opinion, are named after their lush beards that are never cut."<sup>191</sup> Modern philologists do not always agree; it has been argued that this was a secondary interpretation, and *bart* could also refer to the blade of a weapon, for instance an axe, and our Longbeards could even turn into moorland warriors.<sup>192</sup> However that may be, in our context the important thing is that the Lombard sources agree on the longbeard version.<sup>193</sup> Paul the Deacon states: "It is certain that the Lombards, who first were called Winnili, were later named Langobardi after the length of their beards that were untouched by a razor. For in their language, 'lang' means long, 'bart' beard."<sup>194</sup> Paul also repeatedly mentions that Lombard kings and dukes wore long beards; if they lost their office, they had to shave both hair and beard.<sup>195</sup> The grisliest story is that about the seventh century duke of Friuli, Taso, whom the Roman patricius Gregorius had invited to Oderzo, promising "to cut his beard, as it was the custom, and make him his son". But when Taso came he was ambushed and killed; to fulfil his oath, Gregorius had Taso's head brought and cut off his beard.<sup>196</sup> King Aistulf, before the conquest of Byzantine Ravenna, issued a law forbidding

<sup>189</sup> Paulus Diaconus, *Historia Langobardorum* 4, 22: *Siquidem cervicem usque ad occipitum radentes nudabant, capillos a facie usque ad os dimissos habentes, quos in utramque partem in frontis discrimine dividebant.*

<sup>190</sup> *I Longobardi*, Catalogo (Milano, 1990), pp. 114; 472.

<sup>191</sup> Isidore, *Etymologiae* 9, 2, 95: *Longobardos vulgo fertur nominatos prolixia barba et nunquam tonsa.*

<sup>192</sup> Knobloch, "Der Name Langobarden", pp. 391 ff.

<sup>193</sup> This is also what Rübekil, "Völkernamen Europas", p. 1331, remarks.

<sup>194</sup> *Origo gentis Langobardorum* 1; Paulus Diaconus, *Historia Langobardorum* 1, 9; *Historia Langobardorum Beneventana*, MGH rer. Langob., p. 597.

<sup>195</sup> Paulus Diaconus, *Historia Langobardorum* 3, 19 (Duke Droctulf); 4, 38 (Duke Taso of Friuli), 5, 33 (King Grimoald), 6, 20 (Duke Rothari of Bergamo; after his usurpation had failed, King Aripert Rothari's pseudoregem, eius caput barbarmque radens... in exilium trusit).

<sup>196</sup> Paulus Diaconus, *Historia Langobardorum* 4, 38: *promittens Tasoni, ut ei barbam, sicut moris est, incideret eumque sibi filium faceret.* When, a century later, young Pippin III became King Liutprand's son of arms, Paul relates that his *caesaries* was cut (6, 53).



trade with the Byzantine *Romani*; Lombards who should violate it were to lose their property and be shaved, *decalvatus*, and had to go about crying: "Those who conduct business with a Roman contrary to the king's wish, as long as the Romans are our enemies, suffer thus".<sup>197</sup> Erchempert's late ninth-century history of the Beneventan Lombards claims that Charlemagne had required that they shaved their chins as a sign of submission (*ut Langobardorum mentum tondere faceret*).<sup>198</sup> Status again seems to be more important than ethnic identity. But the beard was not only associated with rulership. Rothari's Edict listed pulling a man's beard or hair under the lesions that required paying a fine. For a free man, it was equivalent to throwing him to the ground. But even half-free, ministerials or *servi rustici* were specially protected against pulling their beards; in their case, the fine amounted to the equivalent of any wound.<sup>199</sup>

The case of the Lombard beards is not without ambiguities, either. The seventh-century *Origo gentis Langobardorum*, and later Paul, explain in a story full of mythological allusions how the Lombards really got their name. It did not refer to the men's beards but to the women's long hair tied under their chins to look like beards. They wore this once on a battlefield to fulfil an oracle. Wodan saw these women and exclaimed: "Who are these longbeards"? Thus, he gave both victory and the name to the Lombards.<sup>200</sup> The rich symbolism of the story includes references to an adoption of Wodanism, for one of Wodan's eponyms in Nordic mythology is "the longbeard",<sup>201</sup> and a gender issue that seems to be reminiscent of the transition to patrilinear society. The Lombards in Italy may not have been aware in how many respects their beards were a liminal sign, paradoxically charged with its initial ambiguities. But in any case, it was not very practical as a sign of recognition. Other people wore beards, and some Lombards may not have done so. The iconographic evidence is not without contradictions. The piece of a helmet from Valdinievole shows king Agilulf with a beard, but the warriors on his sides without. Representations of rulers on coins first follow the Byzantine model, showing no or only short beards. It is remarkable that at the same time, in the seventh and eighth century, Byzantine emperors, for

<sup>197</sup> Aistulf 4, ed. Bluhme, MGH LL 4; cf. Brigitte Pohl-Resl, in this volume.

<sup>198</sup> Erchempert, *Historia Langobardorum* 4.

<sup>199</sup> *Edictus Rothari* 383.

<sup>200</sup> *Origo gentis Langobardorum* 1; Paulus Diaconus, *Historia Langobardorum* 1, 9.

<sup>201</sup> Wolfram, "Origo et Religio"; cf. also Gasparri, *Prima delle nazioni*, pp. 141 ff.

instance Constans II, the emperor who tried to reconquer Italy in the 660s, are often shown on their coins with extremely long beards.<sup>202</sup> The dukes of Benevento, from the eighth century onwards, mostly wear stylised, though not very long beards on their coins. Seal rings from Trezzo d'Adda follow the classic pattern with parted hair and beard. A bearded face on a gold lamina cross is flanked by the inscription *dn clef* (king Cleph, d. 574), other crosses are decorated with beardless faces, among them the so-called Gisulf cross from Cividale. A marble slab from San Pietro in Valle shows a bearded rider with a falcon.<sup>203</sup>

Paul the Deacon did not even care to mention beards in his description of the ancient Lombards painted in Theodelinda's palace. It is quite likely that in Paul's day, beards had already lost much of their significance. An (interpolated) passage in the *Liber Pontificalis* about the middle of the eighth century says in a slightly vague manner: "And the province under Roman control was subjugated by the unspeakable Lombards and their king Liutprand. . . . He plundered Campania, and he shaved and clothed many noble Romans in the Lombard fashion."<sup>204</sup> Whatever recognisable Lombard fashion this refers to, it cannot have been beards: that would not have been a result of shaving. Thus, even the name and its persistent association with beards did not lead to a visual symbolism that shaped perceptions and self-identification in an unmistakable and unambiguous way. As a pragmatic sign of identity, long beards were not very suitable because any man might wear one. They derived their significance from a complex and ambiguous mythical narrative and the name that it explained. In early medieval ethnography this is a very rare example that allows a glimpse at symbolic strategies that connected ethnic practice and narrative. But even in this case it was not the outward, bodily sign in itself that conferred identity. It could only work as an element of a mythical discourse which both partners in a communication about ethnic identities had to be aware of.<sup>205</sup>

This is also the context in which grave goods (less so traces of

<sup>202</sup> Hahn, *Moneta Imperii Byzantini* 3, e.g. pp. 23-42; 87-96; and tabb. 20, 21, 23.

<sup>203</sup> *I Longobardi, Catalogo* (Milano 1990), pp. 96, 114 (Agilulf), pp. 166-77 (coins), pp. 161, 466 (rings), pp. 227, 415, 472 (crosses), p. 307 (slab).

<sup>204</sup> *Liber Pontificalis*, interpolation to 92, 15 (Gregory III, 731-741), ed. Duchesne, p. 420.

<sup>205</sup> For the relationship between *signes distinctifs* and a *système mythique*, see Bourdieu, *Raisons pratiques*, p. 24.

costume) have to be seen, although their meaning is hardly ever directly accessible. It seems obvious that the objects used in inhumation rituals had some symbolic significance, thus contributing to the creation of a group identity by overcoming the limits of individual existence. The objects that accompanied the dead during burial and into the grave were a fundamental expression of his social position, and perhaps also of his ethnic identity. But which objects or group of objects were meaningful in such a symbolical context and what they meant is seldom clear. Status differences are as a rule much more obvious than ethnic identities. Weapon burial rites, as has been argued on the basis of early Anglo-Saxon graves, served mainly to display the status of the family.<sup>206</sup> Hardly any types of weapons or other objects are exclusive to regional or ethnic groups, even where distribution maps show a regional focus. Individual mobility, booty or gift exchange may explain how objects that were not produced locally found their way into a far-away grave. The probability that it would still be recognised as a marker of origin, even if originally intended as such, decreased with the extent of its distribution. Many of the richer graves show a variety of different styles and origins, and precious exotic objects appear quite frequently. It may have been a matter of prestige to display unusual and "marvellous possessions" (Greenblatt), whether acquired as booty, gift or by trade.<sup>207</sup> There might also have been a ritual significance in using a defeated enemy's dress and possessions to appropriate his power.<sup>208</sup> This would suggest that even though burial rites were a symbolic language directed at the community, ethnic identification need not have been a major concern in the choice of types of weapons or ornaments that accompanied it. This does not mean that it is impossible to detect ethnically specific burial customs or objects. For instance, Goths did not put any weapons in their graves, and this is a remarkable feature that is common to the first century Wielbark culture in Poland associated with the Gutones, and to Ostrogothic Italy in the sixth century.<sup>209</sup> But it is unlikely that this impressive "sign of ethnic identity"

<sup>206</sup> Härke, "Warrior graves? The background of the Anglo-Saxon weapon burial rite", esp. p. 42. In general, cf. Werner, "Bewaffnung und Waffenbeigabe"; Halsall, *Early Medieval Cemeteries*.

<sup>207</sup> Greenblatt, *Marvellous Possessions*.

<sup>208</sup> Dress as second skin that transfers power: Schubert, *Kleidung als Zeichen*, p. 21.

<sup>209</sup> Bierbrauer, "Archäologie und Geschichte der Goten".

was intended to demonstrate an individual's "gothicness" as he was prepared to cross into the netherworld.<sup>210</sup>

#### CONCLUSION

A Roman traveller venturing beyond the northern frontiers of the Empire around the year 100 A.D., when Tacitus wrote his *Germania*, might have come across a variety of *gentes* organised into relatively small tribal groups, across a few more or less consistent confederacies formed of proud warriors, and on a general level, across two more or less distinct ecological and cultural zones, the forests of *Germania* and the steppes of *Scythia*. In this barbarian universe, he would find ample confirmation for his prejudices about barbarians who represented an inherent opposition to the civilised mediterranean world.<sup>211</sup> He would also be able to recognise some of the fundamental distinctions between Germans and Scythians, although numerous details would threaten to blur and confuse his perception, especially in the broad contact zone between forest and steppe and in the wide forests east of the *Germania* and north of the steppe. Finally, he would certainly be able to notice a variety of particularities that he could regard as unique for specific tribes. Some of them would be proudly presented to him by the members of the group themselves, others be generally known among neighbours, and even more characteristic features might be more or less easily recognisable to a trained observer of barbarian appearance and habits. Misunderstandings, prejudices and false information would complete the traveller's picture, from which he would then select some of the more drastic, puzzling or entertaining aspects to have a good story to tell when he came home. Still, in all its superficiality, the resulting image was an extraordinary achievement in which a wide range of human beings who had all found related, but often different ways to cope with a hard life in a difficult environment were, more thoroughly than ever before, perceived and classified. The methods to achieve this had been developed in many centuries of ethnography, but the means to collect information

<sup>210</sup> For a discussion of "gothicness", and a slightly more substantial interpretation of it than is offered here, see Heather, *The Goths*.

<sup>211</sup> Cf. Dauge, *Le Barbares*, esp. pp. 532-579; Wolfram, *Das Reich und die Germanen*, pp. 68-73.

had never been so suitable. They enabled some Roman specialists to see barbarians in a context that was far broader than any barbarian could ever have had.

On the whole, the impact of this information on Roman society was only slight, and no clear and realistic image of the barbarians emerged. Only a fraction of the knowledge that had been made accessible was actually preserved over the centuries, and some simplifications and ancient prejudices survived generations of able observers who had known better. But still the whole amalgam of perceptions of "the other" provided a valuable, if often misleading instrument to deal with barbarians who, from the fourth century onwards, found their place within the old provinces of the Empire. The principal need that arose in the process was not so much to distinguish among different types of barbarians according to established rules, although that was occasionally attempted. The basic tension that had to be relieved was the progressive blurring of distinctions between Roman and barbarian elites, the massive phenomena of liminality and assimilation that threatened identities and self-perceptions.<sup>212</sup> In places still self-assured of their *romanitas*, people could start to play with signs and identities, like the roguish youths of Constantinople in the day of Procopius. At the other extreme, people who saw their survival directly threatened, like the Roman provincials protected by Saint Severinus of Noricum, obviously cared little for differentiations between their barbarian oppressors. Regions that witnessed a see-saw of barbarian domination and re-assertion of Roman ways of life were most sensitive to establishing distinctions. In a way, they reflected "the highly compartmented structures" of the late Empire.<sup>213</sup> Most of all, this happened in Gaul, where privileged intellectuals like Sidonius Apollinaris characterised barbarians in an elegant and sometimes highly polemic mixture of bitter caricature, patronising assessment, arrogant innuendo, and relaxed irony.<sup>214</sup> But soon, as barbarian dominion came to seem natural, these sharp and often visual perceptions disappeared. Moralising and generalising perceptions of the barbarians had always been predominant, but in their christian form, they hardly offered room for distinctions.

<sup>212</sup> Liminality: see Turner, *The Ritual Process*, esp. pp. 94–130.

<sup>213</sup> Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom*, p. 88.

<sup>214</sup> Cf. Harris, *Sidonius Apollinaris and the Fall of Rome*. For a discussion of Salvian's ethnographic views, see Maas, "Ethnicity, orthodoxy and community in Salvian of Marseilles".

The situations in sixth and seventh century *regna* supported this summary view. The grand synthesis between polyethnic warrior groups and the Roman majority that the barbarian kingdoms strove to achieve made it very difficult to concretise and visualise the ethnic labels they proposed. Identities had to be flexible and largely virtual to accommodate all whose loyalty Frankish or Visigothic kings wanted to encourage. For many individuals, "the adroit manipulation and maintenance of these ambiguities" might be a matter of survival.<sup>215</sup> The few fairly general and well-known signs like the Frankish *caesaries* and the Lombard beards may have been examples of such a virtual symbolism. The long hair of a king was a symbol of the whole community without imposing any actual conformity on its members, apart from not letting their hair grow too long, which in practice only applied to persons potentially suspect of a bid for kingship. The Lombard beard was also unfit to serve as a sign for actual distinction because it was so common, and only meaningful in the context of elaborate and ambiguous narratives. The code, and its occasional visual and narrative confirmation, was what really mattered, not any uniformity in actual appearance.

Among warriors, loose groups might exist who prided themselves in using certain arms, whose women wore certain types of fibulae and who followed certain inhumation rites, as the archaeological evidence seems to indicate. But they never included the total population, not even on most individual cemeteries. There is also no evidence that, in the sixth or seventh centuries, specific *habitus* made them any more Frankish or Lombard than those who did not follow these models. Even if we assume it was intended that way, there is no evidence that a broader "decoding community" agreed to read it that way. It is remarkable that the process of romanisation of barbarians went almost completely unnoticed by contemporary authors, in language, costume and ways of life. Neither is there any evidence that it threatened identities or the cohesion of kingdoms. Thus, Isidore of Seville could not rely on many contemporary examples for his theory of ethnic distinctions. Awareness of distinctive features of ethnic groups only returned with the Carolingians, whose Empire gave some room to regional identities often based on revived ethnic traditions

<sup>215</sup> This is how Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 13, characterises agro-literate societies in which "almost everything militates against the definition of political units in terms of cultural boundaries" (11).

and expressed through law or costume. This may well have been a deliberate imperial policy. It seems that Frankish elites actively developed, or even created, such distinctions to strengthen regional ties, like the young Louis the Pious proudly coming to meet his father in "Gascon" attire.

In this context, it does not seem advisable to take language, arms, dress, or hairstyle for granted as objective signs of stable ethnic identities in the early Middle Ages. This does not mean that people were all alike; many groups of people shared characteristics that others did not have. But these were mostly small local or social face-to-face-groups, not peoples. On the level of large *gentes* and *regna*, stable criteria that would have enabled outside observers to tell the difference and insiders to feel different were at best an exception. Statistically, the distribution of these features may not have been quite insignificant, and the highly trained eye of a modern archaeologist can often perceive very differentiated typologies. The probability that a sixth century male grave on the lower Rhine would contain a axe or that a seventh century male grave on the middle Danube might yield three-sided arrow heads is significantly higher than vice versa. However, even in such cases only a relatively small percentage of the total population, or even of all grown-up males buried with arms, fit the model. And some features that seem ethnically specific, like the significantly higher percentage of high-quality pottery and glass vessels in Frankish graves as opposed to those of Alamans, can also be explained by availability.<sup>216</sup> And the vast majority of all objects found in graves do not allow any ethnic definition. More importantly, our evidence that an archaeologist's sophisticated perception of ethnicity was shared by contemporaries is extremely scarce. In most cases, literary attempts to tell the difference between *gentes* cannot be reinforced by material evidence, and vice versa. Cases in which a certain connection can be established, like with the so-called *francisca*, tend to be overrated. Errors and contradictions show that the level of perceptions was rather low in this respect: Were Frankish axes single or double axes? Why did Paul the Deacon think that the *osae* were of Roman origin? Was the Suevian knot worn on the side or on top of the head? Barbarian hairstyles have stimulated the most detailed descriptions of visible features of ethnic groups, even if we

<sup>216</sup> Siegmund, "Kleidung und Bewaffnung"; Pohl, "Alemannen und Franken. Eine Schlußbetrachtung", forthcoming.

consider that a good part of them were written by a single author, Sidonius Apollinaris. But even here, a rare example where several sources refer to the same hairstyle brings out contradictions: the hair of Avar envoys to Justinian was "dirty, unkempt and tied into an unsightly knot" according to Agathias, or "wound with bands and braided" if we believe Theophanes. Classical authors could never agree whether the Germans had fair or reddish hair, whether this colour was natural or the result of dyeing, and whether the Scythians had the same hair-colour. Descriptions of Hunnic hairstyles also differ completely between Ammianus Marcellinus, Priscus and Procopius, which may of course reflect actual changes in fashion. Indeed, hairstyles could easily change, and their uniformity in larger groups was not easily achieved. We have both evidence for Franks with beards and for Lombards without beards, although their sign of identity was supposed to be the opposite. Therefore, we should not automatically assume that the Franks of the Merovingian period all looked like the vivid descriptions of Sidonius that so many modern handbooks rely on.<sup>217</sup> Appearances may have been more specific, particular to small groups like the retinue of one aristocrat. Archaeology has also created an acute awareness of changes in fashion that could come about very quickly, especially in times of social change. It is another modern myth connected with the concept of national costume that "genuine" costume worn by peasants is resistant to changes of fashion.<sup>218</sup> Therefore, signs of identity that we find described in texts may also be part of a conventional image that relied on past perceptions. In extreme cases, actual appearance and image could differ completely. Every European knows how to dress up like an American Indian, although nowadays none of the native Americans actually dress like that, except to satisfy the expectations of tourists. Roman perceptions of barbarians may sometimes have been similarly inappropriate, if we only consider how outdated the ethnically specific garments were that Isidore listed.

On the other hand, we should not altogether discard the possibility that ethnic groups might in some cases be recognised by outward signs of individuals. Social groups have always produced distinctive features, and although in premodern times, status was more important than ethnos, regional differentiation also played a part. The context

<sup>217</sup> Cf., for instance, Beaulieu, *Le costume antique et médiéval*, pp. 70-73.

<sup>218</sup> Schubert, *Kleidung als Zeichen*, p. 9.

in which such features might acquire an ethnic significance that is discernible to us was the ethnographic code developed in the Greek and Roman world. Even though it was perhaps insufficient by our standards, it was a formidable instrument to deal with a world of *gentes*. Unlike other codes that basically allowed to distinguish between "us" and "them", it also aimed at a distinction between "them" and "them", of course without abandoning the basic categories of "us" (Greeks or Romans) and "them" (barbarians).<sup>219</sup> Our informations on dress or weapons of barbarians are often part of a catalogue of *mirabilia* in the tradition of Herodotus, a mixture of features that a Greek or Roman might regard as different and therefore remarkable and significant. Significance, as modern semiology has established, implies a complex relationship between *signifiant* and *signifié*, between competence and performance, between symbol and code. A sign is part of a restricted set of signs and refers to an arbitrary system of distinctions that makes differences meaningful and perceivable. This explains why contemporaries often disregarded differences that we see as important, for instance between normal or double axes or between blonde and reddish hair.

The resulting ethnic discourse not only provided a code that gave meaning to single features, it also contained a differentiated set of distinctions between true and false, right and wrong, possible and impossible. It placed the barbarians firmly within a universe of ontological, moral and political meanings and values.<sup>220</sup> In the course of time, this discourse also allowed the *gentes* themselves to define their place within it. Thus, in late Antiquity, it not only shaped Roman perceptions, it also influenced the self-consciousness of the new peoples, especially when they grew beyond the immediacy of local groups or small armies. The relative ease with which the Goth Jordanes, the Frank Fredegar or the Lombard Paul the Deacon applied Roman ethnography to their own peoples demonstrates that it was basically seen as an open system. It represented a dialogue between Rome

<sup>219</sup> Dauge, *Le Barbare*, pp. 466–510, with an overview of *La typologie barbarologique*. On the limited practical value of these categories see, however, Wolfram, *Das Reich und die Germanen*, p. 71. Early Byzantine ethnography will be discussed by Michael Maas in his forthcoming book *The Conqueror's Gift. Ethnography, Identity and Roman Imperial Power at the End of Antiquity*; I would like to thank him for letting me read his inspiring exposé.

<sup>220</sup> Cf. Dauge, *Le Barbare*, with an elaborate analysis of the meanings connected with barbarians in Antiquity.

and the *gentes*, just as a few centuries earlier, authors like Flavius Josephus had looked at the history of their own peoples from a hellenistic point of view.<sup>221</sup>

In late Antiquity, the need for ethnic identification obviously grew because identities had become so insecure. The people that our texts aim to measure with ethnic criteria are often in liminal situations, passing from one community to the other or being part of several overlapping systems of identification. Furthermore, the sheer size of *gentes* like the Visigoths or the Franks must have constituted an enormous problem of cohesion and communication. To both problems, ethnic identity offered an ideological, but hardly a practical solution. This means that our anthropological models of group identity, so admirably developed with regard to small communities, are not automatically applicable. Only a relatively small elite group, mostly warriors, could maintain direct participation in rituals, gift exchange, and other forms of communication in which the *gens* reproduced its identity. According to Reinhard Wenskus, they could be defined as *Traditionskern*, although the image of a kernel implies a misleading sense of solidity and immutability. Rather, it was a loose set of groups and networks more or less involved in "ethnic practices". Their concerns and outlook, however, were far from being purely ethnic. They were part of an international warrior culture that basically shared its values and life-style, and they were the ones who could gain most from an adaptation to Roman ways of life. For them, ethnicity was an opportunity to reinforce loyalties and facilitate integration. Ethnic identity could create an imaginary alliance between the living and the dead, and a real sense of belonging among the living. But given the heterogeneous character of all of the new kingdoms, any clear definition and demarcation of this ethnic identity would have excluded a majority not only of its population, but also of its army. Furthermore, the concept of *gens* in itself, applied to these large polities, was an achievement only due to literacy and abstract thinking.<sup>222</sup>

In the long run, none of the ethnic communities could survive without relying on the Roman-Christian discourse and the forms of cohesion it could offer. But Christian perceptions brought another field of ambiguities into ethnicity. "Christianity and the rhetoric of

<sup>221</sup> Momigliano, *Alien Wisdom. The Limits of Hellenization*.

<sup>222</sup> Fried, "Gens und regnum".

Empire"<sup>223</sup> had to take into account the fact that "peoples differed in language, arms and dress", however reluctantly christian authors accepted this obstacle to their longing for a universal *civitas* of God. For some ethnic diversity became a metaphor of disunity and confrontation, with the biblical model of the Tower of Babylon in the background. On the other hand, the same biblical and classical models could serve to establish new systems of perception and to legitimise the existence of the new ethnic kingdoms (Bede is a good example for this process). Isidore's synthesis allowed for an unlimited variety of *gentes*. But the terms—*gentes*, *nationes*, *ethne*—were inescapably linked to overtones of paganism and barbarism. Even authors who actively propagated ethnic traditions, like Cassiodorus or Paul the Deacon, saw it as a stage, however necessary, that should eventually be overcome, be it on the road to romanness or to a universal christian community. One might argue that the consequence was that our authors tended to ignore or misinterpret the many signs of ethnic identity that they perceived: all the long beards and battle-axes and braids. But it might also be the other way round: they did not give shape to features of ethnicity that otherwise might have developed. The *francisca* could have become a perfect symbol of Frankish "corporate identity", if we believe all the assumptions about ethnic identity and its symbols still current in modern research on the early Middle Ages. Only it did not. It took a hundred years until a Frankish author even noticed that the Spanish had once called the axe *francisca*. 26% axes in sixth-century weapon graves are a fair indication that axes were popular with the Franks, and this was what an impressive number of foreign observers, from Constantinople to Seville, accurately wrote down. But is this enough for an elaborate theory about symbols and identities?

In fact, barbarian rulers had to be ambiguous, and flexible handling of ethnic identities had enabled them to survive in the first place. No barbarian king could afford to exclude everybody who had no beard or no axe from his army. They would also have been interested in being ambiguous and flexible about their subjects' confessions, to accommodate anybody, whether he was orthodox or arian, pagan or Jew, semi-pelagian, tri-capituline or whatever might cross a believer's minds in those days. But that was a different case, because people like Bede or Gregory of Tours kept telling their kings how

<sup>223</sup> Cf. the book of this title by Averil Cameron.

much it mattered to embrace the right creed and destroy all others—this was the only way to preserve the kingdom. Paul the Deacon even went as far as claiming that Charlemagne had subdued the Lombard kingdom only because an unworthy cleric had been entrusted with the basilica of St. John the Baptist, who was the kingdom's most valiant guardian saint, at Monza. And Bede had similar ideas about the influence of the correct Easter date on the fates of kingdoms. Early medieval authors hardly ever claimed that right or wrong ethnicity of an official or of part of its subjects could ruin a kingdom. This was a notion introduced in a letter by Pope Stephen III, when, for obvious political reasons, he advised Charlemagne not to take a Lombard wife, because the Old Testament showed how detrimental taking an *alienigena uxor* was.<sup>224</sup> It is remarkable that the most dramatic example of chauvinistic rhetoric known from the early Middle Ages came from Rome, usually considered a sanctuary for universalist tendencies in church and state in a world of *gentes*. Otherwise, early medieval writers might be full of prejudices against foreigners, but they did not think that a kingdom had to be nationally homogeneous in the same way it had to be religiously homogeneous. The idea that a state should only accommodate one nation, and discriminate against all others, was only born in the 19th century, and has become fashionable again at the end of the 20th. Its effects can be studied in gruesome detail in former Yugoslavia. No Frank, Lombard or Hun would have understood the implications of ethnic identity in this way. Telling the difference between ethnic groups therefore was clearly not a main concern. This volume is intended to discuss where it was, and why.

<sup>224</sup> Codex Carolinus, *Ep.* 45, ed. W. Gundlach, MGH Epp. 3, p. 561; Pohl, "Zur Bedeutung ethnischer Unterscheidungen in der frühen Karolingerzeit" (forthcoming).

ARCHAEOLOGY, ETHNICITY AND THE STRUCTURES  
OF IDENTIFICATION: THE EXAMPLE OF THE  
AVARS, CARANTANIANS AND MORAVIANS  
IN THE EIGHTH CENTURY

Falko Daim

INTRODUCTION

At the end of the second millennium a sensitive human being cannot approach the topic of ethnicity impartially.<sup>1</sup> The memory of the conflicts in ex-Yugoslavia, which were allegedly conducted for the sake of the various nationalities, and of other recent "ethnic conflicts" is too painful.

In one respect protohistory and medieval history are in a better position than contemporary history, anthropology or sociology. The greater chronological interval is conducive to an attempt at objectivity. The observer of the early Middle Ages is in a better position to control any possible personal identification. Besides, we can observe the developments, together with many of their ramifications and sidings over a longer period of time. How the situation on the Balkans will appear in years to come, for example, cannot at present be foreseen. It is to be hoped that the results obtained by the disciplines of early medieval archaeology and history concerning the function of ethnicity in society might assist in qualifying some well-worn ideas.

The majority of serious archaeological papers on the topic of the "ethnic identification of archaeological finds" resemble a balancing act.<sup>2</sup> After all, our concept of ethnicity is related to the self-identification

<sup>1</sup> This essay is an updated and expanded version of the article: Daim, "Archäologie und Ethnizität—Awaren, Karantanen, Mährer im 8. Jahrhundert"; some details, including new ideas, have been added. Parts of the overview were already included in the *Katalog der Burgenländischen Landesausstellung 1996: Hunnen + Awaren. Reitervölker aus dem Osten*, cf. also: Daim, "Vorbild und Konfrontation—Slawen und Awaren im Ostalpen- und Donauraum".

<sup>2</sup> A short summary with many critical comments but unsatisfactory results: Wendowski, *Archäologische Kultur und ethnische Einheit*. An interesting summary of previous work on this subject in German-speaking countries, with ample bibliographical notes: Veit, "Ethnic concepts in German prehistory: a case study on relationship between cultural identity and archaeological objectivity", pp. 35–36. See also: Jones, *The Archaeology of Ethnicity: Constructing Identities in the Past and Present*.

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of a person. A person identifies with a group of people and expresses this consciously, for instance in his way of dress. At first sight, it should not be too difficult to draw conclusions about the ethnic consciousness of the person, judging from particular ways of dress and other cultural phenomena (funerary rites, house construction...). Unfortunately the matter is not quite so easy:

1. Each person feels himself to be a part of a multitude of different groups. Which identification do we want to comprehend as "ethnic" identification?
2. One expresses one's personal preferences to a certain extent only. A person does not want to stand out in his surroundings. Many external signs (ways of dress, settlement patterns, funerary rites) correspond to strong (more than regional or local) traditions. As soon as one deviates from any of the current social conventions, one must be prepared for sanctions.

Most archaeologists experience discomfort in connection with drawing conclusions from the archaeological finds about the emotions of the person behind the material remains (ethnic consciousness, national sentiment). This could have something to do with the fact that we have been looking for statements that are not in accordance with the social system, the structure of the culture and its archaeological remains, as well as with the psychology of the (protohistoric) human. In our conceptions, ethnicity is a category of extraordinary significance. In the early Middle Ages, however, its role was rarely one of great importance, while other elements of the social code dominated.

### 1. THE CONCEPT OF ETHNICITY

For several generations, the current opinion was that one could recognise something almost "natural" within ethnic classifications. Ideally, it should have been possible to draw political boundaries between the ethnic groups; each "people" could then have its own territory at its disposal. Just a few years ago, the concept of the "right of self-determination of the nationalities" became relevant once more, due to the dissolution of the "Communist Block". Even in the West, this discussion turned into an explosive subject; after all, almost every country possesses "minorities", which could just as well demand "self-determination"; and the sudden completion of the "Südtirolpaket", a

set of treaties regulating the autonomy of South Tyrol from the central government in Rome, by the Italian government is most probably also a result of the fear of a renewal of the debate concerning the subject of independence.

A variety of scientific disciplines have concerned themselves with the problem of ethnic classifications, among them ethnology, the historical disciplines, sociology, psychology and philosophy. The discussion resulted in a relativist view of "ethnicity". While in 1964 Wilhelm E. Mühlmann defined "*ethnos*" as the "*größte feststellbare souveräne Einheit, die von den betreffenden Menschen selbst gewußt und gewollt wird*",<sup>3</sup> Karl R. Wernhart only refers to a "*Rahmenbegriff (. . .), dessen Variationsbreite von der kleinsten Lokalgruppe bis zu Stämmen und Völkern reicht*".<sup>4</sup> From the sociological point of view, Roland Girtler sees only a gradual difference between "*einem Briefmarkenverein und einer größeren sozialen Gruppe, wie einer Religions- oder staatlichen Gemeinschaft*".<sup>5</sup> Every human belongs to a number of human groups, each of which avails itself of a different system of symbols or concepts. He changes between his identities with respect to the situation in which he is presently, for example in reaction to the person he is conversing with,<sup>6</sup> or an altered political situation. In my opinion, this sociological way of looking at ethnicity is relevant for archaeology in the sense that for each find, which could play a role in the symbolic system in question, we should enquire about the nature of the group to which the symbol is referring.

From the historical point of view, we owe the most extensive of the more recent publications on the subject of ethnicity to Reinhard Wenskus.<sup>7</sup> He has compared various protohistoric tribes and isolated characteristic criteria of which a considerable number apply, in most cases, some of which are, however, part of an ideological system: common ancestry, marriage community, community of peace, common law, common settlement, political community, common tradition, common language and culture. Wenskus also discusses the question, to what extent an ethnic group (tribe, nation) can be identified from archaeological evidence.<sup>8</sup> Despite his critical attitude, he tends towards the

<sup>3</sup> Mühlmann, *Rassen, Ethnien, Kulturen*, pp. 57.

<sup>4</sup> Wernhart, "Ethnosnotiz—Bemerkungen und Überlegungen zu einem Zentralbegriff der anthropologischen Disziplinen", pp. 177. Compare, by the same author: "Ethnogenese und Nationenwerdung", pp. 173 ff.

<sup>5</sup> Girtler, "Ethnos, Volk und soziale Gruppe", pp. 42.

<sup>6</sup> Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, pp. 136.

<sup>7</sup> Wenskus, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung. Das Werden der frühmittelalterlichen Gentes*.

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opinion that for those places and times, "die noch von gelegentlichen Strahlen schriftlicher Nachrichten getroffen werden, (...) die Zuordnung von einzelnen umgrenzbaren Fundgruppen zu ethnischen Einheiten, die für die jeweiligen Gebiete bezeugt sind, vielfach vertretbar" ist.<sup>9</sup> The most notable example of a "historical ethnography" was Herwig Wolfram in his standard work on the history of the Goths. In the introduction to the 1983 special edition, he expressed his methodological prerequisites.<sup>10</sup> The most radical step was taken by the American historian Patrick J. Geary, who defined "Ethnic identity as a situational construct in the early Middle Ages".<sup>11</sup> Instead of searching for "objective" criteria for ethnicity, the historian now strives to discover, "unter welchen Umständen die Ethnizität überhaupt eine relevante Kategorie darstellt".<sup>12</sup> "In der Regel werden nur Mitglieder der sozialen Elite, meist aus der unmittelbaren Umgebung des Königs mit ethnischen Bezeichnungen versehen. Weiters werden Heere ethnisch apostrophiert (...). Selten kommen ethnische Bezeichnungen im Zusammenhang mit Religionsgemeinschaften vor (...). Die ethnische Zugehörigkeit eines Mannes wird oft erst durch seine militärische Funktion sichtbar (...). Die Ethnizität ist also eine politische Kategorie im Sinn von Mintz (Ethnizität für etwas) (...). Die ethnische Terminologie des Frühmittelalters stellt sich nunmehr als Code dar, der entschlüsselt werden muß, wenn man die Prozesse des sozialen Wandels erkennen und untersuchen will".<sup>13</sup>

This method is pursued above all by the Viennese medieval historian Walter Pohl, to whom we owe a number of seminal studies concerning the history of the Avars, but also specialised papers dealing with the problem of ethnicity in the early Middle Ages.<sup>14</sup> We now begin to perceive a complex early medieval system of categories, which underlies the formation of groups of people according to totally different criteria. Frequently, the criteria by which ascriptions are made can be identified; only rarely does the person concerned state his own point of view. In the early Middle Ages names for these groups of

<sup>9</sup> Wenskus, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung*, pp. 123.

<sup>10</sup> Wolfram, *Geschichte der Goten. Von den Anfängen bis zur Mitte des sechsten Jahrhunderts*, Beck'sche Sonderausgabe (München, 1983), pp. 13–27.

<sup>11</sup> Geary, "Ethnic identity as a situational construct in the early Middle Ages".

<sup>12</sup> Geary, "Ethnic identity as a situational construct in the early Middle Ages", p. 15.

<sup>13</sup> Geary, "Ethnic identity as a situational construct in the early Middle Ages", pp. 15 f.

<sup>14</sup> W. Pohl, *Die Awaren. Ein Steppenvolk in Mitteleuropa 576–822 n. Chr.* By the same author: "Conceptions of ethnicity in early medieval studies"; cf. also his contribution in this volume.

people often had a long tradition which tended to be maintained and which inspired certain associations in the reader or listener: The phrase: *Hunni . . . qui et Abares dicuntur*<sup>15</sup> illustrates this concept exceptionally well. The aim of the precise analyses of historical research is not to prove that "ethnic groups" never existed, nor to dissolve early medieval ethnic categories altogether, but instead to present the complex early medieval terminological system, the countless variations of human groups, their rapid changes and the presentation and deciphering of the images related to it (symbols).

The possibilities offered by archaeology lie in this area. The archaeological finds and their context are full of codes, which, once they have been deciphered, (should) reveal an endless amount of information about the society and its make-up, its construction, its history, traditions, its self-perception, its set of values. Archaeology has the bonus of a much larger amount of data, which are suited to chronological and spatial analysis. The first prerequisite for this, however, is the abandonment of all too simple models. We must always be aware of the complexity and changeability of human society.

Naturally not every cultural element,<sup>16</sup> not every find or context, possesses symbolic meaning. Many cultural phenomena, for instance certain forms of pottery developed through special technologies and the preference for particular materials, can be explained by the availability of natural resources, the occurrence of particular raw materials or of certain workshops and their area of distribution. A variety of factors interact, which results in a non-homogeneous picture.

One main question remains, however: If we wish to comprehend society as an interlocking system of groups, which of them could then be labelled "ethnic"? In this case also, no definite answer is possible. According to modern understanding, "ethnic association" would mean primarily "a group united by a common fate", similar to the "group of common descent" which constitutes an important element of early medieval ideology. Certainly the present-day Austrian

<sup>15</sup> Cf., for instance, Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum* 4, 11.

<sup>16</sup> Concerning the problem of what we mean by "culture" in the broader sense of the word or by "archaeological culture" there exists a vast amount of scientific literature. While, in the colloquial use of the word, it means "high culture" and—derived from this—is frequently used by archaeologists in the sense of "representational culture", most archaeologists use the term "culture" for the entity of human activities, whereas the excavator is only able to observe those aspects of it that leave traces in the ground.

citizens perceive themselves as a kind of "group united by a common fate"; as a matter of fact this "fate" has given us today's political boundaries. Only from this point of view does a "History of Austria" in ten volumes seem to make sense.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, fellow workers employed in a factory which is due to be closed, perceive themselves as a "group with a common fate"—at least while the conflict concerning the factory's future persists. Is this already an "ethnic group"?

Lev S. Klejn has described ethnicity as a phenomenon of social psychology and has hit the nail on the head with this definition.<sup>18</sup> The emphasis of a common fate constitutes a strong bond for a group of humans and can have positive effects, in that one takes responsibility for one's fellow men, or negative effects in that this emphasis is abused by rulers for the maintenance of power, or even turns the group against "foreigners", which are, as a result, soon perceived as "enemies".

## 2. GROUP IDENTIFICATION IN SOCIETY—UNITS OF COMMON MATERIAL CULTURE IN ARCHAEOLOGY

The complexity, or more precisely, the multi-dimensionality of the group affiliations of an individual can be demonstrated with the help of an example: An imaginary Viennese university lecturer, who, let us assume, is a specialist in Roman villas in the Danubian provinces, is in the prime of life and lives in the 18th district of Vienna. He is interested in Art beyond the limits of his subject, enjoys travelling, is a connoisseur of opera and does research on railway history as a hobby. In addition to that, he is also a sportsman, an enthusiastic skier and yachtsman. Although only a limited number of all the possible identificational groups have been included, the two diagrams depicted here already seem a little unclear (Fig. 1 a and b). The bold dot in the centre represents the position of the (fictitious) colleague. The inclusion of further identities, such as sex, age group, social background, religion, regional ascriptions, would make a diagrammatic depiction impossible.

<sup>17</sup> *Österreichische Geschichte in zehn Bänden*, ed. H. Wolfram (Vienna, 1995 ff.).

<sup>18</sup> Personal communication. Compare also: Klejn, "Die Ethnogenese als Kulturgeschichte, archäologisch betrachtet. Neue Grundlagen".

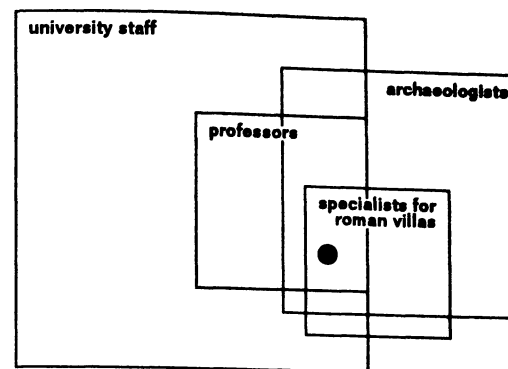


Fig. 1a

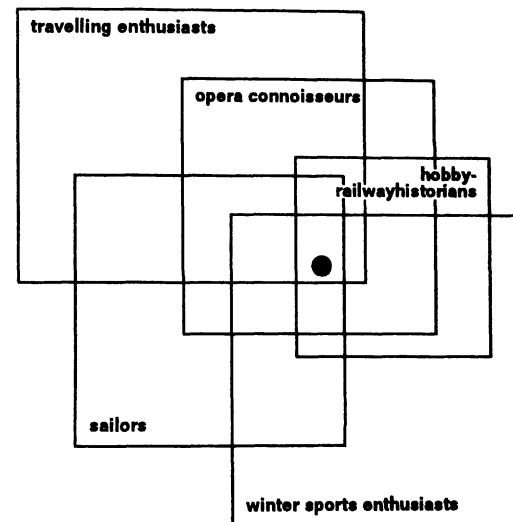


Fig. 1b

Fig. 1. Diagram of two identificational areas or levels of a fictional university teacher (classical archaeologist, specialist for Roman villas, university professor).

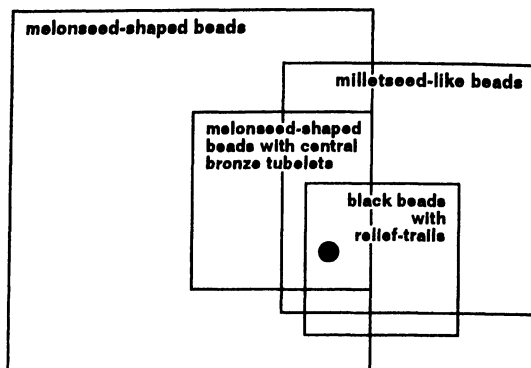


Fig. 2a

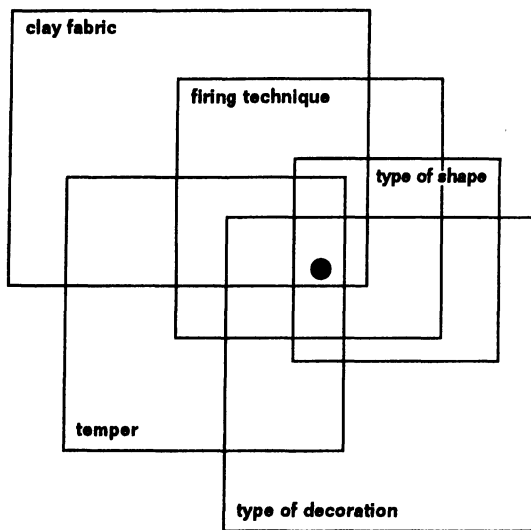


Fig. 2b

Fig. 2. Diagram of the different distributions or ranges of a number of features and artefact types from a fictitious, small grave complex dating to the Late Avar Period, consisting merely of a bead necklace and a vessel.

As a result of his sex, his age, his profession and of the step on the "academic ladder", which he has reached so far, he feels himself to be a part of certain groups of humans. But he also identifies himself with like-minded athletes and steam engine enthusiasts. He has a superb command of the respective technical terminologies, manners and customs, otherwise he would soon be branded as an outsider. Although some of the above mentioned human groups influence his life crucially (especially as a university teacher of the humanities he is almost part of a "group with a common fate"), we would describe none of them as an "ethnic" group. He is occasionally aware of being an Austrian—at international conferences, on holiday abroad and sometimes, when, while reading the newspaper, he is induced to make international comparisons. But almost as frequently, he perceives himself to be a European, a citizen of Western-Central Europe, or recently, as a citizen of the European Union. Are these also "ethnic" identifications?

If we approach the situation via the archaeological material and attempt to form groups of artefacts, the number of groups obtained equals the number of criteria applied. We form groups according to raw materials, shape, decoration, distribution areas of workshops or trade, etc. If we choose a closed find instead of a single object for interpretation, then theoretically each object within the closed find should illustrate these groups. The more discriminating the observation, the more unclear is the resulting picture. A small grave complex, dating to the Late Avar Period, consisting only of a small vessel produced on the potter's wheel and a bead necklace made of only three types of beads (Fig. 2 a and b), may serve as a, greatly simplified, example. The bold dot in the centre of the diagram shows the position of the complex.

Of course we can speculate as to which of our criteria were once part of the social code. The raw material used for the pottery was probably never one of them and neither was the firing technology; much more likely criteria are the shape and decoration of an object and even more likely dress. On the whole, however, the general structure of the social code can be communicated and can thus be manipulated. That an almost objective method of identifying group-consciousness (and especially its quality) could be developed, is therefore impossible.

### 3. THE CONCEPTS "HISTORY OF MENTALITIES" AND "STRUCTURES OF IDENTIFICATION"

The focus on "ethnic identity", coined by nineteenth century nationalism, perhaps also clouded our view of those aspects of identity that seem to be more consistent than the idea of a common fate. The cultural elements that form the basis of human self-perception can be interpreted with the aid of the concept of the history of mentalities. The constant elements correspond to the unreflected "mentality", others are more easily changed and are subject to processes of rapid acculturation.

By "mentality" we mean a psychological-mental pattern, a basic position, an attitude to life, a "mould" that, unreflected, forms the basis of human life. It changes very slowly and is not susceptible to manifestations of fashion. One could say that in human life two distinct rhythms overlap one another. A gradual, almost imperceptible change which corresponds to the basic, the traditional and, blended over it, short fluctuations corresponding to manifestations of fashion, which are taken up avidly and incorporated into life; in addition to that possibly a theoretical, for example theological, superstructure.

The model developed by the "history of mentalities"<sup>19</sup> is very useful for archaeology. The mode of production, the shape and decoration of objects, and aspects of the burial customs can change quickly. Other cultural elements, on the other hand, show utmost persistence, transcending even epochal limits. In this matter there are no rules. What in one society is considered fundamental, may in others be thrown overboard and replaced without a second thought.

If we consider each cultural phenomenon with regard to its social (we could say: with regard to its psychological or political) function; thus searching for the key to the social code, we arrive at another theoretical model, which I would like to call the "model of the structures of identification", in contrast to that offered by the "history of mentalities". The data and facts that are taken into consideration are the same in each case, the only difference being that here they are not employed with the aim of reconstructing a non-reflected "mentality", but instead a web of conscious or half-conscious identifications.

<sup>19</sup> An excellent compilation of selected papers, together with an introduction to the history of the *Annales*: Bloch, Braudel, Febvre *et al.*, *Schrift und Materie*, cf. also Raulff, "Vorwort", *Mentalitäten-Geschichte*, pp. 7 f.

This poses the following question: How does Man perceive himself, or more precisely: how does he perceive his archetype? As in the "history of mentalities", one is searching for a cultural pattern, the main elements of which are stable, even fixed; with the parts located in between the "fixed" parts being prone to rapid alteration. For the archaeologist, the overall structure (being manifest in the soil) is perceptible and in the overview of a longer period of development it becomes evident which elements constitute the cultural identity of the individual in question. Other elements apply to the current form of communication and are subject to rapid change.

### 4. CULTURE AND IDENTITY EXEMPLIFIED BY THE AVARS

#### 4.1. *History of events and culture*

In 558 the Avars reached the boundaries of the Byzantine Empire.<sup>20</sup> Their prehistory is obscure; however, we can assume that the destruction of the empire of the Mongolian Juan-Juan by the ancient Turks initiated copious population movements in middle and central Asia, as well as in eastern Europe. Of course the fleeing and emigrating groups of people were permanently subject to ethnogenetic processes, and among those people who finally reached the Carpathian Basin in 568 there were only few who had set off from central Asia half a generation earlier. To overstate the point, one could say that a name, an idea, a tradition, a way of life migrates; however, the people who profess it change constantly. An identity-constituting tradition, to which one felt oneself to be committed, therefore persisted, even if one adapted in many respects and assumed various customs.

In 567/568 the momentous agreement between the Lombards—who had settled in the area that had previously been *Pannonia*, the Viennese Basin, the *Tullner Feld* and the *Weinviertel* as far as southern Moravia—and the Avars, who at that time were probably hovering on the northern border of the Byzantine Empire, in the hope of obtaining land for settlement from Byzantium, took place. After the Gepids, against whom the alliance had been formed, were defeated, the Avars

<sup>20</sup> Concerning the history of the Avars consult: Pohl, *Die Avarn*. See also *Katalog der Burgenländischen Landesausstellung 1996: Hunnen und Avarn*, with various contributions and bibliographical references.

took over their territories in the eastern Carpathian Basin. The Lombards had, with the aid of the Avars, won supremacy in the middle Danube Basin and exploited it to conquer northern Italy. The Avars thus became the rulers of Pannonia and the *Alpenvorland* of present-day Lower Austria. The Viennese Basin was occupied rapidly and then settled gradually.

The first Avar generation can, in terms of archaeological evidence, only be understood with difficulty. In this context, the so-called "votive deposit pits" (*Opfergrubensfunde*), which are reminiscent of Hunnic customs, are of special relevance. Iron bits, stirrups and lance-heads, that had apparently been burnt, were buried, without any human remains. Apparently the Avars adopted the burial custom of inhumation only a good generation later. One of the earliest cemeteries with inhumation burials is the necropolis in Szegvár-Oromdülö, where several "tunnel graves" were identified. These are graves in which the deceased is placed in a tunnel of about 2 m. length. At an oblique angle to this tunnel a rectangular grave pit was constructed. In the grave pit itself one often finds the riding horse as well as, in many cases, a number of complete, slaughtered animals as a grave accompaniment. This burial custom was occasionally practised even in the eighth century. The burial customs practised by the Lombards, the Bavarians and the Alamans were adopted gradually by the Avars, beginning in the early seventh century. Now the dead were buried in coffins; the bodies lay on their backs, with their dress, their jewelry, their weapons and various food offerings. Initially it appears that—at least in some cases—greater spaces were left between the graves (e.g. Leobersdorf, Sommerlein, Zillingtal). Row-grave necropolises in the narrow sense of the term appear shortly after. Externally, they no longer seem to differ from western necropolises.

At the end of the Late Avar Period, supra-regional influences appear once more in Avar burial customs, when the dead are no longer interred with their dress. These are the first signs of a new era. A little later the cemeteries are abandoned and the dead start to be buried in the vicinity of churches, or at least there are attempts to have them buried there.

What now presents itself to us as the Avar culture in the Carpathian Basin was the result of mainly Byzantine but also western influences. It was doubtless formed in situ, with various eastern traditions grafted onto a local base. To disentangle the individual roots of this complex web of influences is one of the tasks facing modern Avar Studies. In

times of crisis group interests naturally become more influential; in times of military success over external enemies their importance declines. A good example for this is the formation of the empire of Samo in a period of weakness experienced by the Avar empire.

The traditions that once constituted the "backbone" of Avar identity can only be glimpsed in minute fragments archaeologically. The myths and songs remain unknown to us, and to be precise we know nothing about the religious ideas; we can only employ analogies as an aid to understanding. Only the way of life and the appearance of the Avars allow, if only to a certain degree, to be reconstructed. In the course of doing this, one is struck by the impression that the most vital elements of Avar culture—as far as we can tell—remain the same. The basic concept of the Avar way of life persisted until the end of the Avar empire (around 800). Although Roman field structures would have lent themselves to intensive cultivation, agriculture evidently played but a minor role. The equestrian herdsman's greatest source of pride is his livestock: all other means of displaying his status are carried on his person. Nevertheless, at best, in the earliest period (until the first quarter of the seventh century) the Avars were nomads. Later, they inhabited permanent settlements, the high population density of which did not permit a nomadic way of life. Although cattle still formed the basis of Avar agriculture in the eighth century, the horse occupied a major role in Avar life. Up to the Late Avar Period, equestrian graves appear to be exceptionally well endowed, even though they become increasingly uniform—by comparison with the considerable variety present in the first half of the seventh century. Even the Avar warrior of the time of Charlemagne can be assumed to have differed only in small details from his predecessor of the era of Justinian I or that of Maurikios. The heavy armoured cavalry as described in the *Strategikon* no longer existed in the eighth century. It probably required a kind of "war economy" and would have been impossible to maintain in long periods of peace.

Christianity, which had frequently played a vital role in stabilising power and social structure in the western world, did not (yet) penetrate Avar culture. On the contrary: The Franks' war propaganda against the pagans appears to have been a potent impetus when Charlemagne set off with his army from Bavaria. Yet the strength of Avar tradition obviously no longer sufficed; some Avar potentates rapidly changed sides, although they failed to build positions of power of their own.

The Avar traditions were strong enough to survive substantial changes in Europe's political geography. Nevertheless, the transition from Avar rule to a medieval state did not work. Two hundred years later the Magyar King Stephen accomplished this feat, and it is due to him that the Magyars have survived up to the present day, while the Avars merged with other population components of the Carolingian era and only historians and archaeologists have access to them.

#### 4.2. *Social categories, symbolic and semiotic systems*

##### 4.2.1 *Symbols of prestige*

The archaeological remains of a distant society contain numerous symbols and signs with which the sense of belonging to a certain group was expressed; but nevertheless the symbolic and semiotic system of an ancient society is at first hidden to the archaeologist. He strives to identify grave complexes that can be regarded as typical for a particular group of people and assumes, as a working hypothesis, that this typical combination of artefacts found together reflects a specific group awareness of the people behind it. But of course there are many different types of social groups: Men and women, age groups, groups of similar occupation, immigrants from foreign cultures that have not yet completely adapted and social strata with different legal status. Only in the case of displaying status in higher social levels should we speak of means of representation in the narrow sense of the word. Gender-specific groups of finds are the easiest to define: graves of women are equipped differently to graves of men. Only at closer examination does one find areas of indistinctness.

What is the function of the means of representation in society? They stabilise. Early medieval society was characterised by high mobility, in several respects: the abrupt change of domicile, voluntary or forced re-settlement, the rapid change of group identity, the change of tribal, or ethnic affiliation and also ascent or descent in the social hierarchy were omnipresent phenomena. Those that were better off, were of course interested in maintaining constant social conditions and surely must have perceived uncontrolled changes in the social structure as a danger to their rank. Symbols of social status that were regimented as much as possible had a stabilising effect. Nowadays one would say that they promoted corporate identity, although one must assume that their use was occasionally watered down inten-

tionally. From the late Middle Ages we know several examples of regulations for dress, which illustrate both aspects: the conservative aims of the privileged and the encroachments of those striving to increase their privileges. For the early Middle Ages we can assume that rules existed stipulating who had the right to carry certain weapons, to wear particular items of jewelry, certain materials or costumes. Certainly how somebody presented himself to society was not simply a question of wealth. On the other hand, one should not regard these rules as too strict and static.

In order to be able to grasp the different social strata on the basis of the grave assemblages, archaeologists mostly attempt to unite graves of similar endowment to form "quality groups". "Poor" graves correspond to the lower classes, those without legal rights, or social outcasts; well-equipped graves correspond to the higher classes. However one must bear in mind that one limitation of the conclusions drawn from the evidence found in the graves is that the archaeologist usually finds only those parts of the graves' former equipment which are soil-resistant. Theoretically a grave that now appears empty and poor could originally have contained valuable silk cloths, carved wooden vessels or the like. The liquid contained by those vessels could, theoretically, also have been of such value that it was too valuable for daily life (honeyed ale, etc.). In addition to that, we usually employ our own criteria when judging the "wealth" of a grave: Precious metals are valuable, bronze and iron less so, wood and pottery have—as raw materials—no value as prestige goods. Even if this scale of value is roughly correct, it should be analysed carefully and—if possible—objectified.

We are already familiar with the problem that the objects preserved in the soil may not necessarily be those of the highest quality, from our experiences in the study of settlements. We read about Attila's wooden palace and also know from the study of medieval poetry, that splendidly furnished tents were felt to be specially prestigious. Little or nothing of this is preserved in the ground. The sunken huts, which constitute the vast majority of protohistoric settlements, were frequently the simpler, poorer buildings; in the "Germanic" villages often merely workshops.

The easiest way to analyse the worth of objects is to evaluate written sources, which sometimes include a considerable amount of information about representation among the highest social classes. The sources clearly illustrate the high value of coined and worked precious metals



as prestige objects. The fact that Charlemagne presented Offa of Mercia with a coat, a belt and a sword, shows the symbolic value of these objects. The second archaeological possibility is to check the combination of objects and furnishings: are there graves with in-built structures, which differ from others as regards their size and depth? Which combinations of objects occur in these graves? This questions made it possible to prove, for instance in Leobersdorf, Lower Austria, that for male graves with belt sets the work input generally required to make the grave was noticeably higher than for other graves.<sup>21</sup> But what was the legal status of the belt-wearers? Roughly one in six men wore a belt set. Could these men have been the heads of families, the chiefs of clans? Certainly there was more than one belt-wearer in each settlement group at any given time. If a particular honour was connected with the belt, then which was it? It is also interesting to note that there is no group among the female graves which would appear to correspond numerically with the group of belt-wearers. Therefore it is not possible simply to match a "privileged" woman with a "privileged" man. We know little about the social structure of Avar society, even if the contrary is sometimes asserted. It is popular to interpret a richly equipped grave as the burial of a khagan or prince, but does such a grave really represent the highest social level? Why is there, to date, not a single magnificently equipped grave known which can be dated to the eighth century? Were Khagans buried differently, perhaps cremated and their ashes scattered? And could this also be true for the seventh century? Are our "princely graves" in fact the burials of the social level immediately below the highest ruling class?

Apart from the belts, other objects were also regarded as specially prestigious. First among those are objects that are difficult to obtain: raw materials of foreign origin, such as whale skin for the sheaths of swords, amber, garnets from Ceylon or India for certain items of jewelry, imported artefacts, such as beads, buckles, earrings, etc. The latter were then frequently imitated; the resulting objects might, however, lack the prestige of the originals. An imitation of a Byzantine earring is merely "fashion jewelry", which models itself on the possessions of somebody who had access to imported products. Precious metals or artefacts whose manufacture required special skills or much time, were certainly also objects of high prestige. From this point of

<sup>21</sup> Daim, *Das awarische Gräberfeld von Leobersdorf, Niederösterreich*, pp. 71 ff.

view, the early medieval person's set of values does not seem to differ much from that of the person of today.

But in what respects do the Avars' means of representation differ from those of modern people? First of all, it appears that little thought was given to furnishing the domestic environment. Although we can count on the existence of valuable carpets and carved woodwork, the houses were—as far as we know—small and possessed few comforts. It seems certain that, as with their nomadic ancestors, the possession of cattle determined the wealth of an Avar family. This set of values had survived the transition to sedentariness. A Late Avar permanent settlement does not differ fundamentally from one of the Early Avar Period, which was used only for a short period of time.

By now, we have a considerable amount of information about Avar culture, the Avar way of life and the diverse relations of the Avars with their neighbours. When it comes to the semiotic system of Avar society, Avar mentalities, social groupings and stratification, however, we have still not progressed much beyond a few initial steps. New methods and a critical approach to the material will be needed before we can make meaningful statements concerning the mental world of the Avars.

#### 4.2.2 *Burial customs*

Three factors influence the burial of a member of the family: Firstly, religious beliefs determine the ceremonial aspects of the burial, ideas concerning the nature of the deceased after his death, where he is staying and which place he will now occupy in the family or in society. In this context one should not confuse appealing images (e.g.: "the deceased needs his attire and his weapons in the afterworld") with the actual beliefs about life after death. The second factor is the character of the deceased. His wishes, his self-perception and his set of values are taken into consideration as far as possible. The third factor is the self-portrayal of the family and the society around it. The splendor of a funeral is also a way of demonstrating the wealth and influence of those left behind. An additional factor worth bearing in mind is the psychological element, the funerary ritual, which eases the pain experienced by those left behind.

A funeral must always adhere to certain social conventions and is, like everything else, subject to fashion. When examining burial customs, one can always discern elements that are relatively long-lived

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and occur supra-regionally; and others that are of a local or even individual nature. Methodologically serious analysis of the practices surrounding the burial may illuminate social mechanisms, constraints and liberties, even concerning mentalities and—occasionally—the religious background. Nothing could be more inappropriate than to describe the graves as “mirrors of life”. Funerary customs function like a filter, and without an understanding of their mechanisms the result (the burial) cannot be interpreted.

There are few limits to the form which a burial ceremony may take: the dead can be cremated or subjected to being devoured by wild animals; their remains can be either scattered or buried. All conceivable variants of burial rites were practised somewhere, at some time. However, it is difficult for the archaeologist to identify and even more so to evaluate all types of burial. The vast majority of Avar finds comes from inhumation burials which include items of dress and additional grave goods. From the point at which the custom of giving grave goods went out of fashion the archaeologist loses a valuable source of historical information.

In the case of inhumation burials we can observe a large variety of different details, and we can evaluate them statistically: orientation of the grave, dimensions of the grave pit, evidence for the existence of internal fittings and constructions above ground level (grave mounds, “houses for the dead”, cemeteries, poles, steles, other markings, and so forth). Very rarely the deceased was just laid into the bare earth. Mostly we find discolorations resulting from coffins, sometimes evidence of beds for the dead, occasionally also of shrouds in which the body was wrapped. The objects which the archaeologist finds in the vicinity of the dead can be divided roughly into dress accessories and grave accompaniments in the narrow sense of the term: The dress accessories belong—it is thought—to everyday dress. Earrings, plait clasps, bead necklaces, belt sets, but also tools that were permanently carried, all belong to this group. Grave accompaniments are mainly vessels which originally contained food and drink, as well as animal bones representing the remains of gifts of meat. In addition to that, implements which the deceased did not always carry on his person, such as sickles, belong to the group of grave accompaniments. The same probably goes for weapons.

Individual differences between burials are more difficult to interpret than differences between settlements. Frequently local variations, which then persisted over many generations, can be observed. One example:

the custom of placing food and drink in the grave is widespread among the Avars. In Leobersdorf animal bones were found in almost every grave, but hardly any vessels were present; in Sommerein each grave contained a vessel, but animal bones were exceedingly rare; in Mödling there was always a vessel as well as animal bones. This illustrates the possibility for a community to interpret and apply a common “rule” of presenting food and drink as grave accompaniments, to suit their own preferences.

Cultural influences from outside do not become effective everywhere at the same time; fashions do not catch on immediately. As already mentioned briefly, the gradual change of burial customs and the step-by-step transition to row-grave cemeteries can be observed: In the area with which we are concerned, it seems to have been usual at first to leave larger spaces between the graves. Only in the middle of the seventh century does one begin to bury the dead close to each other, forming proper rows of graves. At the same time, a change in the orientation of the graves can be observed. At present we can merely speculate as to why this change occurred.

Regarding the structure of the necropolis, the Avars apparently conformed with the neighbours in the West; the lay-out of the graveyard does not appear to reflect Avar individuality. The tradition of donating grave accompaniments, however, seems to have been fundamental. The Avars were still burying their dead with their dress, weapons and food, when this custom had already been abandoned by the Alamans, Bavarians and Franks for some time. Only in the final phase of burial in these graveyards, during or shortly after the Avar wars, did one bury without dress and without food. A little later, the old graveyards were abandoned. In the new church organisation there was no place for these earlier graveyards. Moreover this clear association with ancient tradition was avoided.

##### 5. POWER AND CULTURE: AVARS, CARANTANIANS AND MORAVIANS IN THE EIGHTH CENTURY

From the Carpathian Basin and its fringes we know of almost 50,000 graves which can be dated to the eighth century. Despite all their regional variations they show a multitude of strong connections between one another, so that it is acceptable to speak of a single culture. The written sources (for the last quarter of the eighth century) reveal

that the head of the "Avar people" was a khagan and that Avar delegations sometimes established contacts with their neighbours. Therefore we have assumed that "the Avars" possessed something like a feeling of ethnic solidarity, at least in addition to other identities, which later, after the Avar wars, quickly became more important than the Avar identity. The territory of Avar rule probably extended approximately to the Enns; but the area of Avar settlement must have been much smaller: The most westerly Avar necropolises lie at the foot of the Wienerwald. Slav settlers also lived within the boundaries of Avar territory if one chooses to interpret find complexes in accordance with the Slav model in that way. These remains differ clearly from those of the Avars.<sup>22</sup>

One of the most conspicuous dress accessories of the higher-ranking man within the realms of the influence of Avar culture was the belt set, which in the eighth century usually consisted of parts made of cast bronze. This "decorative element for nobles" was, most probably, a means of representation which indicated the social rank of the wearer. It is found neither in the area between the Wienerwald and the Enns, nor in the necropolis at Pitten, which lies close to the area of Avar settlement and was already in use at the beginning of the eighth century.<sup>23</sup>

In the eighth century in the Alpine region of Carinthia and Styria there existed a territory under Carantanian rule, while from 743 onwards, the Carantanians were under Bavarian supremacy. Although the state of research is very unsatisfactory, several grave complexes dating to the eighth century, which show similarities and permit generalisations, are known.<sup>24</sup> Here the find complexes from Grabelsdorf, Carinthia, and Krungl, Styria, should be mentioned; however one exceptionally interesting burial from Hohenberg—which, like Krungl, lies in the vicinity of Liezen—deserves special mention.

On the sixth of April 1894, agricultural workers in Hohenberg found several skeletons while digging a cabbage patch. In the proximity of one of them, an iron sword and several cast metal fittings were found.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Recently: Szameit, "Slawische Körpergräber des 8. Jahrhunderts im österreichischen Donauraum und ihre Beziehungen zum spätmerowingischen Kulturkreis".

<sup>23</sup> Friesinger, *Studien zur Archäologie der Slawen in Niederösterreich* 2, pp. 49–174.

<sup>24</sup> Szameit, "Slawische Körpergräber des 8. Jahrhundert im österreichischen Donauraum und ihre Beziehungen zum spätmerowingischen Kulturkreis", pp. 215–225, with further bibliographical notes.

<sup>25</sup> Fischbach, "A hohenbergi leletröl".

This burial is, to date, one of the most important archaeological complexes of the alpine Carantanians. Currently, increased attention is, once again, being devoted to the dress accessories and the grave goods of the high-ranking lord who was buried here around the middle, or in the third quarter, of the eighth century. Only a few years ago, Erik Szameit published a new analysis of the sword, in which he showed that it is in fact an excellent Carolingian spatha of Mannheim type, which is dated to the mid-eighth century.<sup>26</sup>

According to recent studies, the belt set from Hohenberg is, in all probability, a Byzantine or Italo-Byzantine product. As yet it is unclear which social class, age-group or profession decorated or distinguished themselves with such elaborate, decorated belts. However, it is quite possible that they were worn not just by the highest-ranking civilian officials, but also by high ranking military officers. Future research will also have to tackle the question as to whether it is possible that some "Avar" types of the eighth century are not, in fact, Byzantine artefacts. This question is momentous, for a number of reasons: up to now we have assumed that in the eighth century, the Avars—in "splendid isolation"—exploited the resources of an older pool of motifs. Now there is an increasing amount of evidence to support the assumption that there were contacts between the Carpathian Basin and the Byzantine provinces—at least—which have left their mark on the archaeological record: these might be diplomatic connections as well as trade, which was however not very extensive.<sup>27</sup>

Among the Moravian Slavs, the slow differentiation of society and the development of territorial power, which eventually—in 830—resulted in the Moravian empire, can be observed in the archaeological record. In fact the present state of research is not useful for work on this topic, as most finds dating to the eighth century come from settlements, but there are no cemeteries, which is unfortunate, as they would be more meaningful for this question. Nevertheless, detailed studies which have been done in the past few years have resulted in a reliable picture of the situation.<sup>28</sup> At several places in Moravia artefacts, mostly belt fittings, which are either Avar products or were intended as copies of such, were found. We now assume that Byzantine

<sup>26</sup> Szameit, "Karolingische Waffenfunde aus Österreich. Teil 1: Die Schwerter".

<sup>27</sup> In preparation: Daim, "Byzantinische Gürtelgarnituren des 8. Jahrhunderts".

<sup>28</sup> Poláček, "Die slawische Besiedlung nördlich der awarischen Siedlungsgrenzen", pp. 328; Profantová, "Awarische Funde aus den Gebieten nördlich der awarischen Siedlungsgrenzen".

conventions of (military?) dress provided models here and that we have identified some Byzantine originals.

At first sight one might assume that southern Moravia was part of the area of Avar culture in the eighth century. However, if one compares the distribution of belt fittings with those of hooked spurs—a type of artefact which never occurs in the area of Avar culture—one arrives at a different conclusion: in the course of the increasing differentiation of Moravian society and the development of a ruling class it was necessary to “invent” special means of representation. The new lords had to supplement the existing symbolic repertoire and for this purpose, borrowed from their neighbours and the dominant power—at least in terms of image—the Byzantine Empire. However, we have only arrived at this explanation, which suits both the archaeological situation and theoretical conceptions regarding social developments, with the help of an item of riding equipment. If we did not have the latter we would probably still be assuming that the Moravian Slavs were part of the Avar empire, because the political separation of the Moravians could well have been a result of Charlemagne’s war against the Avars. A feeling of solidarity, of ethnic consciousness, might well have existed in the Moravian empire of Moimir I and it is quite possible, or even probable, that this ethnic identity either developed or was created in the course of the formation of Slav rule in Moravia. The creation of a Moravian ethnicity could thus have served as a means of securing power.

#### SUMMARY

In one respect, the methods used by the historian and the archaeologist are very similar: both must attempt to abandon modern terminological systems and to decipher the early medieval “code”. The historian has to use the terminology of the written sources as a starting point and he then must examine what was meant by the names given in the texts. The archaeologist discovers types of artefacts, forms of dress, types of settlements, burial customs, evidence for other customs and traditions and much more besides. He has to consider what status each of these cultural elements once possessed in a semiotic structure and which of them were understood as a criterion for differentiating between groups. We can assume with some certainty that there were just as many possibilities of identification in early medieval society as

there are today; some of them manifest themselves in the archaeological material. However it is highly problematic to label one or more of these “cultural groups” as “ethnic”, without extensive spatial comparison. If ethnicity is really a phenomenon of “social psychology”—as defined by Klejn—this would imply that we are over-stressing our material by a long way.

## DISAPPEARING AND REAPPEARING TRIBES

Peter J. Heather

The non-Roman immigrants who contributed so obviously and substantially to the transformation of the Roman World pose many difficult historical problems. This paper will attempt to explore one particular problem which has received rather less attention than many: the way in which, over time, certain social units—one might wish to call them “tribes”, “ethnic groups”, or something else—“positively” disappear and then “positively” reappear in our sources.

### A. DEFINING THE PROBLEM

What I mean by “positive” disappearance and reappearance is that the group involved can be shown to have survived a period of political domination by another group, seemingly without having lost all sense of solidarity, cohesion, and identity. Good examples of such phenomena ideally require historically reliable documentation on three levels: first, of a group’s original existence and independent activity; second, of its political submergence within another, larger entity; and third, of its re-emergence as an independent group. Late antique and early medieval sources being what they are, such total coverage will not be available in every possible case, but I will for the most part confine discussion here to the well-documented examples. First, some well-known evidence I do not consider relevant.

In two different places, Claudian purports to list the different Danubian tribes who gathered around Alaric at the start of his career: Sarmatians, Dacians, Massagetae, Alani, Geloni, and Getae according to one; Visi, Bastarnae, Alani, Chuni, Sarmatians, Geloni, and Getae according to the other.<sup>1</sup> In similar vein, Sidonius Apollinaris later listed the different tribes of the Danube region subdued by Majorian: Bastarnae, Suebi, Pannonii, Neuri, Chuni, Getae, Daci, Halani, Bellonoti, Rugi, Burgundi, Vesi, Aliti, Bisalti, Ostrogothi,

<sup>1</sup> Claudian, *In Ruf.* 1, 307–14; *id.*, *Cons. Stil.* 1, 94–111.

Procrusti, Sarmatae, and Moschi.<sup>2</sup> In these and similar cases, it is clear that the authors were intending not to provide an up-to-date gazetteer of the political make-up of Scythia north of the Danube, but to stimulate in their audiences' imaginations a general picture of the mass of Scythian tribes on the move (the whole point, of course, being to make this mass as massive as possible, since the punch-line for both poets was that all were nonetheless subdued by their respective heroes: Stilicho and Majorian). The precise names which appear in these lists may have been partly selected to reflect historical reality, but were also dictated by the poetic genre being used. Thus names legitimised by their appearance in works considered part of the classical canon were preferred to historical ones (hence the very common "Geta" for Goth), and all the names chosen, of course, had to fit the poetic metre at that particular point.

These lists are of enormous interest, but the variety of factors playing upon the poets in their choice of names means that, by themselves, they are insufficient evidence to document a "positive" reappearance of a long-lost tribe. No one imagines, for instance, that a little group of surviving Geloni—hidden for hundreds of years—did suddenly appear in Alaric's host in the 390s, and the same is obviously true of names (in a literal sense) such as Getae and Massagetae.<sup>3</sup> In some cases, there will be more room for disagreement on the likelihood of the list representing a genuine historical sighting. The appearance of "Bastarnae" in Sidonius' listing, for example, has been taken to show that this group in some form had survived the punishing campaigns launched against them in the third century. This is far from convincing, however, since Bastarnae appear in no other non-poetic fifth-century source. Indeed, I would myself posit the general principle that a mention (or even several mentions) in poetic lists is insufficient documentation for a positive reappearance; if further confirmation cannot be found elsewhere, there is too great a chance that the resurrection is a purely literary one.

An additional difficulty in identifying positive disappearances and reappearances is provided by instances where we are faced with huge gaps in the coverage of our sources. Rugi, for instance, are mentioned in Tacitus' *Germania* (43), but then not again until the fifth century;

<sup>2</sup> Sidonius Apollinaris, *Carm.* 5, 472–80; cf. *Carm.* 7, 235–40, 320–5.

<sup>3</sup> Some authors, of course, use such terms as deliberate and consistent euphemisms, which is an entirely different phenomenon.

Burgundians appear in Pliny, but not again until mentioned by Ammianus Marcellinus.<sup>4</sup> In both these cases, the groups would appear to have moved substantial distances in between, but there is simply no material from which to write a "history", and, in the case of the Burgundians at least, no pressing reason to suppose that they had ever in reality disappeared at any point in between, just because intervening Graeco-Roman sources chose not to mention them.<sup>5</sup>

#### B. DISAPPEARANCE AND REAPPEARANCE: TWO CASE STUDIES

Despite these substantial problems in the source material, a number of cases can be identified where the evidence is good enough to establish (or at least suggest with a high degree of probability) that submergence of an original group within a larger whole was followed by a further period of independence. One or two illustrations will establish the point.

A striking and dramatic example is provided by the history of the Heruli. In the third century, they were highly active, and, in particular, their participation in the great sea-borne raid which rolled off the northern Black Sea coast in the spring probably of 268 and through the Dardanelles to bring destruction to the Balkans is very well documented. Not only do they find specific mention in Zosimus, but some surviving fragments of Dexippus' history (Zosimus' source) make it clear that Dexippus' famous defence of Athens was actually made against Heruli, rather than against Goths or any of the other participating groups.<sup>6</sup> No fourth-century text, however, mentions them. This could simply be a lacuna in the evidence, but contemporary sources make it clear that first Gothic and then Hunnic groups were politically dominant in the northern Pontic areas which Heruli had occupied

<sup>4</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res gestae* 18, 2, 5; 28, 5, 9 ff.; 28, 5, 11; 30, 7, 1.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. below, Rugi were probably subsumed into the Hunnic Empire of Attila in the fifth century, but there is no reason to suppose that they had been politically submerged before c. 400 A.D. It is perhaps worth emphasising the absence of source material to document a link between first- and fifth-century Rugi does not necessarily mean that one did not exist. Goffart, *Barbarians and Romans*, c. 1, rightly argues that conjecture should not be used to link the Germanic groups of the Migration Period to the time of Tacitus. However, where groups with apparently the same name are documented in reliable sources for both the first and the fourth century, one should not refuse even to consider the possibility of some kind of link.

<sup>6</sup> Third century: Zosimus 1, 42; cf. Millar, "P. Herennius Dexippus".

in the third century, and Heruli certainly reappeared with a bang after the crash of the Hunnic Empire in the mid-fifth century. Their subsequent history is recorded in a number of sources, and particularly in Procopius, to whose account we will return later.<sup>7</sup> In the case of the Heruli, therefore, we find the same named group appearing in detailed, trustworthy, and at least partly contemporary narrative sources but with virtually a two hundred year gap between appearances. In between, they had certainly been submerged within Attila's Hunnic Empire in the fifth century, and had perhaps also been dominated by Goths in the fourth, although this latter point can only be conjecture. The Heruli thus fit, at least in part, the profile of positive disappearance and reappearance with which this paper is concerned.

The same is also true of the groups labelled Goths in our sources. Many details remain to be argued over, but there are more than enough indications in the surviving sources to show that Gothic groups dominated the lower Danubian and North Pontic regions in the fourth century, and had begun to establish that domination in the middle of the third. From the third quarter of the fourth century to the third quarter of the fifth, however, their domination of this region was superseded by that of the Huns, whose remit even extended to the Great Hungarian Plain of the middle Danube. Faced with this new power, some Gothic groups fled south of the Danube into the Roman Empire, but many Goths did not, and, as in the case of the Heruli, the sources document the cases of several Gothic groups who re-emerged as such from the wreck of Attila's Empire, having been subject to Hunnic domination in between. The best known instance is that of the Amal-led Goths who established themselves in Pannonia, but they are not the only case in point.<sup>8</sup>

Here again, the well-documented history of at least some Goths matches the criteria established for a positive disappearance and reappearance: the survival of a named entity through a period of political subjection. Indeed, as has already become clear, the historical context in late Antiquity which generated this kind of phenomenon above all

<sup>7</sup> Procopius, *Wars*, esp. 6, 14–15, but see also 7, 34.

<sup>8</sup> The Goths of Valamer were themselves composed of a number of previously separate groups (refs. as below note 21). In addition, we know at least of the Goths of Bigelis (Jordanes, *Romana* 336) and the Goths who formed part of Dengizich's force destroyed in late 460s: see below. It is also possible that the Goths of Theoderic Strabo (or some of them) had been under Hunnic domination: Heather, *Goths and Romans 332–489*, pp. 251 ff.

was the Hunnic Empire. Not only did Heruli and Goths pass through its fire to reemerge in some form at the other end, but so too in all probability did the host of other groups with which these two can be found competing in the aftermath of its collapse: Gepids, Suevi, Rugi, Sarmatians and others (although full documentation of disappearance and reappearance is in some cases unavailable). Whether these groups had previously also been subject to domination in the fourth century by Goths is unknowable, but, in some cases, distinctly likely.

Taken at face value, therefore, the sources throw up a number of cases where named groups reappear after a period of political subjection. The central question raised by the existence of such an historical pattern for a paper concerned with signs of ethnic identity is obvious. Can we accept what the sources seem to show? Could named social units really survive periods of political submersion?

Surviving literary sources offer us examples of two basic models by which some sense of identity and group cohesion might have survived a loss of political independence: one voluntary, the other involuntary. The classic example of identity within a larger group being maintained by voluntary, that is self-imposed, means is provided by those sixth-century Rugi who found themselves operating as part of the so-called Ostrogoths who followed Theoderic to Italy from the Balkans in 489. In a justly famous passage, Procopius reports:

These Rogi . . . in ancient times used to live as an independent people. But Theoderic had early persuaded them, along with certain other nations, to form an alliance with him, and they were absorbed into the Gothic nation and acted in common with them in all things against their enemies. But since they had absolutely no intercourse with women other than their own, each successive generation of children was of unmixed blood, and thus they had preserved the name of their nation among themselves.<sup>9</sup>

No one was forcing the Rugi to act in this way; indeed, as Procopius reports, they had joined Theoderic by "persuasion". They also maintained a common foreign policy, as it were, with the mass of the Goths. Nonetheless, these Rugi deliberately maintained a sense of separate identity by refusing intermarriage, and, as others have argued, it seems very likely that they had been settled together in one part of Italy, perhaps at some distance from others of Theoderic's followers.<sup>10</sup> They

<sup>9</sup> Procopius, *Wars* 7, 2, 1–3.

<sup>10</sup> Bierbrauer, *Die ostgotischen Grab- und Schatzfunde in Italien*, pp. 26–7.





had joined Theoderic in the late 480s, and the passage relates to 540, so that by such means they had managed to preserve their separate identity through fifty years of political submersion.

The sources fully document only this one example of such a voluntary relationship, but it is noticeable that Procopius reports that Theoderic had also persuaded "certain other nations" to follow him, and it is far from certain that similar arrangements did not apply in their cases too. For instance, as the Gothic war ground towards its messy close in the mid 550s, one centre of resistance was led by a man of Bittigure Hunnic origin. How he came by such a role is not recorded, but the Bittigure Huns had in the 450s and 460s been one of the tribes of the Danubian region, so that it is far from impossible that they had been part of Theoderic's following since the 480s, with at least some of them preserving their identity in between.<sup>11</sup> A similar relationship may also have been established between the Lombard king Alboin and the group of Saxons who followed him to Italy in search of plunder, but later decided to return to Gaul.<sup>12</sup> Here again, voluntary political self-subjection did not lead to loss of identity.

On the other hand, involuntary political subjection—i.e. being conquered—did not necessarily lead to loss of identity either. This is illustrated by a enormously important fragment from the history of Priscus relating the fate of part of the mixed Hunnic-Gothic force with which Attila's son Dengizich attacked the Eastern Empire in the later 460s.

Chelchal, a man of the Hunnic race and a junior officer on [the Roman general] Aspar's staff, approached the part of the barbarians which had been assigned to them and, summoning the chiefs of the Goths (who were more numerous than the other peoples), began to speak to them as follows. He claimed that the emperor would give them land not for their own enjoyment but for the Huns amongst them. For these men have no concern for agriculture, but, like wolves, attack and steal the Goths' food supplies, with the result that the latter remain in the position of servants and themselves suffer food shortages. Yet the Gothic people have never had a treaty with the Huns and from the time of their forefathers have sworn to escape from the alliance with them. Thus, in addition to their own hardships, they make light of their ancestral oaths. . . . The Goths were disturbed by these words and, thinking that Chelchal had said them out of good will, attacked the Huns

<sup>11</sup> Agathias 2, 13, 1 ff.; cf. Jordanes, *Getica* 53, 272.

<sup>12</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 4, 45; 5, 15.

amongst them and began to kill them; and as if at a signal, the two peoples began a fierce battle.<sup>13</sup>

It is unknowable when the Goths mentioned here first came under Hunnic domination, but it is implied that it was in an earlier generation, and is hardly likely to have been later than the 430s when Hunnic power became really prominent under Ruga. Indeed, it may well have been very considerably earlier, so that, despite being constrained into an unequal relationship for at least forty years and probably much longer, the Goths mentioned here had maintained a strong sense of themselves as Goths. Note, in particular, that they had their own chiefs, and the role that some kind of oath had played in generating a sense of group consciousness.

Again, the sources provide us with only this one fully-documented example of the survival of a sense of group identity despite involuntary political submersion, but the whole Hunnic Empire was probably built on a series of similar relationships. As we have already seen, not only various Goths, but also Heruli and numerous other groups were incorporated at some point within Hunnic dominion, and yet lived, as it were, to tell the tale, re-emerging after Attila's death. In these cases, as in that of the Goths described by Priscus, it seems likely that political dominion with consequent economic exploitation was established by force, but that part at least of the existing social hierarchy was left in place, and, with it, a structure through which pre-existing senses of identity might continue.

Such, at least, was Attila's approach to the Akatziri (see below), and such an approach would also explain the ability of Gepids, Suevi, Rugi and others to revive their political independence after Attila's death. And although this is to stray a little from the main chronological focus of this study and a subject worthy of a proper examination in its own right, it is perhaps worth noting that much of the later Avar Empire seems to have been constructed along similar lines. Here again, Avar power rose through the conquest of other groups, at least some of whom, particularly Bulgars and Slavs, were able later to reestablish their independence. And even groups which failed to reemerge did remain recognisable for a considerable period. The Gepids, for instance, were militarily demolished by the Avars in the mid 560s and never

<sup>13</sup> Priscus, *Ex. de leg. Gent.* 21, ed. Müller, fr. 39; ed. Blockley, fr. 49 (Blockley's translation).

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reemerged; nonetheless, Gepid villages were still distinct and recognisable in the 590s.<sup>14</sup>

The sources thus offer us two different but equally plausible models of how a sense of group identity *might* be preserved under different conditions through lengthy periods of political submersion. In a voluntary alliance such as that made by the Rugi, a determined effort had to be made by the smaller group to erect social barriers: in this case via a ban on intermarriage, reinforcing, almost certainly, geographical separation. If the Rugi had been less determined, one presumes, intermarriage and general intermingling would have quickly eroded any sense of being different from the bulk of Theoderic's following. In the case of Priscus' account of Goths in an involuntary alliance with Huns, the politically dominated group will have had to work much less hard to preserve their separate identity. For hand in hand with political domination in the Hunnic Empire, went economic exploitation; the account makes it absolutely clear that the Huns consumed at least part of their subjects' agricultural surpluses (this and other accounts also show beyond doubt that subject groups were also expected to perform military service). The Huns themselves, therefore, had every reason to preserve social barriers to the greatest possible extent, since every subject who managed to escape from that status, was one less basic producer for Hunnic imperialism to exploit.

### C. DISAPPEARANCE, REAPPEARANCE, AND THE PROBLEM OF IDENTITY

For each of these models of identity-preservation, the sources provide only the one fully-documented example. As we have seen, however, there are good indications that variants of these two basic types of relationship—in particular the involuntary one—were in widespread use in the Migration Period. Where the disappearances and reappearances of a given group suggest as much, and where the precise context is plausible, therefore, there is no reason to suppose *a priori* that some genuinely continuous sense of identity could not have survived even lengthy periods of political submersion.

Indeed, of the cases so far reviewed, that of the Rugi, at least would argue for rather a strong sense of identity in the group involved. There is no hint in Procopius' account that anything was stopping

them from intermarrying and, over time, integrating themselves fully into Theoderic's following. Rather, they deliberately chose to erect barriers and maintain their separateness. This clearly implies that they had a very strong conception of their own distinctiveness.

The same is not so true of the Goths in the involuntary relationship with the Huns, since, in that case, as we have seen, the Huns would also have had every interest in maintaining the separation. Nonetheless, the Goths were clearly not merely passive pawns in the Huns' hands, for Priscus' account again shows deliberate mechanisms being used by them to strengthen group solidarity: in this case an oath. Indeed, there is quite a lot of evidence that Goths used mass oaths in a range of contexts. For instance, the *Passion of St. Saba* reports the use of oaths to attempt to enforce public conformity to the traditional Gothic religion, Theoderic extracted an oath from the entire Constantinopolitan senate when dealing with the emperor Zeno, and, although this piece of evidence is more problematic, Eunapius reports that a great oath was sworn by the Goths before they crossed the Danube.<sup>15</sup> This material not only adds to the plausibility of Priscus' account of the oath against Hunnic subjection, but would indicate that, like the Rugi, some Goths had a sense of group identity which was deliberately fostered, and which did not immediately disappear in the face of outside pressure.

A similarly substantial degree of resilience in at least some Migration Period group identities is also suggested by the measures which the Roman state felt it was necessary to take in order to neutralise them. These are best illustrated by the fate of some Sciri who were captured by the East Romans in 408/9, having previously formed part of the following of the Hunnic leader Uldin. Their subsequent treatment receives detailed coverage in the combination of a narrative source, Sozomen's *Ecclesiastical History* (9, 5), and one of the laws of the *Theodosian Code* (5, 6, 3). The emperor and his advisors, we are told, were worried that if the mass of the Sciri were allowed to remain together, they would be bound to revolt. The group was therefore to be broken up, some being sold or given away as slaves, the rest being distributed as *coloni* (tied agricultural labourers) to landowners across the Empire. Built into the process was a series of safeguards. The Sciri were not to be allocated to landowners in Thrace and Illyricum because those areas were too near the Danubian region from

<sup>14</sup> Theophylact Simocatta 8, 3, 11; cf. Pohl, *Awaren*, esp. pp. 225 ff.

<sup>15</sup> Respectively: *Passion of St. Saba* 3; Malchus, ed. Blockley, fr. 18, 2; Eunapius, ed. Blockley, fr. 59 (cf. Ammianus 27, 5, 9).

which they had come (and hence, one presumes, it would have been too easy for them to escape). Nor were the Sciri to be allowed to live close together; rather, they were to be spread as individuals across the map. These measures were to be enforced via the imperial tax rolls, since all had to be entered permanently on the register within two years, and any subsequent transfers were to be carefully regulated. A final measure of control was that none of the Sciri so distributed was to be allowed to be recruited into the Roman army for twenty-five years.

The thoroughness of the East Romans is thus in tune with what we have observed particularly among the Rugi and partly among the Goths. As far as the Constantinopolitan authorities were concerned, the group identity of the Sciri was sufficiently resilient and dangerous for it to be deliberately dismantled by spreading the group across the map, far away from their homelands, and preventing any weapons getting into their hands for a period of twenty-five years. The Byzantine expectation was quite clearly that Sciri would take any opportunity to act together to assert their freedom; i.e. that their sense of identity was not something that would simply and easily fade away.

What these senses of identity were founded upon, and how they were expressed, are extremely difficult questions, which require separate study. It is by no means out of line with recent anthropological and sociological research into identity, however, to find that the senses of identity of at least some Migration Period groups might have been as firm as the evidence reviewed so far would seem to imply. This is not the place for a full review, but there have been broadly two strands to this work. The first, building especially on the writings of Leech and Barth, has demonstrated that identity fundamentally resides in the perception of the individual and of those among whom he or she lives, rather than in concrete measurable things. This has generated a tendency to see identity as something malleable (and in some cases even manipulable), rather than as an inherited unchanging fact: in Barth's words, an "evanescent situational construct". Wenskus' great *Stammesbildung und Verfassung* is thus very much in tune with this work, stressing that the Germanic tribal map was far from unchanging, and that new groups were constantly being built out of amalgamations of old ones. Hence, the famous groups of the Migration Period did not have a history stretching back hundreds of years.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> The classic expression of this vision of identity is *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, ed. Barth; cf. Wenskus, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung*.

The second strand of research has concentrated on the individual, and the way that individual behaviour is affected by the sense of identity picked up from the group into which he or she was born. From this it has emerged that, in certain contexts, the sense of identity picked up by the individual, despite being essentially unmeasurable in concrete terms, can nevertheless be powerful enough to dictate that individual's subsequent behaviour. That is, in certain cases, identity is not something voluntarily or consciously assumed. Despite the fact that it itself is not unchanging, it can be a basic determinant of human action, transmitting in particular the desire to act together with others sharing the same sense of identity. There is much more that could (and should) be said, but this is not the place. Suffice it to say that while the initial reaction to Leech and Barth was to conclude that inherited identity had been shown to be unimportant or at least much less important than had been supposed, more recent work has shown that such a conclusion is only true in certain contexts. In others, inherited senses of identity do indeed dictate behaviour.<sup>17</sup> Where our sources provide well-documented examples of groups acting as though they had a strong inherited sense of identity, therefore, modern research into identity gives us no reason to disbelieve them.

Indeed, the material which has so far formed the basis of this paper is deeply in tune with modern research. For, while on the one hand it seems to show groups with a strong and active sense of themselves, it is quite clear, on the other, that neither the groups involved nor their sense of identity was unchanging. The Rugi, for instance, only wanted to join Theoderic in the late 480s because Odovacar had just inflicted upon them what was clearly a large-scale defeat, even capturing Feletheus, their reigning king.<sup>18</sup> The decision to join Theoderic was presumably made, therefore, only because political independence was no longer a viable option for them. This, of course, helps explain why they were so determined subsequently to preserve themselves as a unit, but stresses that the group was not unchanged by its experiences. In particular, Feletheus' son Fredericus negotiated the relationship with Theoderic and directed the rather independent hand the Rugi subsequently played in Theoderic's war against Odovacar (at one point they transferred their allegiance to Odovacar's

<sup>17</sup> See e.g. Bentley, "Ethnicity and Practice"; Bacal, *Ethnicity in the Social Sciences*. For further discussion and historical applications, Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*.

<sup>18</sup> Refs. as *PLRE* 2, p. 457.

general Tufa, before rejoining Theoderic's side), but it is not clear that the dynasty continued to survive. In c. 540 a certain Eraric possessed, according to Procopius, "great power" over them, but there is no indication that he was related to Feletheus and Fredericus.<sup>19</sup> The determined assertion of their sense of identity does not mean, therefore, that these Rugi should be seen as unchanging—they may even have lost a royal dynasty. Indeed, such determination may rather be seen as a way of preserving some sense of continuity through a period of substantial change.

The Goths' relationship with the Huns, likewise, was initiated by a military subjection, and, here again, the group involved seems to have endured substantial changes. According to Priscus, the group had several leaders: he refers to the "chiefs of the Goths". Everything suggests, on the other hand, that the independent Goths of the fourth century had gathered themselves into units around preeminent dynasts, so that these figures had presumably been suppressed by the Huns in the course of their subjection (Graeco-Roman sources do document the fall of some other fourth-century Gothic dynasts, particularly Athanaric and Odotheus).<sup>20</sup> The Amal family of Theoderic later liked to pretend that its position as a unique Gothic royal dynasty had endured the period of Hunnic control, but a closer look at the sources makes it clear that the dynasty had really risen to prominence only in c. 450 in the generation of Valamer (Theoderic's uncle), when it defeated a series of rival chiefs, some of whom were definitely not Amals. Indeed, even its own propaganda recorded in Jordanes' *Getica* could not completely hide the discontinuities consequent upon subjection to the Huns, since it allowed that there had been a forty year interregnum in the family's exercise of monarchical control. It is equally clear that the Goths led by Valamer were only one among several Gothic groups held in thrall to the Huns. As we have seen, one Gothic group was still under Hunnic control in the late 460s, so there was no simple pattern of monarchical continuity through the period of Hunnic domination.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Fredericus: Eugippius, *Vita Severini* 44; Ennodius, *Panegyric* 55. Eraric: Procopius, *Wars* 7, 2, 1.

<sup>20</sup> Athanaric: Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res gestae* 31, 3, 4 ff.; Odotheus: Zosimus 4, 35, 38–9. See generally on the fourth century, Heather, *Goths and Romans 332–489*, pp. 97 ff.

<sup>21</sup> Amal propaganda: Jordanes, *Getica* 48, 246–52. Reality: Heather, "Cassiodorus and the rise of the Amals", pp. 103–28; cf. id., *Goths and Romans 332–489*, pp. 19–28, pp. 240–2.

While some Goths at least continued to preserve a sense of themselves under Hunnic control, the establishment of that control had thus involved a far-reaching political revolution. No source preserves the details, but this would be entirely in line with what we know of how the Huns approached newly subject groups. The best (indeed the only) detailed account is Priscus' report on the subjugation of the Akatziri,<sup>22</sup> where a military campaign led to their submission; the existing leaders of their sub-groups were then suppressed, and Attila's son imposed as ruler. The rest of the social hierarchy, however, seems to have been left in place: hardly surprising, since the only alternative would have been a total, and extremely complicated, social reorganisation. If the fate of the Akatziri is representative of the Huns' treatment of their subjects, then one can see that a sense of identity could indeed have survived among them, so long as that sense of identity was not confined to the absolute elite, since only prominent dynasts were suppressed. The process would nevertheless have involved considerable change and discontinuity, at the very least on the political level.

As modern sociological and anthropological research might lead us to expect, therefore, Migration Period evidence suggests that senses of identity *could* be resilient, but also that the groups involved rarely survived without considerable trauma. Moreover, if the conditions and context which produced a particular group-consciousness changed sufficiently, then, no matter how strong its sense of identity, the group could be pulled apart and effectively destroyed. Procopius' account of the Heruli illustrates this point admirably.

As Procopius stresses, the Heruli had developed over the years some particular ways of acting which marked them out from the other tribes around them.<sup>23</sup> The end of the Hunnic Empire (it had ceased to exist by the end of the 460s) marked the opening of a new phase of competition for the tribes of the Danubian region. According to Procopius, the Heruli did well to begin with, but were then defeated by the Lombards. This provoked a first split in their ranks, with one group moving north, eventually, it seems, reaching Scandinavia (called Thule by Procopius), while another sought to maintain itself in the Danubian region, establishing a dependent relationship first with the Gepids, but then, in the reign of Anastasius, moving south of the Danube

<sup>22</sup> Priscus, ed. Müller, fr. 8; ed. Blockley, fr. 11, 2.

<sup>23</sup> Procopius, *Wars* 6, 14, 2–7.

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<sup>22</sup> Priscus, ed. Müller, fr. 8; ed. Blockley, fr. 11, 2.

<sup>23</sup> Procopius, *Wars* 6, 14, 2-7.

into the East Roman Empire.<sup>24</sup> At this point, the Heruli clearly still retained some sense of group identity, despite the considerable geographical distance separating the two sub-groups. For when the sub-group inside the eastern Empire found themselves without any member of the royal clan to elect as king, they sent a deputation to the Scandinavian sub-group to bring back a suitable candidate. After the death of their first choice, the deputation eventually returned with one Datus and his personal following of some 200 Heruli youths.<sup>25</sup> Meanwhile, however, the Roman Heruli had become fed up with waiting and asked the emperor Justinian to choose a king for them from among their nobility. This he did, his choice falling upon Suartuas, but the arrival of Datus then provoked a second major split. Some Heruli remained loyal to Datus, but many went over to Suartuas, and when Justinian decided to back Datus, Suartuas' followers moved on to submit themselves once again to the Gepids. The Heruli were now divided into three sub-groups. The end result of this development was that, when Justinian decided to make war upon the Gepids in 549 A.D., some 1,500 Heruli fought for him, but another 3,000 were fighting on the other side.<sup>26</sup>

As described by Procopius, the Heruli thus started the post-Hunnic period (say c. 460) with a strong sense of identity, and their subsequent behaviour, particularly the attempt to bring a proper Herule king from Scandinavia, shows this sense of identity in action. Some ninety years later, there were still people around who thought of themselves as Heruli (a further sign of the solidity of their identity), but changed circumstances meant that the group as a whole was no longer viable as an independent unit. Essentially, I suspect, it was simply too small to maintain itself against the new monarchies which were creating themselves out of the wreck of the Hunnic Empire. Consequently, there were splits among the Heruli as different groups of individuals decided what strategy to pursue: some chose an alliance with Constantinople, some chose one with the Gepids, others tried to maintain their independence by moving to an entirely new location. One might even argue that their sense of identity was too strong to allow them to import the extra manpower which would have been required for them to build a group large enough to remain independent.

<sup>24</sup> Procopius, *Wars* 6, 14, 8–36; 6, 15, 1–4.

<sup>25</sup> Procopius, *Wars* 6, 15, 27–30.

<sup>26</sup> Procopius, *Wars* 6, 15, 27–33; 7, 34, 40–3.

Be that as it may, their history is a perfect illustration that, however strong a sense of identity might be, circumstances can break its hold. For by c. 540, being a Herule had ceased to be the main determinant of individual behaviour; the Heruli had ceased to operate together on the basis of that shared heritage, and different Heruli were adopting different strategies for survival in the new political conditions which even caused them to fight on opposing sides. After c. 540, we still find small groups called Heruli fighting for the East Romans in Italy, and it is noticeable that the Roman commanders were careful to appoint for them leaders of their own race.<sup>27</sup> Thus some sense of identity probably still remained. That said, we are clearly dealing with a few fragments of the original group, and, in the prevailing circumstances, Herule identity had no future. No groups of Heruli, even as small military units, appear, for instance, in the detailed military histories of Menander Protector or Theophylact Simocatta describing events from the later 560s onwards. Where the unit created by a strong sense of identity ceases to be viable, then, despite the desire of individuals to maintain it, their behaviour will gradually cease to be fashioned according to its demands.

#### CONCLUSION AND WIDER CONTEXT

The fact that certain named groups disappear and reappear in the Migration Period, then, has a number of important historical implications. The evidence is far from comprehensive, but the available texts show both that it could really happen that a group might genuinely preserve sufficient sense of itself to survive a period of political eclipse, and also allow us to explore some of the contexts which would make such a phenomenon possible. More generally, the fact that such patterns occur at all implies that the sense of identity binding together some groups at least was powerful, and, as we have seen, there is both plenty of ancient evidence pointing in the same direction, and no reason, on the basis of modern research, to dismiss such a conclusion out of hand. It must be stressed, however, that no sense of identity will have been entirely unchanging, and, as the case of the Heruli illustrates, no sense of identity, however strong its pull on

<sup>27</sup> Agathias 1, 11, 3; 1, 20, 8.

individuals, could survive if the group it generated ceased, because of changed circumstances, to be a viable social unit.

These conclusions apply, of course, only to particular groups in particular contexts, and not all situations, even in the non-Roman World of late Antiquity, conformed to this pattern of quite solid group identities. Compare, for instance, the late sixth-century Slavs described in the Ps. Maurice *Strategicon*. According to this text, the Slavs of this period did not maintain firm boundaries against outsiders, and were indeed very keen to allow prisoners, after one year, to join their groups as fully equal members.<sup>28</sup> Certain individuals, likewise, could always cross even the strongest boundaries. As we have seen, the Huns had good reason to restrict the ability of their subjects from throwing off their status, and in the case of the Goths described by Priscus did so with some success. On the other hand, Priscus had a famous encounter with one former Greek merchant, who had started as a Hunnic prisoner, but risen in status via martial endeavour to win freedom, a Hunnic wife, and, seemingly, full acceptance into the ranks of the Huns.<sup>29</sup> This, however, was not the fate of all Roman prisoners captured by nomads, for the *Miracula S. Demetrii* records a contrary case, where large numbers of Roman prisoners taken by the Avars, preserved a sense of themselves as Roman over at least two generations.<sup>30</sup>

Not all the social groups of the Migration Period were the same, therefore, in the strength of their sense of group identity; nor, consequently, were they all equally liable to absorb outsiders. This is patently not the case. I would like to suggest, in conclusion, that the problem of identity is another instance where a reawakening sense of the importance of historical narrative is very much to the point. It is exceedingly difficult to define what a modern sense of identity consists of, suggesting, given the surviving source material, that the elements of Migration Period identities will in most cases remain highly elusive. A very real test of the strength of the identity of different Migration Period groups, however, is how they acted in practice. Here we can hope to make progress even if the constituent elements of any identity remain hidden. For what these groups did in practice is in many ways the acid test. When faced with the difficulties of this highly

<sup>28</sup> Maurice, *Strategicon* 11, 4, 12–16.

<sup>29</sup> Priscus, ed. Müller, fr. 8; ed. Blockley, fr. 11, 1.

<sup>30</sup> *Miracula Demetrii*, ed. Lemerle 2, 5.

dangerous and uncertain period of history, did individuals tend to act with others belonging to the same named group as themselves, or did they not? When faced with what seem like attractive options of transferring allegiance to richer and more powerful entities such as the Roman (or, indeed, the Hunnic) Empire, did people do so? — or did they seek to maintain their own independence, co-operating with others of similar background to themselves? For this reason, I would argue that historical narrative — how groups acted when faced with outside stimuli — is one of the most fundamental signs of ethnic identity: not in understanding its composition, of course, but certainly in gauging whether it was a key determinant of the behaviour of any given set of individuals.



NOMEN ET GENS: POLITICAL AND LINGUISTIC  
ASPECTS OF PERSONAL NAMES BETWEEN THE THIRD  
AND THE EIGHTH CENTURY—PRESENTING  
AN INTERDISCIPLINARY PROJECT FROM  
A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Jörg Jarnut

For some time there has been a working group consisting of medievalists, historians and philologists concerned with establishing an inter-disciplinary project to advance the investigation of onomastics in Latin-Germanic Europe (3rd–8th century). The main aim is to gain safer criteria than hitherto of what indication names give of the origin of their bearer. The state of the art in historical research concerning naming during the great migration and also the early medieval period in general is characterised by a paradoxical situation: the names in this period are not completely documented nor systematically researched, but on the other hand the individual name plays a central role in discussions concerning the origin of the name-bearer.

It may illustrate the first statement that the much more complex Paris Project PROL (*Prosopographia Regnorum Occidentis Latini*) is obviously stuck. The prosopography of single *gentes* of the last two decades (García Moreno, Kampers, Schwarcz, Jarnut, Selle-Hosbach, Ebling)<sup>1</sup> deals only partially with the names which occur there and this also applies to the “Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire” (Martindale).<sup>2</sup> In particular, they all lack a philological analysis of the recorded names. Three examples concerning very different subject groups should make the second statement evident:

1. A classic problem of the investigation of the Germanic kingdoms during the migration period from the fifth to seventh centuries is the question of whether a Latin name indicates Roman descent and

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<sup>1</sup> García Moreno, *Prosopografía del reino visigodo de Toledo*; Kampers, *Personengeschichtliche Studien zum Westgotenreich in Spanien*; Schwarcz, *Reichsangehörige Personen gotischer Herkunft. Prosopographische Studien*; Jarnut, *Prosopographische und sozialgeschichtliche Studien zum Langobardenreich in Italien (568–774)*; Selle-Hosbach, *Prosopographie der merowingischen Amsträger des Merowingereiches 511–613*; H. Ebling, *Prosopographie der Amsträger des Merowingereiches*.

<sup>2</sup> Martindale, *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire A.D. 395–527*.

whether a Germanic name indicates Germanic descent. The answers which have been given to these questions vary considerably. Whereas the tendency in former research placed high emphasis on this aspect, recent research questions this. Personal research experience would indicate that both positive and negative generalisations are problematic.

2. It is often assumed that a Germanic name is a useful determiner of the specific ethnic background of its bearer, for example to identify him as a Goth, Frank or Alaman. This opinion is only based on the individual research experience of the historians and philologists who share this viewpoint and not on name statistics or similar research.

3. If and to what degree names indicate family affiliation is a contentious issue. Almost all prosographic discussion centres around this issue. An extreme example of an extraordinarily high assessment of the name material in this respect is given by Reinhard Wenskus,<sup>3</sup> whereas a very sceptical position was taken, for example, by Matthias Werner<sup>4</sup> in his research on Frankish noble families. Certain knowledge can only be gained if one investigates the names and the name-giving in as many families as possible comparatively, taking into account time, location and social position.

The significance of personal names with reference to the ethnic origin of their bearers is a contentious issue especially because the wealth of name-material during the migration period and the early Middle Ages is not fully recorded. The members of the project now want to collect this material in order to create a basis for reliable statements pertaining to the ethnic origin of the bearers of a given name. Above all the project should consider ethnic, social and family aspects. Moreover, the group will endeavour to formulate qualitative and quantitative methods on this basis so that the most reliable statements possible can be made about ethnic origin.

The first main aim of the project is to redress the aforementioned research deficit which means that a Corpus of traditional first names and their bearers from the migration period and the early middle ages (3rd–8th century) will be created. It is intended to list all references to personal names from a philological point of view by using

<sup>3</sup> Wenskus, *Sächsischer Stammesadel und fränkischer Reichsadel*.

<sup>4</sup> Werner, *Adelsfamilien im Umkreis der frühen Karolinger. Die Verwandtschaft Irminas von Oeren und Adelas von der Pfalz. Personengeschichtliche Untersuchungen zur frühmittelalterlichen Führungsschicht im Maas-Mosebrunn*.

preliminary studies and to create—as far as sources allow—short prosopographies about their bearers. Obviously this collection which will be a name-book/prosopography has to be computer compiled. In this respect, one can rely on the model of the Duisburg Database Dieter Geuenich is in charge of, designed for the investigation of medieval personal names and groups. This also means that the names can be registered, stored and indexed under the criteria created there. As a result of this work different Corpora should be developed in which names and persons that are grouped according to their affiliation to a kingdom will be registered.

In these Corpora personal names from the beginning of the third century to the end of the eighth century should be collected. On the one hand, the chosen period makes it possible to trace the development of the name-giving process of single *gentes* from their formation to their alteration by the Franks; on the other hand it allows the majority of later name-material (e.g. the Bavarians, Alamans and Thuringians) to be included in a comparative analysis. This onomastic material should then be ethnically evaluated from a philological and historical point of view. The historical and ethnic evaluation of the material that is collected and philologically prepared in single Corpora should then help to work out group-specific signs for the relevant *regnum*, which means according to the particular family, social (class-specific) and regional characteristics. This can be achieved through investigation of typical names, parts of names, and if necessary of rules of name formation that span over several generations. The comprehensiveness and the philological analysis of the name-material ensures much more certainty than was previously possible in assigning named persons to families and social groups. Moreover, thanks to the computer-compiled quantitative analysis, there are possibilities of a comparison with names of other *regna* and also with the Corpora of the eighth to eleventh centuries (approximately 400,000 personal names) already stored in the Duisburg Database.

Another aim of the project is to work out ethnic specifics and the possible transmission of name material by comparison with the characteristics of the name-material and the name-giving process so that the bearers of individual names can in future be associated with single *gentes* with a higher degree of certainty. With the help of the comparative method, names and name-material of single *gentes* are utilised for investigating the ethnogenesis of early medieval *gentes*. If we look at the sources it is evident that the names and the name-giving processes

of single *gentes* are very rare, almost unique, evidence for the investigation of late antique and early medieval ethnogenesis.

At the same time the name-material of the Germanic kingdoms, which came into existence and were consolidated within the borders of the Roman Empire, should be investigated to see how the relation between Germanic and non-Germanic name-giving processes developed. Observations can then be made about the relation between Germanic peoples and Romans, and an important contribution can be made on the theme "The Transformation of the Roman World". Problems of assimilation and adaptation, but also separation and isolation of different cultural communities, especially in the area of name-giving in which group traditions and individual decisions which were connected by a uniform value-system overlapped, can easily be worked out. Little other than the naming of children makes it possible to draw conclusions about the self-classification of the parents in gender assigned groups and also about their expectations and wishes for the future of the child.

In conclusion the aim of the project can be described as follows: constructing of Corpora including names current in Germanic *gentes* and *regna*, establishing criteria for the names as an indication of the group identity of its bearer, analysing the family and social aspects of name-giving, contributing to the research on ethnogenesis during the migration period and the early Middle Ages, and therefore also to the history of early medieval Europe.

## REMARKS ABOUT RELATIONS BETWEEN VISIGOTHS AND HISPANO-ROMANS IN THE SEVENTH CENTURY

Dietrich Claude

Since practically the entire Iberian Peninsula had been annexed by the Visigothic kingdom, particularly under Euric's rule,<sup>1</sup> the peninsula formed an important part of the *regnum Gothorum*, especially after the loss of Aquitania to the Franks, and from the sixth century onward its central part. How did the relationship between the Roman provincial population and the Goths develop? First we should ask where contemporaries saw characteristic differences between ethnic groups and which criteria of distinction they knew. Isidore of Seville is particularly worth considering as a witness even if one must be aware that he often relates ancient knowledge that was out-dated in his time.<sup>2</sup> First he mentions dress as a distinctive feature between *nationes*.<sup>3</sup> Besides, some *gentes* also have different physical characteristics.<sup>4</sup> Language can also be a criterion for distinction.<sup>5</sup> After the tower of Babylon was built, there had been as many languages as *gentes*,<sup>6</sup> but later several *gentes* emerged from one language community—it is thus we should translate the word *lingua* in this context.<sup>7</sup> Consequently

<sup>1</sup> Stroheker, *Eurich, König der Westgoten*, pp. 21 ff.; Thompson, *Romans and Barbarians*, pp. 188 ff.; id., "The end of Roman Spain, Part 3"; García Moreno, *Historia de la España visigoda*, pp. 68 ff.; id., "Mérida y el reino visigodo de Toledo"; Domínguez Monedero, "La *Chronica Caesaraugustana* y la presunta penetración popular visigoda en la Península Ibérica". Inhumations in row grave cemeteries (*Reihengraberfriedhöfe*) set in towards the end of the fifth century: Ripoll López, "Características generales del poblamiento y la arqueología funeraria visigoda de Hispania".

<sup>2</sup> Diesner, "Isidor von Sevilla und das westgotische Spanien", pp. 28 f. and pp. 84 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae sive Origines* 19, 23, 1: *Quibusdam autem nationibus sua cuique propria vestis est. . .*

<sup>4</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae sive Origines* 19, 23, 7: *Nonnullae etiam gentes non solum in vestibus, sed et in corpore aliqua sibi propria insignia vindicant: ut videmus curras Germanorum, granos et cinnibar Gotorum, stigmata Brittonum*. Isidore uses the terms *gens* and *natio* as synonyms: *Ibid.*, 9, 2, 1: *Gens est multitudo ab uno principio orta, sive ab alia natione secundum propriam collectionem distincta. . . Gens autem appellatur propter generationes familiarum, id est a gignendo, sicut natio a nascendo*.

<sup>5</sup> Isidore, *Etymologiae sive Origines* 19, 23, 6: *Discordantur et gentes ita habitu sicut et linguae discordes*.

<sup>6</sup> Isidore, *Etymologiae sive Origines* 9, 1, 1: *Initio autem quot gentes, tot linguae fuerunt, deinde plures gentes quam linguae*.

<sup>7</sup> Isidore, *Etymologiae sive Origines* 9, 1, 1: *. . . quia ex una lingua multae sunt gentes exortae*.

a number of *gentes* can use a common language. Therefore, according to Isidore, language is of less importance than dress or physical characteristics.

As a term for all the inhabitants of the Iberian Peninsula Isidore knows the word "Hispani",<sup>8</sup> but this is probably not a term for an ethnic group, because he subsequently talks about "the peoples of Hispania" (*Hispaniae populi*).<sup>9</sup> Elsewhere in the text he mentions the *Hispani* as a "dialect community" within the Latin world.<sup>10</sup> Therefore the *Hispani* of Isidore are Hispano-Romans.

On the Iberian Peninsula, Isidore mentions several peoples; explicitly, he mentions *Gallaeci*, *Asturi* and *Cantabri*, to each of whom he attributes special features. The *Gallaeci* have a lighter complexion than the other Spaniards.<sup>11</sup> They themselves claim to be of Greek origin;<sup>12</sup> they owe another characteristic to this ancestry: cunning.<sup>13</sup> The *Cantabrians* Isidore describes as pugnacious and litigious.<sup>14</sup> Concerning the *Asturians* he only mentions their houses.<sup>15</sup> Because all of these peoples appear in the history of Visigothic Hispania,<sup>16</sup> Isidore's statements have contemporary value, even though one cannot verify his information about tribal characteristics.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Isidore, *Etymologiae sive Origines* 9, 2, 109: *Hispani ab Ibero ante primum Iberi, postea ab Hispano Hispani cognominati sunt.*

<sup>9</sup> See n. 11. That the Visigothic kingdom is occasionally described as an *imperium* may be explained by its polyethnicity. In the eyes of the contemporaries, an empire is a community that consists of a multitude of *gentes* and *nationes*. See Fanning, "Emperors and empires in fifth-century Gaul", pp. 295 ff.

<sup>10</sup> Isidore, *Etymologiae sive Origines* 9, 1, 8: *Omnes Occidentis gentes verba in dentibus frangunt, sicut Itali et Hispani.* . . .

<sup>11</sup> Isidore, *Etymologiae sive Origines* 9, 2, 110: *Galleci a candore dicti, unde et Galli. Reliquis enim Hispaniae populi candidiores existunt.*

<sup>12</sup> Diesner, "Isidor von Sevilla und das westgotische Spanien", p. 28.

<sup>13</sup> Isidore, *Etymologiae sive Origines* 9, 2, 110: *Hi Graecam sibi originem adserunt.*

<sup>14</sup> Isidore, *Etymologiae sive Origines* 9, 2, 113: *Cantabri gens Hispaniae. . . Horum animus pertinax et magis ad latrocinandum et ad bellandum, vel ad perpetiendum verbera semper parati.*

<sup>15</sup> Isidore, *Etymologiae sive Origines* 9, 2, 112.

<sup>16</sup> Isidore, *Etymologiae sive Origines* 9, 2, 107 f.; Diesner, "Isidor von Sevilla und das westgotische Spanien", p. 29, correctly remarks that Isidore regards tribes who were not or only loosely integrated into the Visigothic kingdom as savage and rapacious; Novo Guisán, *Los pueblos vasco-cantábricos y galaicos en la Antigüedad Tardía*.

<sup>17</sup> Gibert, "El reino visigodo y el particularismo española"; Vigil and Barbero, "Sobre los orígenes sociales de la Reconquista", pp. 281 ff. For the *Gallaeci*: Thompson, *The Goths in Spain*, pp. 87 f. and p. 184. García Moreno, "Las invasiones y la época visigoda", pp. 405 f.; Besga Marroquin, *Consideraciones sobre la situación política de los pueblos del Norte de España durante la época visigoda del reino de Toledo*; Diego Santos, "De las Asturias sueva y visigoda". As late as towards the end of the seventh century, *Gallaecia* became a Visigothic subject kingdom: Prelog, *Die Chronik Alfons' III*, p. 10 with n. 53, pp. 142 ff.

As a particular part of the dress of the *Hispani*, Isidore mentions the *stringes*, a garment that cannot be defined more clearly.<sup>18</sup> It is questionable whether this applied to his own time, the more so because Isidore presumes a more or less uniform costume for the indigenous inhabitants of Hispania; the very different climatic conditions of the country, however, contradict this assumption.<sup>19</sup> In Isidore, the Visigoths do not appear among the peoples of Hispania, although he must have known them well. He knows about their alleged origin from the biblical people, Magog.<sup>20</sup> The Goths are described as reddish of hair and pigtailed.<sup>21</sup> One can doubt whether the information about the hairstyle of the Goths was up-to-date, because Goths with pigtailed are mentioned nowhere else. Furthermore, Isidore claims that the Goths are tall and strongly built and extremely skilled with weapons.<sup>22</sup>

Let us verify Isidore's statements with the help of our sources. Our informants say nothing about the Visigothic dress. Here, the archaeologist has to take the floor. As Volker Bierbrauer showed with reference to the grave finds, the Visigoths discarded their tribal costume by about 570/80,<sup>23</sup> Visigothic aristocrats had done so

<sup>18</sup> Isidore, *Etymologiae sive Origines* 19, 23, 1. For the significance cf. Du Cange, *Glossarium Mediae et Infimae Latinitatis* 5, s.v. *striga*, p. 4: *Hispanorum vestes, Internius subligaculum, vulgo caleçon*. This interpretation is probably incorrect because underwear was not worn visibly and therefore was unsuitable to mark a group.

<sup>19</sup> That the degree of romanisation in Visigothic Spain differed regionally to a considerable extent is stressed correctly by Palol, "Demografía y arqueología hispánicas de los siglos IV al VII", p. 9; Vigil, "Romanización y permanencia de estructuras sociales indígenas en la España septentrional".

<sup>20</sup> Isidore, *Etymologiae sive Origines* 9, 2, 27: *Magog, a quo arbitrantur Scythas et Gothas traxisse originem*. For the origin of this legend see Wolfram, *Die Goten*, pp. 39 f.; Borst, "Das Bild der Geschichte in der Enzyklopädie Isidors von Sevilla", p. 28, who shows that this origin construct should emphasise the particular status of the Visigoths.

<sup>21</sup> Isidore, *Etymologiae sive Origines* 19, 23, 7: *Nonnullae etiam gentes non solum in vestibus sed et in corpore aliqua sibi propria quasi insignia vindicant: ut videmus cirros Germanorum, granos et cinnibar Gotorum, stigmata Brittonum.*

<sup>22</sup> Isidore, *Etymologiae sive Origines* 9, 2, 89: *Gothi a Magog filio Iaphet nominati putantur . . . gens fortis et potentissima, corporum mole ardua, armorum genere terribilis.*

<sup>23</sup> Bierbrauer, "Frühgeschichtliche Akkulturationsprozesse in germanischen Staaten am Mittelmeer (Westgoten, Ostgoten, Langobarden) aus der Sicht des Archäologen"; Bierbrauer, *Die Ostgoten in Italien*, p. 157; Hübener, "Témoins archéologiques des Visigoths en Espagne", pp. 133 f.; Ripoll López, "Reflexiones sobre arqueología funeraria, artesano y producción artística de la Hispania visigoda", p. 346; Ripoll López, "Características generales del poblamiento y la arqueología funeraria visigoda de Hispania", p. 391; Domínguez Monedero, "Las necrópolis visigodas y el carácter del asentamiento visigótico en la Península Ibérica", pp. 177 ff. Domínguez Monedero questions whether those inhumated in row-grave cemeteries belonged to the Visigothic *gens* without offering any convincing evidence for this position. In contrast, García Moreno, "La arqueología y la historia militar visigoda en la Península Ibérica" stresses

before.<sup>24</sup> Row-grave cemeteries (*Reihengräberfelder*) that are supposed to be mainly Visigothic come to an end in the early seventh century,<sup>25</sup> obviously because the inhabitants living in the settlements near the row-grave cemeteries adopted the funerary customs of the indigenous population.<sup>26</sup>

Research to date does not permit us to verify Isidore's statements about the physical constitution of the Visigoths.<sup>27</sup> It must be seriously doubted if this will ever be possible because of the ethnically heterogeneous composition of the Visigoths. It must be presumed that towards the end of the sixth century at the latest, dress ceased to be a distinguishing feature between Visigoths and Hispano-Romans.

How long did language separate Visigoths and provincial Romans? It is self-evident that King Euric could speak the language of his people. If he used it in negotiations with the envoys of the emperor<sup>28</sup> the reason might lie in his distinct self-confidence. A little later Sidonius Apollinaris was disturbed by two bickering Gothic women in his exile in Llvia.<sup>29</sup> He does not expressly mention that the two used the Gothic language but the disgust that the Gallic aristocrat shows about the really "barbarian" noise gives a hint that the old people used the Gothic language.

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correctly that inhumations in row-grave cemeteries should be considered, as a rule, as Visigoths. D'Abadal i de Vinyals, "À propos du legs Visigothique en Espagne", p. 553, dates the change of costume too late, in the period around 600; similarly Reimer, *Die Westgoten—Versuch einer archäologisch-historischen Studie*, p. 42 and p. 51. On the cemetery of El Carpio del Tajo that had been founded by Visigoths, Romans were inhumated as well: Ripoll López, "La necrópolis visigoda de El Carpio del Tajo" (1993/94), pp. 243 ff.

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<sup>28</sup> Ennodius, *Vita Epifani* 90 f., ed. Cesa, *Ennodio*, p. 58. Cesa, *ibid.*, p. 172, thought that the king who could speak Latin spoke Gothic with the ambassadors for reasons of protocol or politics. For the Gothic language in the kingdom of Toulouse: Kremer, "La survivance du Wisigothique dans la péninsule Ibérique".

<sup>29</sup> Sidonius Apollinaris, *ep.* 8, 3, 2, ed. Loyen, vol. 3, p. 85.

language. As Knut Schäferdiek has stated, Leovigild's religious policy presupposed an advanced linguistic romanisation.<sup>30</sup> The fact that two of the Arian bishops who signed the Athanasian confession at the Third Council of Toledo in 589 wrote their Gothic names in a romanised form<sup>31</sup> fits this picture. After the conversion of the Visigoths to the Catholic religion the Gothic language lost its last, and probably already declining, function as a church language.

The *Historia Pseudo-Isidoriana* that originated in the eleventh century in the Arabian part of Hispania tells us about a king of the Visigoths in the seventh century, possibly Reccesvinth (649/52-672), who was highly educated in the "barbarian language".<sup>32</sup> But the information provided by this source is of negligible value for Visigothic history,<sup>33</sup> so that this remark cannot be used as proof for the survival of the Visigothic language. Likewise, the *Tractatus institutionum disciplinae* is of no value as a testimony to the survival of the Visigothic language and epic literature in the seventh century. This little *opus*, which advises young nobles, among other things, to sing the songs of the old instead of frivolous songs,<sup>34</sup> is a collection of literary selections that do not originate with Isidore—as presumed earlier—and it is also doubtful that it originated in the Visigothic kingdom at all.<sup>35</sup> Perhaps, the Visigothic language survived for some time as a domestic language

<sup>30</sup> Schäferdiek, *Die Kirche in den Reichen der Westgoten und Sueven bis zur Errichtung der westgotischen katholischen Staatskirche*, pp. 160 f. with n. 97.

<sup>31</sup> *Concilium Toletanum* 3, ed. Vives, p. 122. It was the case of Ubiligisclus (Willegisel) of Valencia and Froisclus (Frawigisel) of Tortosa: Schäferdiek, *Die Kirche in den Reichen der Westgoten und Sueven bis zur Errichtung der westgotischen katholischen Staatskirche*, p. 161 with n. 97; García Moreno, *Prosopografía del reino visigodo de Toledo*, p. 146, nr. 364; p. 209, nr. 600.

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<sup>33</sup> Gautier Dalché, "Notes sur la Chronica Pseudo-Isidoriana".

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<sup>35</sup> Fontaine, *Isidore de Seville et la culture classique dans l'Espagne wisigothique*, p. 143; according to the contribution to the discussion of d'Abadal i de Vinyals, "À propos du legs Visigothique en Espagne", p. 680, by M.C. Diaz y Diaz, the text probably originated in the Merovingian kingdom. Riché, "L'éducation à l'époque wisigothique: Les *institutionum disciplinae*", p. 180, proposed to date its origin to the period between the death of Isidore and the early eighth century in the Visigothic kingdom. He did not specify which kind of songs of the old they were.

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of the Visigothic lower class in the Castilian Meseta,<sup>36</sup> but also here it would seem to have vanished in the seventh century.<sup>37</sup>

Up to now linguistic research had not achieved any definite results either. The place-names of the so-called "Septimian type" that obviously originate from the period after 500 show that romance syntax influenced Visigothic name-forming.<sup>38</sup> But one cannot speak of a deep romanisation of the Visigoths at the time of the kingdom of Toulouse.<sup>39</sup> In the Iberian Peninsula, a significant Visigothic influx can only be assumed from the late fifth century onwards. There, only ten Gothic place-names can be established with some certainty.<sup>40</sup> These are "Goth"-names that prove that the Gothic settlement was surrounded by Roman villages whose inhabitants saw the Gothic ethnicity as an important distinctive feature when it came to name-giving.<sup>41</sup> Because the Visigoths scarcely ever named their settlements after their own ethnic identity, it is to be assumed that the original Visigothic place-names have vanished; only the names given by outsiders survived.

The legal language of the Visigothic kingdom preserved only a few Gothic words like *wardia*, *thiuphadus* and *gardingus*.<sup>42</sup> In addition, one to two dozen Gothic words found their way into the Portuguese and Spanish languages.<sup>43</sup> Obviously the use of the Gothic language receded rapidly in the period after the kingdom of Toulouse.<sup>44</sup>

The historian may take the liberty to add further criteria to those that Isidore of Seville used to describe ethnic groups: law, religion, military matters and social behaviour. This is not the right place to deal again with the *quaestio vexatissima*, the question of personality or territoriality of the Visigothic law.<sup>45</sup> Most historians of law agree that

<sup>36</sup> Gamillscheg, *Romania Germanica*, p. 395.

<sup>37</sup> Gamillscheg, *Romania Germanica*, p. 355; Piel and Kremer, *Hispano-gotisches Namenbuch*, p. 29, state the lack of sources for the end of Visigothic.

<sup>38</sup> Gamillscheg, *Romania Germanica*, p. 351.

<sup>39</sup> Gamillscheg, *Romania Germanica*, p. 354.

<sup>40</sup> Piel, "Toponimia germánica", pp. 533 f.; Piel and Kremer, *Hispano-gotisches Namenbuch*, pp. 23 ff.

<sup>41</sup> D'Abadal i de Vinyals, "À propos du legs Visigothique en Espagne", p. 551.

<sup>42</sup> Gamillscheg, *Romania Germanica*, pp. 356 ff.; *Wardia: Lex Visigothorum* 9, 2, 9, p. 378; *Thiuphadus: ibid.*, index, s.v. *thiuphadus*; *Gardingus: ibid.*, 9, 2, 8, p. 371; 9, 2, 9, p. 375; 9, 2, 9, p. 377. Further examples are offered by Kremer, "La survivance du Wisigothique dans la péninsule Ibérique", p. 222.

<sup>43</sup> Piel and Kremer, *Hispano-gotisches Namenbuch*, pp. 27 f.

<sup>44</sup> Gamillscheg, *Romania Germanica*, p. 394; Kremer, "La survivance du Wisigothique dans la péninsule Ibérique", p. 223.

<sup>45</sup> D'Ors, "La territorialidad del derecho de los visigodos"; King, *Law and Society in the Visigothic Kingdom*, pp. 6-10; King, "The alleged territoriality of Visigothic law".

the *Codex Euricianus*<sup>46</sup> and the *Lex Romana Visigothorum*<sup>47</sup> contain personal law whereas the *Liber iudiciorum* of Reccesvinth<sup>48</sup> is certainly territorial in application.<sup>49</sup> Thus, the territorialisation of Visigothic law, which began with the edict of Theudis on the cost of juridical proceedings in 546,<sup>50</sup> was completed around the middle of the seventh century at the latest. The same law now applied to Hispano-Romans and Visigoths.

The religious differences between the arian Visigoths and the catholic Romans were in reality less severe than our sources, catholic clergymen, would have us believe. Already around 455, a noble catholic Gothic woman named Glismoda is attested.<sup>51</sup> Not only was the Goth John of Bicular already Catholic before 589, but also Masona, who belonged to the same group, held office as metropolitan of Merida before 585.<sup>52</sup> In the aristocracy, there were marriages of mixed religion, as the example of Theudis shows.<sup>53</sup> Even terms that seemed unambiguous could become confused—in the interest of certain intentions of ecclesiastic policy. According to John of Bicular, Leovigild desired that the Hispano-Romans should convert from their belief, which the king describes as *Romana religio*, to the Arianism modified in 580 by the arian synod, which he describes as *catholica religio*.<sup>54</sup> The term *Romana religio* for the Athanasian religion defamed it as the religion of the "Romans" and of the emperor with whom the Visigoths had had to fight repeatedly since 552.<sup>55</sup> Leovigild's propaganda therefore

<sup>46</sup> *Codex Euricianus*, ed. A. d'Ors (Roma, Madrid, 1960).

<sup>47</sup> Nehlsen, "Alarich II. als Gesetzgeber".

<sup>48</sup> MGH Leges 1, ed. Zeumer; Reccesvinth's lawbook is based upon a codification proclaimed by Chindasvinth that also had a territorial validity: King, "Chindasvinth and the first territorial law-code of the Visigothic Kingdom".

<sup>49</sup> Zeumer, "Geschichte der westgotischen Gesetzgebung I", p. 485.

<sup>50</sup> Zeumer, "Geschichte der westgotischen Gesetzgebung I", p. 475.

<sup>51</sup> Schäferdiek, *Die Kirche in den Reichen der Westgoten und Suaven bis zur Errichtung der westgotischen katholischen Staatskirche*, pp. 10 f.

<sup>52</sup> Schäferdiek, *Die Kirche in den Reichen der Westgoten und Suaven bis zur Errichtung der westgotischen katholischen Staatskirche*, pp. 165 ff.; Garcia Moreno, *Prosopografía del reino visigodo de Toledo*, pp. 166 ff.; *Vitae Sanctorum Patrum Emeritensium* 5, CCSL 116, pp. 47 ff.

<sup>53</sup> Procopius, *Bellum Gothicum* 1, 12, 50; Garcia Moreno, "Sobre la sociedad de la Península Ibérica entre el reino de Tolosa y el de Toledo", pp. 693 f.; Garcia Iglesias, "El intermedio ostrogodo en Hispania", pp. 95 ff.

<sup>54</sup> John of Bicularo, *Chronicon* a. 580, ed. J. Campos, pp. 89 ff.: *Leovigildus rex... antiquam haeresim novello errore emendat, dicens de Romana religione ad nostram fidem venientes non debere baptizari...* For Leovigild's religious policy see Schäferdiek, *Die Kirche in den Reichen der Westgoten und Suaven bis zur Errichtung der westgotischen katholischen Staatskirche*, pp. 159 ff.; Orlandis, "El Arrianismo Visigodo tardío"; Alonso Campos, "Sunna, Masona y Nepopis".

<sup>55</sup> Garcia Moreno, "Propaganda religiosa y conflicto político en la epigrafía de

departed from the assumption that the Hispano-Romans did not identify politically with the Roman Empire but with the Visigothic kingdom.<sup>56</sup> John of Biclar had a similar opinion. On the occasion of the civil war between Leovigild and his rebellious son Hermenegild, he stated that the conflict had done more damage to the Goths and the Romans than an enemy invasion.<sup>57</sup> The comparison with an *adversariorum infestatio* proves that the chronicler understood the *Romani* as Hispano-Romans but not as Romans of the Empire. Goths and Romans were affected by the conflict to the same degree. Although John of Biclar differentiated between both ethnic groups, he did not see any political division between them.

The conversion of most of the arian bishops, the Gothic nobles and the Gothic *gens* at the Third Council of Toledo 589 finally brought to an end confessional dualism in the Visigothic kingdom.<sup>58</sup> This constituted an important step towards a rapprochement between Goths and Hispano-Romans. Common belief now connected both peoples as one people of God.<sup>59</sup>

The Hispano-Romans suffered from the civil war not only as non-participants, but also as active participants in conflict. The indigenous population of the Visigothic kingdom had probably never been debarred from military service. Already at the battle of Vouillé in 507 Roman aristocrats fought on the side of the Visigoths under the leadership of Apollinaris, the son of the converted Goth-hater Sidonius Apollinaris.<sup>60</sup> In this instance, it was a unit that consisted exclusively

época visigoda"; García Moreno, "La Andalucía de San Isidoro", pp. 555 ff.; Schäferdiek, *Die Kirche in den Reichen der Westgoten und Suewen bis zur Errichtung der westgotischen katholischen Staatskirche*, pp. 159 f.

<sup>56</sup> Fontaine, "Qui a chassé de Cartaginoise Severianus et les siens?", p. 381, reckons that some senators in the south of Spain initially welcomed the Byzantine landing.

<sup>57</sup> John of Biclaro, *Chronicon* a. 579, p. 89: *quae causa provincia Hispaniae tam Gothis quam Romanis maioris exitii quam adversariorum infestatione fuit.*

<sup>58</sup> About the Third Council of Toledo: Schäferdiek, *Die Kirche in den Reichen der Westgoten und Suewen bis zur Errichtung der westgotischen katholischen Staatskirche*, pp. 205 ff.; Saitta, "La conversione di Reccaredo"; García Moreno, "La coyuntura política del III Concilio de Toledo. Una historia larga y tortuosa?"; García Moreno, "El concilio III de Toledo y la historia de España altomedieval".

<sup>59</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Liber de variis questionibus* 25, eds. Varga and Anspach, p. 107: *De eo quod gentes ante adventum Salvatoris, Gentes tantum vocabantur, post adventum vero eius, conversae ad ipsum nunc populus Dei et filii Dei sive Israel appellantur, quamvis pristinum nomen Gentium retineat.*

<sup>60</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 2, 37, p. 88. This is a particularly spectacular case of a Roman who did military service for a Visigothic king. Already in the second half of the fifth century, Romans appear as commanders in the service of the Visigothic king; Vincentius, *dux* of the *Tarraconensis*, immediately passed from Roman to Visigothic

or at least mostly of Romans, whereas at the end of the sixth century we find the Roman Claudius as *dux* of Lusitania and as commander of a Visigothic army that successfully fought the Franks.<sup>61</sup> No doubt Claudius also commanded Visigoths. His conspicuous position shows that by the end of the sixth century no distinctions were made between Visigoths and Romans as far as the army was concerned.

The only difference between both peoples that is obvious in our sources lay in an aspect of social behaviour. It was a Germanic tradition to use "leading names" (*Leitnamen*) within each family and to hand down parts of names. As examples from the Visigothic kingdom king Liuva I, his brother Leovigild and his son Hermenegild may be mentioned. The son of Reccared I was called after his great uncle Liuva (II). The son and successor of king Chindasvinth was called Reccesvinth. Julian of Toledo mentions a bishop Wilesind of Agde and his brother Ranosind. Both participated in the rebellion of Paulus in 672.<sup>62</sup> The Germanic tradition of namegiving lasted at least until the middle of the seventh century, which allows conclusions to be drawn about the survival of family tradition within the Visigothic aristocracy.

In daily life Visigothic and Roman nobles may have adopted similar customs even earlier. Visigothic nobles wanted to kill the metropolitan Masona of Merida and the *dux* Claudius around 590.<sup>63</sup> Witterich, later to be King, belonged to the conspirators. He stood behind Claudius like "a younger man who owes the older respect".<sup>64</sup>

service: García Moreno, "Vincentius *dux* provinciae Tarraconensis. Algunos problemas de la organización militar del Bajo Imperio en Hispania". For further examples see Burgess, "From Gallia Romana to Gallia Gothica: the view from Spain", pp. 25 ff. A comprehensive presentation is offered by Schwarcz, "Senatorische Heerführer im Westgotenreich im 5. Jahrhundert".

<sup>61</sup> García Moreno, "Las invasiones y la época visigoda. Reinos y condados cristianos", p. 135. Orlandis, "Los hispano-romanos en la aristocracia del siglo VII", p. 190. He brings (*ibid.*, pp. 191 ff.) further examples for Romans in leading positions.

<sup>62</sup> Julian of Toledo, *Historia Wambae regis*, MGH SS rer. Merov. 5, p. 532: *... comprehendentes ... Wilesindum episcopum, ... et Ranosindum, germanum Wilesindi episcopi.* Vgl. García Moreno, *Prosopografía del reino visigodo de Toledo*, p. 198, nr. 562 (Wilesind) and p. 69, nr. 118 (Ranosind). For the Visigothic use of names cf. García Moreno, "Gothic survivals in the Visigothic Kingdom of Toulouse and Toledo", p. 7.

<sup>63</sup> García Moreno, *Prosopografía del reino visigodo de Toledo*, pp. 41 ff., nr. 35.

<sup>64</sup> *Vitae patrum Emeretensium* 5, 10, pp. 83 f.: *... Wittericus ... stans post scapulam egregii viri Claudii ducis, utpote iubenior aetate reddens obsequium seniori, immo nutritori suo. ...* If Claudius were Witteric's nutritor, this would be important evidence for the social assimilation of Hispano-Roman and Visigothic aristocracies in the last quarter of the sixth century. However, a metaphorical use of language cannot be excluded.



This gesture of—in this case hypocritical—respect must have been common to Romans as well as to Visigoths.<sup>65</sup>

More than once in the first half of the seventh century the sources mention the Gothic origin of a particular individual. The author of the *Vitae Patrum Emeretensium*, who wrote around 633–638, talks about the Gothic origin of two metropolitans. The context is reminiscent of hagiographic *topoi*,<sup>66</sup> so that the mention of Gothic origin may have served to enhance their glory. Moreover, the author writes that both originated from aristocratic families. The Goths who combined to kill Mazona were also of noble origin.<sup>67</sup> One of the Visigothic formulas compiled in the early seventh century contains a model for the handing over of a dowry given by the husband to a Gothic bride.<sup>68</sup> The very rich gifts prove that the bridegroom and surely also the bride belonged to the upper nobility. A gravestone of the year 632 mentions the Gothic origin of the deceased.<sup>69</sup> As he was born around 572, the gravestone gives testimony to a mixed marriage between a Goth and an indigenous woman.<sup>70</sup>

According to these testimonies, in the first third of the seventh century recognition of a Gothic origin still survived. That this was also true of the Roman side, is testified to by the author of the *Vitae Patrum Emeretensium* in particular, but also by the epitaph that places

<sup>65</sup> *Vitae patrum Emeretensium*, p. LV.

<sup>66</sup> *Vitae patrum Emeretensium* V, 2, p. 48: *Denique sanctus Mazona antestis nobilis hortus in hoc seculo origine, genere quidem Gotus, sed mente promtissima erga Deum. . . Ibid.*, 5, 14, p. 100: *Quo (scil. Innocentio) defuncto, sacerdoti culmen sanctus Renovatus cunctis virtutibus decoratus non inmerito promeruit, vir denique natione Gotus, generoso stigmate procreatus, familie splendore conspicuus.* García Moreno, "Gothic survivals in the Visigothic Kingdom of Toulouse and Toledo", p. 14.

<sup>67</sup> *Vitae patrum Emeretensium* 5, 10, p. 81; *Sunna: namque Gotus episcopus, . . . irritatus a diabolo quosdam Gotorum nobiles genere opibusque perquam ditissimos, e quibus etiam nonnulli in quibusdam civitatibus comites a rege fuerant constituti. . .*

<sup>68</sup> Buchner, *Die Rechtsquellen*, p. 51; *Formula Visigothica* 20, ed. I. Gil, p. 90: *Insigni merito et Getica de stirpe senatus. . .* García Moreno, "Gothic survivals in the Visigothic Kingdom of Toulouse and Toledo", p. 13; García Moreno, "La Andalucía de San Isidoro", pp. 560 ff.

<sup>69</sup> *Inscripciones Cristianas de la España Romana y Visigoda*, ed. Vives, p. 31: *Sinticio, famulus Domini cognomento Didomum paterno traens linea Getarum. . .* According to Vives, p. 32, Didomum is a Gothic name, Sinticio the baptismal name. In contrast to this, García Moreno, "Gothic survivals in the Visigothic Kingdom of Toulouse and Toledo", p. 13, n. 74, correctly proposes an emendation and maintains it should have been "Deidonum"; "Sinticio" was a Gothic name.

<sup>70</sup> D'Abadal i de Vinyals, "À propos du legs Visigothique en Espagne", pp. 556 f., considers the number of mixed marriages between Goths and Romans as insignificant. Indeed, we know very little about it. The wording of *Lex Visigothorum* 3, 1, 1, pp. 121 f., however, seems to suggest a higher number of mixed marriages.

the origin of the inhumated in a primarily Roman environment. The integration of Goths and Hispano-Romans had not developed to such an extent that a Gothic origin, obviously regarded as a positive attribute, had become absolutely meaningless. Admittedly all references to Gothic origins—perhaps with the exception of the epitaph—refer to persons of noble origin. This allows us to see the aristocracy as bearers of a particular Gothic consciousness and as guardians of old traditions; probably these traditions were on the whole restricted to the family sphere. They were supplemented by a vague pride in belonging to an old and glorious people.<sup>71</sup>

Let us turn to the 17th canon of the Sixth Council of Toledo in 638. There the criteria which a future king had to fulfill were determined; not eligible were those who tried to gain this honour in a "tyrannous", which means an unlawful, way, any who had been shorn as clerics or criminals, or who were descended from the unfree, or from a "foreign gens". One had to be a Goth and a worthy one to become king.<sup>72</sup>

The wording of the canon seems to imply the conclusion that the kingship should only be reserved for the Goths, and that the way to the highest honours was blocked for the Hispano-Romans. But this appears to be doubtful in the light of our preceding discussion. Let us look at the excluding features first. If a *tyrannica praesumptio* excluded one from kingship, the council Fathers obviously wanted to secure the legal succession of a king as it had been constituted in the Council of Toledo after 633.<sup>73</sup> It is self-evident that nobody could become king who had suffered the dishonouring punishment of the *decalatio*.<sup>74</sup> The exclusion of clerics might be seen as a wise self-restriction by the high clergy—or as a consequence of the idea that only a physically

<sup>71</sup> García Moreno, "Gothic survivals in the Visigothic Kingdom of Toulouse and Toledo", pp. 13 f.

<sup>72</sup> *Concilium Toletanum* 6, 17, pp. 244 f.: *Rege vero defuncto nullus tyrannica praesumptione regnum adsummat, nullus sub religionis habitu detonsus aut turpiter decalatus aut servilem originem trahens vel extraneae gentis homo, nisi genere Gothus et moribus dignus provehatur ad apicem regni.* Orlandis, "La sucesión al trono en la Monarquía Visigoda", p. 87, still paraphrases this canon without analysing the term *Gothus*; the same in id., "La iglesia Visigoda y los problemas del sucesión al trono en el siglo VII", p. 49.

<sup>73</sup> *Concilium Toletanum* IV, 75, ed. Vives, pp. 217 ff.; d'Abadal i de Vinyals, *Dels Visigots als Catalans*, p. 55; Barbero de Aguilera, "El pensamiento político visigodo y las primeras uniones regias en la Europa Medieval", pp. 75 f.; Vigil and Barbero, "Sucesión al trono y evolución social en el reino visigodo", pp. 387 f.

<sup>74</sup> *Leges Visigothorum*, p. 510, s.v. *decalare, decalatio*; King, *Law and Society in the Visigothic Kingdom*, p. 46, nr. 6.

unharmful human being who also had his full head of hair could become king. This regulation also protected the high clergy against the very dangerous suspicion of striving for kingship. Finally the king was not allowed to descend from an *extranea gens*. Visigothic legal sources can help to make this term more precise. A law of Wamba that was proclaimed on the 1st November 673 talks of "foreign *gentes*" as peoples that live outside the borders of the kingdom.<sup>75</sup> King Egica complains in the *tomus*<sup>76</sup> that he gave to the fathers of the Seventeenth Council of Toledo in 694 that Septimania was nearly depopulated because of crime, invasions of "foreign people" and the plague.<sup>77</sup> Obviously the Franks or the Aquitanians are implied here as the *externa gens* who in 672 tried in vain to support the rebellion of Paulus.<sup>78</sup> Therefore "foreign peoples" are ethnic groups that lived outside the Visigothic kingdom and were seen as potential enemies. It is understandable that foreigners should be excluded from the Visigothic line of succession.

Already in 636, the Fifth Council of Toledo had enacted regulations pertaining to eligibility<sup>79</sup> that help to clarify the relevant canon of the Sixth Council. Complaints were made that persons who were neither of noble origin nor had a noble character wanted to become king.<sup>80</sup> Henceforth, one who wanted to become king, without being legitimised by election and descent from the nobility of the Visigoths, should be excommunicated.<sup>81</sup> It becomes clear that the social origin of the candidate was of paramount importance. The regulations show that candidates for the crown must be citizens of noble origin of the Visigothic kingdom. There is no indication of an exclusion of noble Hispano-Romans in this canon.

Reality confirms this conclusion. In 680 Ervig succeeded to the throne of Toledo; his father Artavasdus had come as an exile from

<sup>75</sup> *Lex Visigothorum* 9, 2, 8, pp. 370 f.: *Nam quotienscumque aliqua infestatio inimicorum in provincias regni nostri se ingerit, dum nostris hominibus, qui in confinio externis gentibus adiunguntur, hostilis surgit bellandi necessitas. . .*

<sup>76</sup> For this term: Schwöbel, *Synode und König im Westgotenreich*, pp. 81 ff.

<sup>77</sup> *Concilium Toletanum XVII*, ed. Vives, p. 525: . . . *ut quia delictis ingruentibus et externae gentis incursu et plagae inguinalis interitu pars ipsa ab hominibus desolata dinoscitur. . .*

<sup>78</sup> Julian of Toledo, *Historia Wambae regis* 28, p. 523. As enemy, the Aquitanian *dux Lupus* is mentioned; Rouche, *L'Aquitaine des Wisigoths aux Arabes*, p. 102.

<sup>79</sup> Beumann, "Zur Entwicklung transpersonaler Staatsvorstellungen", pp. 217 f.

<sup>80</sup> *Concilium Toletanum V*, 3, p. 228: . . . *quos nec origo ornata nec virtus decorat, passim putant licenterque ad regiae potestatis pervenire fastigia. . .*

<sup>81</sup> *Concilium Toletanum V*, 3, p. 228: *Ut quisquis talia meditatus fuerit, quem nec electio omnium provehit nec Gothicae gentis nobilitas adhuc honoris apicem trahit. . .*

the Byzantine Empire. He had married a relative of the king Chindasvinth<sup>82</sup> but as a rule the status of the children followed that of the father; Ervig can hardly be seen as a Goth in an ethnic sense. However, as he was born in the Visigothic kingdom, he did not belong to an *extranea gens*. If his father was accepted as worthy of marriage to a close relative of the king he must have been regarded as equal to the nobles. So Ervig fulfilled the prerequisites to become king of the Visigoths that had been determined by the councils. The pretender Paulus may also have been of Roman origin because of his name.<sup>83</sup>

Finally the Visigothic kings placed themselves in a Roman tradition at an early date by following the Ostrogothic model—for the first time attested in the case of Theudis—by using the royal title *Flavius*.<sup>84</sup> Therefore the term *Gothus* in the 17th canon of the Sixth Council of Toledo very probably did not have an ethnic, but a social and "regnal" meaning; it was used for any member of the kingdom of aristocratic origin.<sup>85</sup>

Hints of a Gothic origin of individuals in the first third of the seventh century do not contradict this. Because our most important source for this, the *Vitae Patrum Emerentensium*, tells us about the noble origin of the Hispano-Roman Claudius in nearly the same words as about the origin of the metropolitans Masona and Renovatus,<sup>86</sup> one

<sup>82</sup> Görres, "Die byzantinische Abstammung der Westgotenkönige Erwig und Witiza, sowie die Beziehungen des Kaisers Maurikios zur germanischen Welt"; Claude, "Erwig", pp. 531 f.

<sup>83</sup> García Moreno, *Prosopografía del reino visigodo de Toledo*, pp. 65 ff., nr. 111. He doubts p. 65, nr. 1 the late tradition that Paulus would have been of Byzantine descent. Rouche, *L'Aquitaine des Wisigoths aux Arabes*, p. 102 takes Paulus for a (Hispanic) Roman.

<sup>84</sup> Wolfram, *Intitulatio I. Lateinische Königs- und Fürstentitel bis zum Ende des 8. Jahrhunderts*, pp. 60 ff.; Prostko-Prostyoski, *Ultraeque res publicae*, p. 74.

<sup>85</sup> Barbero de Aguilera, "El pensamiento político visigodo y las primeras unciones regias en la Europa Medieval", p. 303; Orlandis, "Los hispano-romanos en la aristocracia del siglo VII", identifies the Goths with the oligarchy, whose members have to personally swear homage to the king. Since Egica at the latest the members of the *ordo palatinus* swore before the king: *Lex Visigothorum* 2, 1, 7, p. 53. For the *ordo palatinus*: Sánchez Albornoz, "El aula regia y las asambleas políticas de los Godos", pp. 27 ff., who remarks *ibid.*, p. 27 that the term *seniores gentis Gothorum* disappears from the sources, and we only hear of *seniores palatii*, *maiores* or *primates*. Obviously, the king had succeeded in restricting the privileges to a group of those he had chosen, without regard to their ethnic origin. Menéndez Pidal, "Los godos y el origen de la epopeya española", p. 300, maintained that in medieval Spain the terms Goth and noble were used as synonyms.

<sup>86</sup> Claudius: *Vitae patrum Emerentensium* 5, 10, p. 83: *Idem vero Claudius nobili genere hortus Romanis fuit parentibus progenitus. . .* For "Masona" and "Renovatus" cf. above n. 66.

gains the impression that noble birth was at least as important as ethnic origin. The ethnic identity of the Visigoths was under a permanent process of erosion, particularly in the sixth century, which led to an almost complete assimilation into the Hispano-Roman environment. Archaeologically, the Visigoths are no longer detectable as a distinct group by the end of the century. The barriers that costume, confession, law and language had once formed, were gone. What remained were more or less distinct family traditions.

The political aspect of the transformation was interpreted by Isidore of Seville. Once upon a time—as the Church Father tells us—Hispania was conquered by the Romans and integrated into their Empire. But now it has been taken into the possession of the Goths, a people at least equal in value to the Romans.<sup>87</sup> In this description, Visigothic rule over Hispania appears similar in nature to that of the Romans. Neither one nor the other was seen by Isidore as a foreign domination. Moreover, Goths and Hispano-Romans are both descendants of Japhet.<sup>88</sup> Continuing this line of thought, one could see both ethnic groups as having the same origin, as one *natio*. Isidore understood Goths and Romans as equal *ethnica* in the *regnum Gothorum*.

During a long process of transformation, the Visigoths were assimilated to the Hispano-Romans by giving up the characteristics of their tribe, and the Hispano-Romans on the other hand took on important ideas of political order from the Goths. They abandoned the idea of the political unity of the *imperium Romanum* and became members of the Gothic kingdom. This process resulted in the formation of a new Hispanic “nation” in the late seventh century.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>87</sup> Isidore of Seville, *De laude Spaniae*, p. 267. Some late Visigothic laws mention Goths and Romans, for instance *Lex Visigothorum* 9, 2, 9, p. 377: . . . *seu sit Gothus sive Romanus*. . . It is the case of a law on *Heeresfolge*. It should, however, be noted that legal language is always conservative. Moreover, the legislator obviously wanted to exclude from the start any objection that the offender was not liable because his special status was not mentioned in the lawcode. It is also worth remarking that the law proclaimed only a few years before by Wamba (*Lex Visigothorum* 9, 2, 8, pp. 370 ff.) mentions neither the “Gothus” nor the “Romanus”. Their mention in Ervig’s law should rather be considered an example for jurisdictional perfectionism than for survival of a conscience of ethnic diversity.

<sup>88</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae* 9, 2, 26 ff.: *Item tribus filiorum Iaphet: . . . Magog, a quo arbitrantur Scythas et Gothos traxisse originem. . . Thubal a quo Iberi, qui et Hispani; licet quidam ex eo et Italos suspicentur*. Thubal was Magog’s brother. Borst, “Das Bild der Geschichte in der Enzyklopädie Isidors von Sevilla”, p. 28.

<sup>89</sup> Claude, “Gentile und territoriale Staatsideen im Westgotenreich”, p. 37.

## CITIZEN STATUS AND LAW IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE AND THE VISIGOTHIC KINGDOM<sup>1</sup>

Wolf Liebeschuetz

Until the year 212 when the *Constitutio Antoniniana* made all inhabitants of the Empire—except perhaps the *dedicicii*—Roman citizens, the Roman Empire represented the rule of the Roman people over foreigners (*peregrini*).<sup>2</sup> To be a Roman citizen was to be a very superior person. The essence—if not the full legal implications—is brought out vividly in a famous episode in *Acts*.

And as they bound him with thongs Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman and uncondemned? When the centurion heard that he went and told the chief captain, saying; “take heed what thou doest; for this man is a Roman.” Then the chief captain came and said unto him; “tell me, art thou a Roman?” He said “yea”. And the chief captain answered: “with a great sum obtained I this freedom”. And Paul said: “But I was Roman born”. Then straightaway they departed which should have examined him: and the chief captain was afraid after he knew that he was a Roman and because he had bound him.<sup>3</sup>

Already on an earlier occasion at Philippi Paul had used the revelation that he was a Roman with similar dramatic effect.<sup>4</sup>

In the early Empire Roman citizens were generally distinguishable from *peregrini*, and marked out as members of the ruling people by the possession of “the three names”, *praenomen*, *nomen* and *cognomen*. In the courts they enjoyed considerable advantages, which were rhetorically summarised by the sophist Aristides: “to be safe it is sufficient to be a Roman.”<sup>5</sup> Even if the legal implications of the narrative of *Acts* are not quite correct, and provincial Romans did not in fact have an absolute right of appeal to the emperor,<sup>6</sup> the general impression that possession of Roman citizenship carried enormous prestige

<sup>1</sup> I am grateful to Ian Wood for suggestions and corrections.

<sup>2</sup> Jones, “The *Dediticii* and the *Constitutio Antoniniana*”, on *P. Guessen* 40.

<sup>3</sup> *Acts* 22, 25, 9.

<sup>4</sup> *Acts* 16, 19–39.

<sup>5</sup> *On Rome*, Or. 26, 100.

<sup>6</sup> Garnsey, *Social Status and Legal Privilege in the Roman Empire*, pp. 70–76.

must be right. Roman citizens, or strictly speaking upper class Roman citizens, had a monopoly of leading posts in the administration of the Empire; governors, governor's staff, imperial procurators, officers in the army were Roman citizens. The legions, the army's crack regiments, were recruited entirely from Roman citizens. The public spaces of provincial communities of Roman citizens (*coloniae* and *municipia*) were crowded with numerous monuments commemorating the distinguished careers of fellow citizens in army and administration. In the Greek East such monuments continued to be in Latin well into the third century.

A formidable legal barrier separated Roman citizens from foreigners. For Roman law recognised marriage only between citizens. There could be no marriage between the ruling people and its subjects—except those privileged by a special grant of the *ius connubii*. Thus children born of a union of a Roman and foreigner were illegitimate, and not entitled to inherit through the will of their father. On the other hand when an individual was granted Roman citizenship he ceased to be legally part of his family of birth.<sup>7</sup>

The institution of citizenship provided powerful motivation to work for the good of the Empire for citizens and non-citizens alike. Citizens had every reason to sustain the Empire which boosted their self esteem and offered them tangible privileges. *Peregrini* could look forward to the prospect of being rewarded with a grant of citizenship in return for loyal support of the Roman state, for on the whole the Romans were generous with grants of citizenship to individuals or to communities who had proved their worth to the Empire.<sup>8</sup>

One would imagine that the living together in the same community of citizens and non-citizens might have proved seriously inconvenient in the business of everyday life. In fact this seems not to have been the case. While the legal principles governing the separation of citizens from non-citizens were strictly maintained, devices were found to minimise their inconvenience on the life of individuals living in the same community, while subject to different systems of law. For instance *peregrini* were excluded from full legal ownership of all *res mancipii*, i.e. objects whose ownership was transferred by the legal procedure of *mancipatio*.<sup>9</sup> These included Italian land, farm animals

<sup>7</sup> Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World*, pp. 483–5: modification of disadvantages through liberality of emperor.

<sup>8</sup> Sherwin White, *Roman Citizenship*.

<sup>9</sup> Gaius, *Institutiones* 1, 119.

and slaves. But for practical purposes *peregrini* were able to obtain adequate rights of ownership of these things by an alternative process, *in iure cessio*.<sup>10</sup>

In at least some chartered cities (*municipia*), whose citizens were of mixed Roman and Latin status, and whose inhabitants included *incolae* who might be neither Latins nor Romans, the resulting legal problems were catered for to a considerable extent.<sup>11</sup>

Together with its charter the *municipium* of Irni received part of a new legal system, and for situations not covered in the charter it was laid down that

for everything else not explicitly covered in the law concerning the *ius* according to which the citizens of Irni are to deal with each other, they are to deal with each other in all these matters by the civil law, under which Roman citizens deal or will deal with each other.<sup>12</sup>

That meant that the *municipes* of Irni, whether Roman citizens or not, were treated as if they were Roman citizens as long as they remained within the territory of Irni.<sup>13</sup> The *incolae* were less favourably treated, but they received some concessions too.<sup>14</sup>

Of course difficulties would arise for citizens of Irni if they had legal needs outside their *municipium*. But even then they might be lucky in that nobody might notice if they assumed the rights of Roman citizens away from their *municipium* too.<sup>15</sup> This is exemplified by the case of certain Alpine tribes, the Annauni, Tuliasses, and Sinduni, who had been attached for administration to the *municipium* of Tridentum and not only behaved like Romans within the territory of Tridentum, but in some cases managed to be commissioned in the army, and even to be enrolled on the panel of equestrian jurors at Rome. Eventually they were challenged, but the emperor Claudius allowed them to keep the privileges of citizenship which they had wrongfully assumed.<sup>16</sup>

Auxiliary units, which made up nearly half the Roman army, were recruited from non-citizens. But on retirement from the army the

<sup>10</sup> Gaius, *Institutiones* 2, 22–24.

<sup>11</sup> González, "The *Lex Imitana*: a new copy of the Flavian Municipal Law"; cf. Galsterer, "*Municipium Flavianum Imitanum*: a Latin town in Spain".

<sup>12</sup> *Lex Imitana*, c. 93.

<sup>13</sup> Gardner, *Being a Roman Citizen*, pp. 188–90.

<sup>14</sup> *Lex Imitana*, c. 94, and commentary in González, "The *Lex Imitana*: a new copy of the Flavian Municipal Law", p. 237.

<sup>15</sup> Gardner, "Proofs of status in the Roman World".

<sup>16</sup> *ILS* 206.

veterans were given citizenship together with their children and the women with whom they were living at the time they received citizenship.<sup>17</sup> Only citizens were allowed to serve in legions. Legions stationed in provinces inhabited by few citizens seem however to have been kept up to strength with non-citizen recruits—who must have been given citizenship on enrolment.<sup>18</sup> Roman citizenship was a valuable and much desired commodity and the Roman emperors were generally concerned not to cheapen it by excessive prodigality in its award. Nevertheless it spread quite rapidly, no doubt partly from the sheer impossibility in many cases of checking an individual's status when he was away from his birthplace where he and his family were known.<sup>19</sup>

After Caracalla had conferred citizenship on all inhabitants of the Empire, except the *dediticii*, through the *Constitutio Antoniniana*,<sup>20</sup> the distinction between citizens and non-citizens ceased to be of practical importance. Status, wealth, birth, public office, imperial favour were now the principal sources of privilege. Not that these advantages had been insignificant in earlier times. Quite the reverse. At Rome, as far as we can look back even among citizens wealth and birth had been privileged in court, and in the provinces among *peregrini*, Roman officials were certainly more considerate of the rights and feelings of the leading provincials than of the ordinary provincials and even of humble Romans.<sup>21</sup> In the course of the second century this discrimination became formalised in that imperial edicts began to prescribe alternative penalties, more severe, painful and humiliating for so called *humiliores*, and the opposite for *honestiores*. Neither status was ever defined precisely, but roughly speaking the section of the population on which the government of the Empire depended were treated as *honestiores*: senators, equestrians, soldiers, veterans and decurions. To be an *honestior* it was not necessary to be a Roman citizen. Already in the later second century in many situations it was more advantageous to be an *honestior* than to be a Roman. After 212 the distinction between citizen and non-citizen ceased to be of importance within the Empire, and the *honestior/humilior* distinction was

<sup>17</sup> Roxan, *Roman Military Diplomas*.

<sup>18</sup> Mann, *Legionary Recruitment and Veteran Settlement during the Principate*, pp. 41–44.

<sup>19</sup> Gardner, "Proofs of status in the Roman World".

<sup>20</sup> Sherwin White, *Roman Citizenship*, pp. 279–87, pp. 380–93.

<sup>21</sup> Garnsey, *Social Status and Legal Privilege in the Roman Empire*: a large subject with abundant evidence.

left as the basic status division among free inhabitants of the Empire.

In the fourth century and subsequently the concept of Roman citizenship was given a very low profile. The use of three names (*praenomen*, *nomen* and *cognomen*) which had served to show that their holder was a Roman citizen fell in disuse when everyone was a citizen. Instead of a *nomen* many individuals now used the imperial family names Aurelius or Flavius. Flavius was the name of the Constantinian family and it came to be conferred on all office holders. Aurelius commemorated Caracalla, to whom so many owed their citizenship. The division between the two status *nomina* therefore roughly corresponded to the *honestior/humilior* distinction, and can be taken to symbolise the overshadowing of citizen status by elevation or lack of it in the social, or rather official, hierarchy.<sup>22</sup>

It is significant also that the legal term for a non-Roman, *peregrinus*, occurs only very rarely in the imperial constitutions of the fourth century and after. When it is used, the word *peregrinus* now means an individual living in a city or province other than that of his registered *origo*.<sup>23</sup> In a similar way *politeia*, the Greek word which had regularly been used to express the concept of citizenship seems to have acquired a new meaning allowing it to describe the status of groups of non-naturalised barbarians who had acquired the right to live within the Empire, well expressed by the German *Reichsangehörigkeit*.<sup>24</sup> The fading out of the importance of citizen status contrasts sharply with the continued importance of the distinction between slave and free, and the procedures for transferring an individual from one to the other. Numerous constitutions were still being issued to regulate these procedures, not only by Roman emperors, but also by Germanic kings in the successor kingdoms.

At the same time late Roman laws reveal the existence of a large and growing number of status groups each subject to privileges or restrictions which profoundly affected the way its members could live. The *honestiores* split into a growing number of grades of imperial rank, each with its own title and privileges. Soldiers became a hereditary class subject to the jurisdiction of their officers.<sup>25</sup> Many groups in the

<sup>22</sup> Salway, "What's in a name?"

<sup>23</sup> Kübler, *RE* XIX, pp. 639–55, s.v. *peregrinus*, e.g. *CTh* 6, 37, 1; 9, 1, 10; 1, 34, 1.

<sup>24</sup> Synesius, *De Regno* 25C (Visigoths); Procopius 1, 11, 3 ff. (Vandals); see Cesa, "Überlegungen zur Föderatenfrage".

<sup>25</sup> By far the best account of this is still in the relevant chapters of Jones, *The Later Roman Empire*.

imperial service enjoyed the privilege of *praescriptio fori*, that is they were under the jurisdiction not of the public courts but of their own head of department.<sup>26</sup> Large numbers of tenants were hereditarily tied to the land which they worked, and had both rents and taxes collected by their landowners.<sup>27</sup> Christian clergy formed a separate class, with its own privileges and generally its own courts.<sup>28</sup>

The multitude and refinement of status distinctions of the later Empire expressed an individual's relation to the complex system of imperial administration. They differed from citizenship in being not unifying but fragmentising, emphasising the vertical layering or the segmentation of society rather than its cohesion. What should have united the various groups was loyalty and gratitude to the emperor, the ultimate source of honour as of justice. But the emperor was also the source of tax demands and of prohibitions of various kinds, and for many provincials, say in Britain, Gaul or Spain, beset by local troubles, he certainly seemed very far away. A sense of Roman identity survived but it had been depoliticised.

We have proportionally very little evidence about the attitude to the Roman state of the peasantry and of the urban *plebs*. We know that the peasantry, once the citizen soldiers, had long ago ceased to be called up to defend their country, and had more or less at the same time lost all share in the political process.<sup>29</sup> In the fourth century the landowner to whom they paid both rent and taxes must have loomed much more prominently than the state in the lives of most of them. To the average *colonus* the fact that he was a Roman citizen is not likely to have meant very much. For the upper classes what distinguished Romans from barbarians was literary culture, Latin in the West, Greek in the East. For the nobility the state was the source of honour and distinction conferred by imperial appointments,

<sup>26</sup> Jones, *The Later Roman Empire*, pp. 484-94, ns. 31-52.

<sup>27</sup> Landowners collect taxes of tenants inscribed on tax registers of their estates: *CTh* 11, 1, 14, p. 371. On (among other things) collection from peasants by "great houses" in Egypt: Gasco, "Les grands domaines, la cité et l'état en Égypte byzantine"; Eibach, *Untersuchungen zum spätantiken Kolonat*. Carrié, "*Le colonat du Bas-empire*", interestingly traces the historical background to the views of historians of different times and nationalities, but very much underestimates the loss of personal freedom of the tied colonate.

<sup>28</sup> Gaudemet, *L'église dans l'empire romain IV<sup>e</sup>-V<sup>e</sup> siècles*, pp. 240-71.

<sup>29</sup> De Ste Croix, *Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World*: loss of political rights, pp. 300-26; turning against the state: pp. 474-88. But the theory of steadily worsening condition of the peasantry does not fit the evidence of Syria or Egypt.

for humbler functionaries the state was the provider of more or less profitable jobs. These people were broadly speaking in favour of the Roman state but their attitude could not be described as active patriotism. When faced with the question of whether to cooperate with foreign invaders or to risk life and fortune for the preservation of the Empire their choice was determined by immediate advantage, not by an overriding claim of loyalty to "king and country".<sup>30</sup> In short the population of the late Empire lacked a strong sense of common obligations and shared interest. In the long run strengthening of the centralised administration could not compensate for this.

When the distinction between citizens and non-citizens ceased to be of practical importance within the Empire, it continued to distinguish the legal status of inhabitants of the Empire from that of people beyond the frontiers, that is between Romans and barbarians. But the barbarians did not stay behind the frontiers. In the course of the fourth century large numbers of them were recruited into the Roman army,<sup>31</sup> either from captured barbarians settled in the provinces,<sup>32</sup> or from outside the Empire altogether. What gave this trend high visibility was the fact that it resulted in men of barbarian origin rising to the highest positions in the army, and achieving very great power and influence in the Roman state.

Modern analogy would suggest that this situation would arouse hostility among the native Romans against the newcomers. This did indeed happen, but not to the extent of becoming a chronic problem. We know of only two really violent outbursts of hostility, the Gainas affair in 399-400 at Constantinople,<sup>33</sup> and the fall of Stilicho in 408 in Italy,<sup>34</sup> and on both occasions anti-germanism was only one among a number of political motives. Above all it is notable that such antagonism as there was did not focus on the legal issue of

<sup>30</sup> Harries, "Rome and the Barbarians: a climate of treason"; Teitler, "Un-roman activities in late antique Gaul", pp. 309-317. Procopius' detailed account of Justinian's reconquest of Italy shows how little Roman patriotism and loyalty to the Roman state affected the decision of Italians when forced to choose whether to side with the Imperial forces or the Goths. It is also significant that the "Roman" armies seem to have drawn scarcely any recruits from Italy itself.

<sup>31</sup> Liebeschuetz, *Barbarians and Bishops*, pp. 7-47; a different view: Elton, *Aspects of Defence in Roman Europe A.D. 350-500*.

<sup>32</sup> De Ste Croix, *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World*, pp. 509-18.

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citizenship. There was no demand that the benefits enjoyed by inhabitants of the Empire should be reserved for Roman citizens. Nor do we hear of any political movement to make it as difficult as possible for barbarians who had been admitted into the Empire to become citizens. In fact the issue of citizenship is scarcely mentioned, either in the historical narratives or in the laws. As far as we can tell the presence of large numbers of foreigners in garrison towns and in the capitals did not cause legal problems. Moreover when bands of barbarians inside the Empire became sufficiently powerful to make demands, their leaders demanded money or corn or land for the rank and file, and high military commands for themselves. We are never told, as far as I know, that they demanded to receive the rights of Roman citizens.<sup>35</sup> In the fifth century Germanic war bands were in a position to demand and receive land to settle on and to farm, not however as Roman citizens, but as practically independent allies.

A principal reason for the evident unimportance of the issue of citizenship in this period is probably that the assimilation of immigrants was no longer a matter of turning them into citizens, but rather of fitting them into one or another of the hierarchy of status groups, whether as *laeti*,<sup>36</sup> or as *gentiles*, or as a particular class of *colonus*,<sup>37</sup> or as soldiers, or as guardsmen (*scholares*), or as officers,<sup>38</sup> or with more insecurity, as allies (*foederati*).<sup>39</sup> Presumably some of these occupations were open only to citizens. If so it would seem that barbarians who needed citizenship to qualify, say, for a commission in a regular unit, or for a conspicuous marriage,<sup>40</sup> were given citizenship as a mere formality—in the same way as non-citizen recruits for the legions stationed in the East had received citizenship on entry even in the early Empire. Since only the highest aristocrats on very formal occasions now used the “three names” (the aristocrats often used many more than three)<sup>41</sup> lack of citizenship would not have

<sup>35</sup> E.g. Heather, *Goths and Romans 332-489*, pp. 215-17, pp. 222-3.

<sup>36</sup> Liebeschuetz, *Barbarians and Bishops*, pp. 12-3.

<sup>37</sup> E.g. *Panegyrici Latini* 8, 8, 4; 9, 1-4.

<sup>38</sup> Waas, *Germanen im römischen Dienst im 4. Jahrhundert*.

<sup>39</sup> E.g. Cesa, “Römisches Heer und barbarische Foederaten”, and now above all Cesa, *Impero Tardoantico e Barbari*.

<sup>40</sup> The later *magister militum* Fravitta is the only case we know of a barbarian receiving special permission to marry a Roman woman (Eunapius, fr. 60, Müller = 59, Blockley), discussed in Demandt, “The osmosis of late Roman and Germanic aristocracies”, pp. 78-9.

<sup>41</sup> Cameron, “Polyonymy in the late Roman aristocracy”; B. Salway, “What’s in a name?”

been conspicuous, particularly as all imperial officers whether civilian or military now used the name of Flavius as a title.<sup>42</sup> Moreover those who did not get citizenship probably did not suffer significant legal disadvantage compared with citizens of the same status group. For most purposes there will have been legal arrangements to facilitate the everyday business of the immigrants of the same kind as we now know to have existed for the *municipes* and *incolae* at Irimi in the reign of Domitian.

But to this there would seem to have been one outstanding exception:

*Nulli provincialium, cuiusque ordinis aut loci fuerit, cum barbara sit uxore coniugium, nec ulli gentilium provincialis femina copuletur. Quod si quae inter provinciales atque gentiles affinitates ex huiusmodi nuptiis exstiterint, quod in iis susceptum (suspectum?) vel noxium detegitur capitaliter expietur.*<sup>43</sup>

This law seems to prohibit categorically intermarriage between Roman citizens and barbarians. But this law also raises problems, for marriages between barbarian officers and Roman women did undoubtedly occur quite frequently.<sup>44</sup>

It is likely therefore that the law has a more limited scope than appears at first sight.<sup>45</sup> *Gentiles* in the Theodosian Code are either pagans (which is not relevant here), or tribesmen who might be settled in frontier provinces for purpose of defence,<sup>46</sup> or live across the frontier under the rule of “kinglets” (*reguli*).<sup>47</sup> It may well have been thought that marriage links between *gentiles* understood in the latter sense and Romans were undesirable. The second sentence of the law seems to confirm this interpretation: what was punished was not the marriage itself, but the fact that harmful consequences of the marriage link have come to light.<sup>48</sup> In other words marriage between a Roman and a barbarian became punishable if it seemed to have been the

<sup>42</sup> Cameron, Bagnall and Worp, *Consuls of the Later Empire*, pp. 36-39; Keenan, “The names of Flavius and Aurelius as status designations in later Roman Egypt”, id., “The names of Flavius and Aurelius as status designations in later Roman Egypt, Part 2”; id., “An afterthought on the names of Flavius and Aurelius”.

<sup>43</sup> *CTh* 3, 14, 1, of 373 to Theodosius (father of later emperor) *magister militum* in West. Cf. Hagith Sivan in this volume.

<sup>44</sup> Demandt, “The osmosis of late Roman and Germanic aristocracies”, pp. 75-86. Demandt’s evidence relates almost exclusively to marriages involving members of the imperial family and the very highest ranking barbarian officers.

<sup>45</sup> Demougeot, “Le conubium dans les lois barbares du VI<sup>e</sup> siècle”; see also Hagith Sivan in this volume.

<sup>46</sup> *CTh* 7, 1, 2, 4; 11, 30, 62, 3 and *Notitia Dignitatum* Occ. 42, 46-70.

<sup>47</sup> *CTh* 12, 12, 5.

<sup>48</sup> *Quod in iis susceptum (suspectum?) vel noxium detegitur capitaliter expietur.*



starting point of some kind of conspiratorial activity between Romans and their barbarian kinsmen.<sup>49</sup> That the marriage law was viewed by the Roman government as of limited, or at least only passing importance, is suggested by the fact that it was not included in the Code of Justinian.

The marriage bar was however upheld by the Visigoths after their settlement in Aquitaine in 418 or 419; for the law was included in the *Breviarium of Alaric*, the *Lex Romana Visigothorum*, issued in 506.<sup>50</sup> Moreover the *interpretatio* makes it quite clear that the prohibition applied to everybody: *nullus Romanorum barbaram cuiuslibet gentis uxorem habere praesumat, neque barbarorum coniugiis mulieres Romanae in matrimonio coniungantur*, and in this case it is certainly the marriage itself and not any consequent activity which is to be punished: *Quod si fecerint, noverint se capitali sententiae subiacere*. The law remained in force until it was abolished by the great king Leovigild (568–86). By then the law was often honoured in the breach.<sup>51</sup> Whether it was strictly observed earlier or not we lack the evidence to tell.<sup>52</sup> The fact is we simply do not have the prosopographical evidence to do more than speculate.

At first sight one may wonder why the Goths should have actually taken a stricter view of intermarriage than the Romans. The answer is surely that maintenance of ethnic cohesion, one might almost say of national identity,<sup>53</sup> was a matter of the greatest importance for them, as indeed it had once been for the Romans. It was that which had enabled them to establish a state of their own within the Empire, and once more like the Romans of old to become a master-people ruling over subjects. But the separate identity cannot have been easy to maintain. On any estimate the Visigoths were only a small minority of the population of Spain, and they were ruling over a very large territory. Even in the areas of settlement<sup>54</sup> they lived in close proximity to Romans whose estates they shared.<sup>55</sup> So it is perhaps

<sup>49</sup> E.g. espionage? *barbara conspiratio*? armed support for usurpation or more local strong-arm tactics?

<sup>50</sup> *CTh* 3, 14, 1. On the problem of the date of the Visigothic settlement see Wood, "The fall of the western Empire and the end of the Roman Britain", p. 254.

<sup>51</sup> 58, 1: *cum fractas vires habuerit prisce legis abolita sententia*.

<sup>52</sup> Thompson, *The Goths in Spain*, p. 19, n. 1 refers to two possible cases of intermarriage in addition to that of king Theudis (531–48) who was an Ostrogoth.

<sup>53</sup> *Volkstum* would perhaps be less anachronistic.

<sup>54</sup> See the plan of area where Germanic cemeteries have been found, roughly between Toledo and Palencia in Schlunk and Hauschild, *Hispania Antiqua*, p. 32, fig. 16.

<sup>55</sup> The system of Gothic *sortes* and the associated sharing of estates between Goths

not surprising that they emphasised the difference between themselves and their near neighbours by prohibiting intermarriage. The marriage-bar together with the Goths' adherence to the arian sect had the effect of building a wall around the Gothic people, an artificial fortification like the Berlin wall, that presumably seemed indispensable to preserve the ethnic consciousness and cohesion of a group threatened with disappearance through assimilation.

Gothic laws do not however define what constituted a Goth. This should probably not be taken to imply that the apartheid between Goths and Romans was so strictly observed that breaches of the law never occurred. I find it difficult to believe that the Goths were able to maintain the military strength to control the huge territory of Spain if they were an entirely or even largely closed society. It also is difficult to see how in earlier times Alaric's Goths repeatedly recovered from seemingly calamitous losses, and how the Ostrogoths had become numerous enough to be in a position to recover from their initial defeat in Justinian's Gothic war if they did not have procedures for replenishing their manpower from outside.<sup>56</sup> Perhaps the institution of *commendatio*, which allowed a man to introduce himself to a patron with a view to being accepted by him as an armed follower, was a route by which an outsider might enter the Gothic people.<sup>57</sup> It would have helped if—in words of P. Amory—"for the lower classes, social role and geographical location were more important defining traits than ethnic identity". In any case it is likely that the kings reserved for themselves the right to decide whether an individual was a Goth or not.

It has often been maintained that the Visigoths and Romans were governed by separate administrations, and subject to different codes of laws.<sup>58</sup> According to this view Romans were subject to the laws

and Romans survived into the seventh century: *LV* 10, 1, 8; 10, 1, 9; 10, 1, 16; 10, 2, 1; 10, 3, 5.

<sup>56</sup> The repeated recovery from heavy losses of Alaric's Goths, the evident growth of Ostrogothic military strength from c. 20,000 warriors who entered Italy with Theoderic in 489 to the very large military manpower at disposal of the Goths at the beginning of the Gothic war in 536, and their ability to replace losses, cannot be explained by natural increase alone. The Goths surely found ways of absorbing local population. It is significant that Totila regularly offered Roman prisoners of war the option of becoming part of the Gothic army (Procopius 7, 30, 21) and that the offer was very widely taken up (*ibid.*, 7, 12, 8–9).

<sup>57</sup> *Commendatio*: *LV* 5, 3, 1 = *L. Eur.* 310; *LV* 5, 3, 2 = *L. Eur.* 311; *LV* 5, 3, 3–4; relative irrelevance of ethnic identity to lower classes: Amory, "Names, ethnic identity and community in fifth- and sixth-century Burgundy", n. 4.

<sup>58</sup> Most fully in Thompson, *The Goths in Spain*, pp. 121–26, from whom, agreeing

of the *Breviarium of Alaric*,<sup>59</sup> the Goths to the *Code of Euric*. There has been a great deal of writing on the subject, and the question cannot be fully argued in this paper. In my opinion this theory faces a serious difficulty: the *Breviarium* can never have been a self-sufficient and up-to-date collection of law, because it is essentially a shortened version of the Theodosian Code. Its date 506<sup>60</sup> strongly suggests that the *Breviarium* was intended as a gesture to win the support of Gallo-Roman aristocrats for the Visigoths in their imminent war against Clovis' Franks by offering them a guarantee of legal continuity. The antiquated laws are brought up-to-date by more or less contemporary interpretations, but there is no legislation specifically devised for the new situation of a Gaul ruled by Goths.

But the *de facto* replacement of the emperor and his central administration by a Gothic king cannot but have had far-reaching effects on the legal system. For instance as Goths and Romans lived in close juxtaposition, legal cases involving members of both peoples must have been common, not least over the boundaries and common lands of shared estates. If Goths expected disputes to be solved in accordance with Gothic custom, and Romans in accordance with the *Theodosian Code*, the conflict of laws would have raised difficult questions. A Code lacking in rules relevant to such situations would have had to be supplemented from somewhere else. The *Breviarium* does not in fact mention the Goths at all. It would therefore have needed to be supplemented by a large number of new rulings which could only have come from the Gothic king.<sup>61</sup> In fact a collection of them would have looked very much like the *Code of Euric*. So it is more than likely that the Code of the Gothic king was valid also for Romans, to provide guidance on matters not dealt with in the

with Collins, *Early Medieval Spain, Unity in Diversity*, pp. 28–30, I differ here, while having found Thompson's book a treasure house of information on many other aspects of Visigothic Spain.

<sup>59</sup> Also called *Lex Romana Visigothorum* = *LRV*, ed. Hänel.

<sup>60</sup> *LRV praescriptio*: 22nd year of Alaric.

<sup>61</sup> The *praescriptio* tells us that no other law book or legal formulation is henceforth to be produced in court. This surely refers only to older Roman law books, such as the Theodosian Code or the books of juriconsults. The prohibition surely cannot include edicts of the Gothic king. *LV* 2, 1, 13: all cases for which there is no prescription in the Code of Reccesvinth to be taken to the king. But a similar rule is already in *L. Burg.*, *pr. const.* 10. Zeumer concluded that the principle probably goes back to the Code of Euric. Amory, "Meaning and purpose of ethnic terminology in Burgundian laws", argues for a parallel and complementary development of the two Burgundian codes very similar to what I have suggested for the Visigothic codes.

*Breviarium of Alaric*. The *Code of Euric* was of course older than the *Breviarium* and it was compiled as the law book for Euric's Gothic kingdom. Indeed we are told that it put the unwritten custom of the Goths into writing for the first time.<sup>62</sup> The *Code of Euric* has come down to us only in fragments. We can however make some deductions about the general character of the lost sections of Euric's Code because it certainly provided the foundation and framework of the surviving Gothic Code, the *Liber Iudiciorum*.<sup>63</sup> One thing can be said with certainty about the *Code of Euric*, it was not simply a written compilation of Germanic custom. The laws include scarcely any Germanic legal terms. All concepts have been translated into Latin legal vocabulary, and thereby inevitably romanised. In detail the *Code of Euric* was not a collection of ancestral Germanic folk custom, but rather a set of laws designed for the contemporary conditions by men trained in Roman law. Many of its rulings were derived from vulgar Roman law, that is the simplified version of Roman law practised in the provincial courts.<sup>64</sup> But it also incorporated some Germanic custom, for instance in the area of the compensation of victims of violence and in the laws regulating inheritance.<sup>65</sup> In a way the *Code of Euric* reminds of the municipal law of Irni. The Gothic code is not of course as Roman as the municipal law, but like the law of Irni it would seem to be designed to smooth life in a mixed community.

In fact I would argue that the *Code of Euric* bears precisely the same relation to Gothic customary law as it does to the *Breviarium of Alaric*. The Goths who settled in Aquitaine in 418 certainly had their traditional customary law. But the custom was unwritten. It had not been applied in sedentary conditions for more than twenty years. It is far from certain, and even unlikely, that all the individuals who were settled as Goths in Aquitaine in 418 (or 419) were used to exactly the same custom. Furthermore the Goths did not settle in

<sup>62</sup> Isidore, *Historia Gothorum* 35.

<sup>63</sup> Still basic on the *Liber Iudiciorum*: Zeumer, "Geschichte der westgotischen Gesetzgebung". See also Collins, *Early Medieval Spain, Unity in Diversity*, pp. 123–28. On the Code's later history: Collins, "Visigothic law and regional custom in disputes in early Medieval Spain", or Collins, *Law, Culture and Regionalism in Early Medieval Spain*.

<sup>64</sup> Wieacker, *Vulgarismus und Klassizismus im Recht der Spätantike*, p. 3.

<sup>65</sup> See the thorough discussion of one area of the Code: Nehlsen, *Skavenrecht zwischen Antike und Mittelalter*, pp. 153–250; King, *Law and Society in the Visigothic Kingdom*, pp. 222–50 (the family), pp. 251–58 (theft and robbery), pp. 259–63 (killing and misuse of person). An interesting survey of the significance of custom in early Germanic states: Wormald, "*Lex scripta and verbum regis: Legislation and Germanic kingship*".

virgin territory but were fitted into a land system already governed by a sophisticated body of law. So a great deal of adaptation was inevitable, which could only come from the king. The Code of Euric surely represents a compilation of royal rulings of this kind. But a king who was the head of state of both peoples is not likely to have spoken with two voices about the same legal issue. Euric's law book was certainly not a complete statement of the law of either people, but on the matters it dealt with it was surely intended to be authoritative for both.<sup>66</sup>

A possible parallel to the *Code of Euric* is provided by the *Edict of Theoderic*.<sup>67</sup> The author of this edict was almost certainly the Ostrogothic king of Italy, and he proclaimed explicitly that the edict was intended for all his subjects, Romans as well as barbarians.<sup>68</sup> The greater part of the Edict simply restates Roman legislation,<sup>69</sup> but it does include some rules that seem to be derived from Germanic custom.<sup>70</sup> We know from Cassiodorus' *Variae* that Theoderic was anxious to demonstrate that Romans and Goths were living under the same right.<sup>71</sup> His legal rulings were evidently meant for both peoples.

For Ostrogothic Italy letters of appointment preserved in Cassiodorus' *Variae* give us some knowledge of the detailed working of the judicial system which we lack for Spain. The *comes Gothorum* seems to have been the principal judge in an area of Gothic settlement, where Goths and Romans lived closely intermingled, and disputes between them were frequent.<sup>72</sup> This functionary, who usually or always was a Goth, is instructed to settle disputes between Goths in accordance with the king's edicts. When judging a dispute between a Goth and a Roman he is to have a man learned in Roman law sitting with him so that his decision would be equitable to both parties.<sup>73</sup> He is not to judge a case between two Romans. Instead the king will send

<sup>66</sup> For Burgundian parallels see Amory, "Meaning and purpose of ethnic terminology in Burgundian laws".

<sup>67</sup> MGH LL 5, 145 ff. Various suggestions that the *Edict of Theoderic* was not issued by the Ostrogothic king are refuted by Nehlsen, *Sklavenrecht zwischen Antike und Mittelalter*, pp. 120-23, and in id., "Review of G. Vismara, *Edictum Theoderici*..."

<sup>68</sup> *Praef.*: ... quae barbari Romanique sequi debeant.

<sup>69</sup> *Epil.*: ... quae ex novellis ac veteris iuris sanctimonia ... collegimus.

<sup>70</sup> Halban, *Das römische Recht in germanischen Volksstaaten* 1, pp. 117 ff.

<sup>71</sup> Cassiodorus, *Variae* 3, 13, 2: nec permittimus discreto iure vivere quos uno voto volumus vindicare; *ibid.*, 8, 3, 4: ... ius et Gothis Romanisque apud nos esse commune.

<sup>72</sup> Cassiodorus, *Variae* 7, 3.

<sup>73</sup> Cassiodorus, *Variae* 7, 3: Qui ... certamen possit aequabilis ratione discernere.

two Roman judges into the area to hear the case. The object of this ruling is that everybody should be given his rights, and that through a variety of judges a single concept of justice should embrace all.<sup>74</sup> In Ostrogothic Italy Roman provincial organisation survived more or less intact, and with it the position of the Roman governor. Nevertheless it would seem that a great deal of jurisdiction fell to the *comes civitatis*, the official, as a rule a Goth, who now represented the king in every or at least most cities,<sup>75</sup> even in cases involving Romans.<sup>76</sup>

What the letters of appointment show is that in Italy jurisdiction was largely in the hand of Gothic officials appointed by the king. In order that Romans should receive their rights too the king appointed Roman heads of department (*principes*) to the office staff of each *comes*.<sup>77</sup> His letters of instruction show that Theoderic took into account the fact that Goths and Romans were used to different systems of law. But the tendency of his administration of jurisdiction would be towards unification of the systems. While an effort was made to try cases between Romans according to the law with which Romans were familiar, the Gothic nationality of the judge would provide a bias towards Gothic law or rather the law of the Gothic king. In the same way in earlier centuries the varied customs of the different provinces of the Roman Empire had tended to become assimilated to Roman law.<sup>78</sup> But in the case of Gothic law the transformation was less, because the Gothic law as summed up in the edict of Theoderic was already itself strongly romanised.<sup>79</sup>

It is likely that a comparable situation existed in Spain with the difference that the Roman system was much less intact. The impression given by the *Liber Iudiciorum* is that the important judicial officers were the *comes civitatis* and the *iudex territorii*, both normally Goths—as far as we can tell—and not the *rector provinciae*. Moreover this situation

<sup>74</sup> Cassiodorus, *Variae* 7, 3: ... ut unicuique sua iura serventur, et sub diversitate iudicum una iustitia complectatur universos.

<sup>75</sup> Cassiodorus, *Variae* 7, 22: *comes* of Syracuse; 7, 14: of Ravenna; 6, 23: of Neaples.

<sup>76</sup> This follows from abuses committed by Gildilus, count of Syracuse: Cassiodorus, *Variae* 9, 14; cf. 9, 11; 6, 22: appeal from the count was not to the governor but directly to the king—or the praetorian prefect (?)—at Ravenna.

<sup>77</sup> Cassiodorus, *Variae* 7, 25-27.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. Richardson, "The *Tabula Contrebiensis*".

<sup>79</sup> Goths and Romans doing business together at Ravenna seem to have used Roman law: *P. Ital.* 30, in 539 a Gothic woman, widow of a Roman, sells land to a Roman using Roman law: *P. Ital.* 34, in 551 the clergy of a Gothic church at Ravenna sells a piece of land, partly in repayment of a debt to Petrus defensor, using Roman procedures.

may well go back to the *Code of Euric*.<sup>80</sup> It is true that the *Breviarium of Alaric* assumes the survival of most of the Roman system of provincial administration, including the role of the Roman provincial governor as the most important judge in the province. The theory of the coexistence of two legal systems has therefore been argued largely from the evidence of the *Breviarium*, and depends on the assumption that the administrative institutions of the *Breviarium* continued to function in Spain through most of the sixth century, or even longer.<sup>81</sup> But the administrative arrangements of Gaul assumed in the *Breviarium* were almost certainly anachronistic already in 506, when the Code was issued. They are surely altogether misleading for Visigothic Spain in subsequent decades.

Already in the fifth century Spain had suffered a great deal from invaders, and wars between invaders. Towards the end of the century the Visigoths gained control of large parts of Spain, but it took them more than a century before they had completely unified the country under a single strong administration. The Goths probably found the Roman administration in ruins. It is extremely unlikely that during the disorders of the first hundred years or so of their occupation the Goths restored a Roman administration run by Romans, which would inevitably clash with whatever administration they were able to establish for themselves. In practice the administration of justice in the late fifth and for most of the sixth centuries is likely to have been extremely decentralised, and to have varied from region to region, on the one hand according to the density of Gothic settlement and the degree of Gothic control, and on the other the strength of surviving Roman administrative structures, above all of civic institutions. The judicial organisation is likely to have ranged from largely Roman courts in Seville or Cordoba,<sup>82</sup> in Baetica, where Goths were few and

<sup>80</sup> *C. Eur.* 322; *Conc. Narb.* (589), ed. Vives (1963), c. 4, 9, 14: bishops order count of city to inflict fines and beatings, presumably irrespective of nationality.

<sup>81</sup> Supporters of the personal law disagree when territoriality was introduced. Thompson, *The Goths in Spain*, pp. 210-17, argues that both territorial law and a unified system of courts were instituted by Chindasuinth c. 654; King, *Law and Society in the Visigothic Kingdom*, p. 18, n. 5, follows Zeumer *LV*, praef. xiii-xi, in suggesting that the institutions were unified very early, but the laws only by Chindasuinth.

<sup>82</sup> In *Formulae Wisigothicae*, MGH LL, sectio 5, 575-95 of 615-20 A.D., c. 25 refers to the *curia* of Cordoba registering land gifts. On administration of cities and especially the bishop's role, as well as on decentralisation in Gothic Spain, see Collins, "Merida and Toledo", reprinted with some second thoughts in Collins, *Law, Culture and Regionalism in Early Medieval Spain*. See also elsewhere in that volume.

far between, to courts largely run by Goths in the area of massed settlement. The character of the law enforced in different parts of the country is likely to have been most Germanic in the areas of strongest Gothic settlement. But if the existence of two systems of law caused conflict there could only be one source of conciliation: the Visigothic king, and his law. As in Ostrogothic Italy practice would in time tend to become more uniform, and as in Italy the common ground would be strongly Roman.<sup>83</sup>

If this argument is correct the *Code of Euric* was a collection of royal rulings intended for both peoples. No doubt the body of such law grew from reign to reign as successive rulers were consulted on matters of legal uncertainty.<sup>84</sup> Eventually expanded and emended collections were issued by Leovigild (568-86),<sup>85</sup> and after further expansion and revision by Chindasuinth (642-53) and Reccesuinth in 654.<sup>86</sup> In the view of E.A. Thompson and many earlier scholars<sup>87</sup> it was only with the *Code of Reccesuinth* that the parallel functioning of Roman and Gothic laws was ended, and the two legal systems unified. This is not convincing. Edicts introducing the *Code of Reccesuinth* state that the new code would supersede all earlier law-books.<sup>88</sup> Thompson and others have given this ruling a much wider scope, arguing that it promulgates the unification of the two systems of law, and of the two judicial systems. But this is not what the edicts say.<sup>89</sup> The

<sup>83</sup> The *Formulae Wisigothicae* (see n. 82 above) do not define whether they are to be used by Goths or Romans. Perhaps most were for use by Romans but ns. 9 and 14 were drawn up for the Gothic king. Zeumer notes numerous allusions to *LVR* and older Roman sources.

<sup>84</sup> Normally the laws of Gothic kings do not state to whom they are addressed, but some look as if they must have been for territorial application: e.g. *Codex Eur.* 325 on property of clergy without heirs; the *Lex Theudi* of 546 A.D., *LV*, ed. Zeumer, pp. 467-9; the *Antiqua LV* 7, 4, 2 and 9, 3, 2; three laws of Reccared (586-601), *LV* 3, 5, 2; 12, 1, 2; 12, 2, 12.

<sup>85</sup> Isidore, *Historia Gothorum* 51.

<sup>86</sup> *LV* 2, 1, 4; cf. Zeumer's *praefatio* xiv.

<sup>87</sup> E.g. Merèa, *Estudios de derecho visigótico*, pp. 199 ff.; Sanchez-Albornoz, "Pervivencia y crisis de la tradición jurídica romana en la España goda". But in favour of territoriality: García Gallo, "Nacionalidad y territorialidad del derecho en la época visigoda".

<sup>88</sup> *LV* 2, 1, 10-11.

<sup>89</sup> *LV* 2, 1, 10: *Aliene gentis legibus ad exercitiam utilitatis inbui et permittimus et optamus; ad negotiorum vero discussionem et resultamus et prohibemus. Quamvis enim eloquiis polleant, tamen difficultatibus herent. Adeo, cum sufficial ad iustitie plenitudinem et perscrutato rationem et competentium ordo verborum, que codicis huius series agnoscitur continere, nolimus sine Romanis legibus seu alienis institutionibus amodo amplius convexari.* This and 2, 1, 11, prohibit the use of Roman law books in court. They do not introduce any change in judicial institutions. They certainly imply that Roman law books were cited previously, but

edicts certainly have the effect of invalidating earlier codes, no doubt the *Breviarium of Alaric*, but also the *Code of Euric*. But surely the ending of the special legal status of a large part of the population, and the abolition of a complete set of institutions administering justice, would have had to be announced explicitly. Moreover nothing that we know about the politics of the time can explain why a reform, which would have fundamentally changed the balance of power of the two peoples of the kingdom, should have been introduced just then. Even for E.A. Thompson "the reasons which led to the great reforms of Chindasuinth and Reccesuinth are one of the darkest mysteries of Visigothic Spain".<sup>90</sup> The mystery would however vanish if the Code did not involve any drastic reform at all, but merely brought up to date arrangements which had been in force more or less since the beginning of Gothic rule in Spain.

By the seventh century there will have been very little to separate Goths from Romans. The Goths were no longer kept apart and defined by the marriage bar. They no longer practised a form of Christianity which the Romans condemned as heretical. They had probably long been Latin-speaking. Certainly when they converted to catholicism nobody seems to have seen an obstacle in the fact that they would henceforth no longer worship in the Gothic language. Gothic custom could well have survived a long time in dealings between Goths, in local courts, in areas of Gothic settlement—but we have no evidence of this.<sup>91</sup> Perhaps the various tribal customs of different kinds of Germans in the successor kingdoms survived rather like Jewish law among orthodox Jews, but the practical significance of such survivals is difficult to assess. In Frankish Gaul as late as the ninth century various peoples each had their own law. Agobard of Lyons mentions the laws of Franks, Burgundians, Alamanni, Lombards and Aquitanians. The disadvantage of this situation—in Burgundian Lyons at any rate—was that men were not allowed to give evidence against individuals living under a different law, so that right and

not that they were used exclusively in cases involving Romans, and never in cases involving Goths. 2, 1, 13, makes the king sole arbiter of all disputes not covered by the law book.

<sup>90</sup> Thompson, *The Goths in Spain*, pp. 216–17.

<sup>91</sup> In Spain the earliest reference to trial by combat between two Goths dates from 820. The so-called *fueros* sometimes recall Germanic custom, but the earliest in Castille were granted by local lords in the tenth century, while the oldest surviving texts date from the twelfth: Collins, "Visigothic law and regional custom in disputes in early Medieval Spain", pp. 85–105.

wrong in many cases could only be decided by the unsatisfactory method of trial by combat. There is no suggestion that individuals living in the same city but belonging to different nationalities were tried in different courts. That surely would have been quite impractical.<sup>92</sup>

Archaeologically Romans and Goths are very hard to distinguish. Around the beginning of the sixth century they began to adopt distinct burial customs with characteristic grave goods in about 20% of the graves. Comparable objects have been found in late fifth-century graves on the Danube and in Ostrogothic Italy. It looks almost as if the Goths some time after their first settlement in Spain began to feel the need to make themselves more distinct. If so, they no longer felt the need to emphasise their separateness in the seventh century. For their specific funeral customs seem to have been abandoned.<sup>93</sup> But in spite of this the Goths preserved their sense of nationhood, or if that term is thought too modernising, their ethnic identity.<sup>94</sup> The kingdom remained the kingdom of the Goths.<sup>95</sup> It continued to be ruled by Gothic kings. Nobody but a Goth could be king of Spain. His title was king of the Goths, to conspire against him, treason against the Goths and their *patria*.<sup>96</sup> The king's principal secular advisers were known as *seniores Gothorum*, and nearly all had Gothic names.<sup>97</sup> From the Fourth Council of Toledo (633) 33%–42% of the bishops attending national councils had Gothic names.<sup>98</sup> It would almost seem

<sup>92</sup> Agobard, *Liber adversus legem Gundobadi*. On the problem of the *personality* of the law see Amory, "Meaning and purpose of ethnic terminology in Burgundian laws", and id., "Names, ethnic identity and community in fifth- and sixth-century Burgundy"; also: Wood, "Ethnicity and ethnogenesis of the Burgundians"; also in: Wood, *The Merovingian Kingdoms 450–751*, pp. 114–15.

<sup>93</sup> Périn, "L'armée de Vidimer et la question des dépôts funéraires", Kazanski, "Contribution à l'étude des migrations des Goths" and Gisela Ripoll López, in this volume.

<sup>94</sup> LV 9, 2, 9: *quisquis ille est . . . seu sit Gotus sive Romanus . . .* (Ervig's army law). The *Vitae Sanctorum Patrum Emeritensium* (*El Libro de las vidas de los santos padres de Mérida*), ed. Macías, mentions the Roman or Gothic origin of important individuals, e.g. 2, 1: *. . . sanctus Masona . . . genere quidem Gothus*; 10, 6–7: *Claudius nobili genere ortus Romanus fuit parentibus*; 14, 4: *Renovatus . . . vir denique natione Gothus, generoso sigmate procreatus*. Cf. also Isidor, *De viris illustribus* 31: *Joannes gerundensis ecclesiae episcopus natione Gothus*.

<sup>95</sup> *Conc. Tol.* 4, 75; *Conc. Tol.* 7, 1.

<sup>96</sup> LV 2, 1, 8, cf. extract from *Act. Conc. Tol.* 8 of 653, Zeumer 473, 30 and from *Act. Conc. Tol.* 16 of 693, Zeumer 488, 10. Cf. however, Claude, in this volume.

<sup>97</sup> See *subscriptions virorum illustrium*, Zeumer 485–86.

<sup>98</sup> Thompson, *The Goths in Spain*, pp. 289–92. Metropolitan rarely had Gothic names. In Burgundy the contrast between court officials with Germanic names and bishops having almost exclusively classical or biblical names is even sharper: Amory, "Names, ethnic identity and community in fifth- and sixth-century Burgundy", pp.

that as the actual differences between Goths and Romans disappeared, symbolic differences such as personal names, and the titles of certain public offices (*saio*, *triumphadus*, *gardingus*),<sup>99</sup> but not as we have seen burial rites, became more important.

It is not at all clear how the leading Romans responded to this situation. Clearly the Roman aristocracy had a good position in the Gothic kingdom. They kept their wealth and as bishops they might exercise considerable power.<sup>100</sup> Isidore of Seville (c. 570–636), the Roman—or strictly Graeco-Roman—we know best, was certainly in his time a man of very great influence.<sup>101</sup> He wrote a history of the Goths, but not because he identified with them. He presented them as a great warlike and imperial people like the Romans, but he does not suggest that in the Gothic kingdom, as had happened in the Roman Empire, the difference between ruling people and ruled was being eliminated.<sup>102</sup> Nevertheless one cannot help wondering. Does the fact that in the seventh century almost the entire known secular leadership of Visigothic Spain bore Gothic names<sup>103</sup> really mean that they were all of Gothic descent?<sup>104</sup> In sixth and seventh century Gaul,

8–22. This in spite of the fact that the fusion of Goths and Romans seems to have happened more quickly in Burgundy than in Spain. Certainly the Spanish evidence does not suggest that up to the time of the Arab conquest “categories of ethnography” had been reduced to “mere instruments of rhetoric”. The quotation is from Amory, “Names, ethnic identity and community in fifth- and sixth-century Burgundy”, p. 4.

<sup>99</sup> *Saio* as law enforcement officer (as opposed to retainer) appears in seventh-century laws, in *Lex Theudi* the same officer still figures as *compulsor* or *executor*, see Thompson, *The Goths in Spain*, pp. 142–3. The *iudex loci* is replaced by *triumphadus* in Reccesvint's code, Thompson, *The Goths in Spain*, p. 213; King, *Law and Society in the Visigothic Kingdom*, p. 82. The *gardingi* are mentioned only in documents of Wamba (672–80) and Ervig (680–87), see Thompson, *The Goths in Spain*, pp. 252–53; King, *Law and Society in the Visigothic Kingdom*, pp. 57–61.

<sup>100</sup> Exemplified by the wide range of topics, ecclesiastical and secular discussed by church councils on request of king: Thompson, *The Goths in Spain*, pp. 98–101; pp. 278–9.

<sup>101</sup> Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville et la culture classique dans l'Espagne wisigothique*.

<sup>102</sup> See Isidorus, *Historia Gothorum*, *praef.* In the same way Gregory of Tours (539–594) did not identify with the Franks: *Historiae* 5, *praef.*

<sup>103</sup> Apart from the *seniores Gothorum* (compare n. 97 above) the names of leading followers of the usurper Paulus captured by Wamba in Spain and Gaul: *Judicium in tyrannorum perfidia promulgatum* 4; 6, PL 96, coll. 804, 806.

<sup>104</sup> Thompson, *The Goths in Spain*, p. 289: “While Goths sometimes took on Roman names, Romans are not known to have ever called themselves by Gothic names.” But our knowledge of families and even of the descent of known individuals in Visigothic Spain is so poor that a fashion among Romans for giving Gothic names to their children can easily have escaped our notice. See García Moreno, *Prosopografía del reino Visigodo de Toledo*. There must have been considerable intermarriage. If Leovigild could refer to the marriage-bar as having lost its force while intermarriage was still

which has left us far more prosopographic information, Frankish names were fashionable with the result that the fact that an individual has a Frankish name does not at all exclude the possibility that he is descended from a Roman family.<sup>105</sup> I would suggest that it is likely that the same is true of Spain and that in the kingdom of the Goths just as in the kingdom of the Franks the Roman and the Germanic aristocracies were becoming one.

It may seem surprising that a culturally more advanced majority population should take on the “national” or “ethnic” identity of a ruling minority that had already accepted its language and religion. But this is what certainly happened in Frankish Gaul, Lombard Italy and Burgundy.<sup>106</sup> Clearly the sense of identity of a ruling minority, if it is powerfully entrenched, particularly if it is in alliance with the Church, becomes very attractive to the governed people. It is also relevant that “romanity” as sensed by the late Roman aristocracy was unpolitical and unmilitary, consisting largely of loyalty to the Roman emperor as source of honour, and of pride in belonging to the fellowship of classical literary culture. In Visigothic Spain the Gothic king was the source of honour, and the upper class culture had undergone profound change. High literary culture had lost its place as a central value of society. It is very difficult to assess its decline in quantitative or qualitative terms.<sup>107</sup> There is no doubt that Visigothic administration, and especially jurisdiction continued to make much use of written documents. But changes of far-reaching importance had certainly taken place. Secular literary culture now took second place to theology, and the values of asceticism had greatly modified

a capital offence, it is exceedingly unlikely that intermarriage ceased after it had become legal.

<sup>105</sup> E.g. Gundulfus (*de genere senatorio*) was a great-uncle of Gregory of Tours (Martindale, *PLRE* 3 A, p. 568). Kurth, “De la nationalité des comtes Franques”, discusses origins of 50 counts from Auvergne and Touraine; Wieruszowski, “Die Zusammensetzung des gallischen und fränkischen Episkopats bis zum Vertrag von Verdun 843”. For names of Frankish officials see Martindale, *PLRE* 3 B, pp. 1524–1532. The names of *maiores domus*, *comites palatii*, *comites stabuli*, *cubicularii*, *duces*, are overwhelmingly Frankish; *comites* are more mixed. See also *Nomen et gens*, eds. Ebling, Jarnut and Kampers, and the contribution of Jörg Jarnut in this volume. For Burgundy see Amory, “Names, ethnic identity and community in fifth- and sixth-century Burgundy”.

<sup>106</sup> In the Arab-ruled East the majority took on not only the sense of national identity but also the religion and language of the ruling minority.

<sup>107</sup> The administrative class was evidently considerably more literate than was formerly thought: in McKitterick, *Uses of Literacy in Early Medieval Europe*, see the articles of Collins, “Literacy and the laity in early medieval Spain”, and of Wood, “Administration, law and culture in Merovingian Gaul”.

the classical ideal of a good life. What literature was produced was almost entirely religious, and its creators almost universally clerics. Practically all education, the lower as well as the higher stages, was provided by the clergy. Even legal expertise was now sought among bishops.<sup>108</sup> The Christianisation of literacy must have helped to unite the two peoples because Christianity brought together Goths and Romans in a way secular literary tradition could not. At the same time the way of life of the Roman ruling groups was simplified in many ways. They no longer lived in great country villas, nor as far as we can tell in substantial stone town-houses. They were all liable to call-up, and it is a fair assumption that the military values of the Gothic leaders spread to the Romans. So the considerations which had once led a Roman aristocrat like Sidonius Apollinaris to despise barbarians had lost much of their force. In fact there will not have been very much difference between well-to-do, or well-born, Romans and their Visigothic equivalents, and consequently little reason why a Roman should not wish to identify with the *gens et patria Gothorum*—certainly not reluctance to surrender the once proud title of *civis Romanus*. Roman citizenship had long ceased to have any practical or even rhetorical significance.

## THE ARRIVAL OF THE VISIGOTHS IN HISPANIA: POPULATION PROBLEMS AND THE PROCESS OF ACCULTURATION

Gisela Ripoll López

The presence of a new group of people—the Visigoths—in the provinces of the *diocesis Hispaniarum* supposed a process of mutual accommodation on the part of both Visigoths and Romans. These adaptations are known to us from both literary sources and the archaeological record.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, there exists a clear historiographical tradition that defends not only the existence of two large groups within the population, together with other minority groupings, but also that these separate communities continued to exist and live alongside one another without interfering with each other until Leovigild's repeal of the law forbidding intermarriage. They formed, thus, two completely different worlds, apparently confronted by a question of origins and culture.<sup>2</sup> The main reason for hostility as opposed to mere confrontation between Romans and Visigoths, in addition to the problems arising from the division of lands, may well have been the question of religious denomination. The Romans had been Catholics for some time, even though pagan survivals continued to exist, together with groups of Priscillianists<sup>3</sup> and Jews.<sup>4</sup> The impact of Christianity in *Hispania* had been considerable, as it had been in the other provinces of the Empire. Both the urban and the rural landscape had been gradually altered, a phenomenon which has been described as the impact of Catholicism, by a process which preserved and maintained the Roman tradition at the same time as new concepts of social and cultural life were introduced.<sup>5</sup> In contrast, the Visigoths

<sup>108</sup> Bishop of Saragossa asked to thoroughly revise the Gothic law: Braulio, *ep.* 10, *PL* 80, col. 633, cf. *ep.* 39–41. Bishops of *Com. Tol. VIII* asked to check Recceswinth's new Code: *LV*, Zeumer (supplementa), p. 474, 3–12. The assumption is that legislation requires expertise in theology as much as in jurisprudence.

<sup>1</sup> A preliminary consideration of the population problem can be found in: Ripoll López and Velázquez, *La Hispania visigoda*. Some preliminary thoughts appeared in: Palol and Ripoll, *Los godos en el occidente europeo*.

<sup>2</sup> Benito Ruano, *De la alteridad en la Historia*. See also: Beltrán Torreira, "El concepto de barbarie en la Hispania visigoda".

<sup>3</sup> Fontaine, "Panorama espiritual del Occidente peninsular en los siglos IV y V".

<sup>4</sup> García Iglesias, *Los judíos en la España antigua*. Gil, "Judíos y cristianos en la Hispania del siglo VII".

<sup>5</sup> Gurt, Ripoll and Godoy, "Topografía de la Antigüedad tardía hispánica".

had been arians for some time. Some scholars see an apparent conflict between what can be called the *fides gothica*, defended by the Visigoths, and the *fides romana*, the banner under which the Romans aimed to maintain or restore earlier concepts of the Empire.<sup>6</sup> This differentiating factor gradually weakened from the reign of Reccared onwards, although even beforehand there had been attempts at drawing the two doctrines closer together and important theological debates.

The arrival of the Visigoths in rural areas must also have caused instability, for the newcomers were allowed to settle as *foederati*, and, as the *Leges Visigothorum* (10, 1, 8-9) indicate, a division of land is likely to have taken place, as had been the case in *Gallia*, although it cannot have been carried out in exactly the same way. This land distribution continues to cause debate among historians although it would seem certain that it was a differentiating factor in the initial stages of Visigothic settlement.<sup>7</sup> The late sixth- and seventh-century legislative sources do not give further consideration to this issue.

Careful reinterpretation of certain texts and a new analysis of the archaeological material, particularly that of a funerary nature, enable us to qualify the traditional view expounded above as regards differentiation and confrontation. In the course of the subsequent pages it will be seen that the population map of *Hispania* from the late fifth century until the early eighth century was highly varied and that such a lack of contact between the different elements making up the population cannot be defended with any degree of certainty; quite the contrary, the arrival of the Visigoths supposed the adaptation of the great mass of the population and a mutual process of acculturation, which had started prior to their settlement in the Iberian Peninsula.

The analysis carried out here is thus based, on the one hand, on a reconsideration of certain legal sources that give rise to a series of questions as regards the way the various elements of the population are presented and, on the other, on the study of a cemetery, that of El Carpio de Tajo, in which the intermingling of Romans and Visigoths

<sup>6</sup> Godoy and Vilella, "De la fides gothica a la ortodoxia nicena".

<sup>7</sup> A full bibliography concerning the interpretation of the legislative texts and the various theories elaborated as regards this matter would be of considerable length; the following, however, are fundamental works: García de Valdeavellano, *Curso de Historia de las instituciones españolas de los orígenes al final de la Edad Media*; García Gallo, *Manual de Historia del Derecho Español*; Pérez Prendes, *Curso de Historia del Derecho español*; Zeumer, *Historia de la legislación visigoda*.

can be seen with a certain degree of clarity, a situation which has hitherto only rarely been noted.

#### THE VISIGOTHIC PRESENCE AND POPULATION ISSUES

##### *The various elements of the population*

During late Antiquity the population of *Hispania*, in addition to Romans and Visigoths, was made up by other groups of barbarians, such as Sueves, Alans and Siling and Asding Vandals, together with communities of eastern origin, such as Greeks, Jews and Syrians, as well as Africans. Before going on to the issue which here concerns us, that is the question of the Roman and Visigothic population groups, these oriental inhabitants will be briefly considered.

Both the texts and the archaeological and epigraphic sources for the study of the various social groupings of eastern Mediterranean origin are very limited,<sup>8</sup> and the dominant historical literature includes a series of statements which have become historiographical clichés through their frequent repetition. These communities of eastern origin, together with the African ones, were groups which basically lived in urban centres with maritime or river ports in *Tarraconensis*, *Carthaginensis* and *Baetica*, although there are also some outlying groups recorded in *Lusitania*. Among those centres known to date, cities such as *Narbo* (Narbonne) to the north of the Pyrenees, *Tarraco* (Tarragona) and *Dertosa* (Tortosa) on the coast of *Tarraconensis*, *Ilici* (Elche) and *Carthago Spartaria* (Cartagena) on the coast of *Carthaginensis* are prominent. As for *Baetica*, there were several noteworthy coastal communities, such as those of *Malaca* (Málaga) and *Carteia*, while in the Guadalquivir valley major groups appeared at *Hispalis* (Seville) and *Corduba* (Córdoba), as well as at *Astigi* (Écija). Finally, in the case of *Lusitania*, *Emerita Augusta* (Mérida), *Myrtilis* (Mérola), *Olisipo* (Lisbon) and *Turgalium* (Trujillo) should be mentioned.

Present-day studies give these communities of eastern origin the name of colonies, since they were basically devoted to trading with the eastern Mediterranean and north Africa. Different products reached them (cloth, especially silk and linen, as well as ivory, papyrus,

<sup>8</sup> Bréhier, "Les colonies d'Orientaux en Occident au commencement du Moyen-Âge"; García Moreno, "Colonias de comerciantes orientales en la Península Ibérica, ss. V-VIII".



cotton, glassware, purple dye, spices etc.). It should also be noted that, as they were centres devoted to trade, their distribution is frequently similar to that of the Jewish communities, for the latter were also often involved in commercial activities.<sup>9</sup>

The distinguishing characteristic of the eastern community was therefore its involvement in trade, but there was another basic feature which helps us to appreciate the great differences existing between the Hispano-Romans, the Visigoths and the easterners: religion. These communities continued to practise paganism, identified by idol-worship, superstitions, magic and divination.<sup>10</sup> Pagan practices, however, were not exclusive to these groups within the population, since they are also recorded in those areas where Romanisation had had less impact. Nevertheless, at a legislative level, the oriental communities were not differentiated from the Romans.

In this study of the population of *Hispania* in late Antiquity, we should therefore take into account the elements of diversity and the various origins of the different groups, as there were not only surviving communities of native origin, but also Romans, Visigoths, Easterners, Jews and Africans. More localised phenomena, such as the Byzantine occupation of the south of the Iberian Peninsula<sup>11</sup> and the possibility of an Aquitanian presence in Basque lands<sup>12</sup> are also detectable.

#### *The Roman population*

The Hispano-Romans formed the largest population group in *Hispania* although a local native population continued to exist in certain regions that had never been totally subjected. Estimates of the total number of Roman inhabitants vary from those of certain scholars who believe in a population of some seven million to those of others who propose a total of some twelve million.<sup>13</sup> It is difficult to calculate the

<sup>9</sup> The legislative peculiarities which governed those individuals involved in trade should be emphasised: D'Ors, "Los *transmarini negotiatores* en la legislación visigótica".

<sup>10</sup> Sanz Serrano, "Adivinación y sociedad en la Hispania tardoromana y visigoda".

<sup>11</sup> There is a large number of works on this subject; most recent, with references to all previous publications: Vallejo Girvés, *Bizancio y la España tardoantigua*.

<sup>12</sup> The whole historical question is considered in: Sayas, *Los vascos en la Antigüedad*. New information derived from funerary archaeology is presented in: Azkarate Garai-Olaun, "The western Pyrenees during late Antiquity".

<sup>13</sup> Calculations of the number of Roman inhabitants for this period invariably present comparisons with the number of Visigoths. See, for example: García Gallo, "El carácter germánico de la épica y del derecho en la Edad Media Española".

total since there are no contemporary documents to provide any information on the subject and neither is archaeology of much use as, even though the size of the cities is known, thus enabling approximate figures to be proposed, little is known as regards the inhabitants of rural areas.

The great bulk of the population was distributed throughout the Iberian Peninsula, with the exception of regions such as Orospeña, the Basque lands and Cantabria, where the Roman presence was of a purely military nature, for, as has already been mentioned, these regions had always been reluctant to accept Roman control.<sup>14</sup> The highest density of population was to be found in those provinces of the *diocesis Hispaniarum* that were more intensely romanised, both from the point of view of urban activity and from that of exploitation of the land.

In this context, *Tarraconensis*, with key coastal settlements open to trade as well as large cities of long standing, such as *Emporiae* (Ampurias), *Gerunda* (Gerona), *Barcino* (Barcelona) and *Tarraco* (Tarragona), stands out. Inland reference should be made to *Caesaraugusta* (Zaragoza), *Ilerda* (Lérida), *Osca* (Huesca) and *Calagurris* (Calatayud), basically because of their fertile lands. Several large rural estates that must have continued to exist in the sixth century at least are also recorded from this province.

Roman settlement was especially dense in eastern and southern parts of *Carthaginensis*, with old urban centres such as *Saguntum* (Sagunto), *Valentia* (Valencia), *Dianium* (Denia), *Ilici* (Elche), *Bigastri* (Cehegin), *Carthago Spartaria* (Cartagena), which was the capital of Byzantine *Spania*, *Acci* (Guadix), *Mentesa* (La Guardia), *Castulo* (Cazlona) and *Oretum* (Granátula). In late Antiquity, *Carthaginensis* expanded towards the north and west. Within this area stood well-known centres which partially determined the Visigothic settlement: cities such as *Segobriga*, *Valeria*, *Arcavica*, *Complutum* (Alcalá de Henares), *Segontia* (Sigüenza), *Oxoma* (Osma), *Pallentia* (Palencia), *Saldania* (Saldaña) are worthy of note. Finally, *Toletum* (Toledo), which was to become the capital of the Visigothic Kingdom, should be mentioned. At present, the surviving archaeological remains do not enable us to speak of great estates in

<sup>14</sup> There is abundant bibliography on the subject of *Hispania* prior to the arrival of the Visigoths. A recent work deals with various aspects of interest, taking into account the contributions of different population groups and the previous process of acculturation: Le Roux, *Romains d'Espagne*. See also: *The Hispano-Roman Town*, ed. Bendala Galán.

south-eastern *Carthaginensis*, instead it would seem that a diversified agricultural system was implanted, perhaps on the basis of a division into small properties or rather of organised communities. The opposite occurred in the far north of the province where villas whose residential parts include architectural features that are indicative of the great wealth of their owners are to be found. These estates, basically devoted to grain production, must have comprised considerable tracts of land with a dispersed pattern of settlement.

Without any shadow of doubt *Baetica* was one of the most densely populated Roman provinces,<sup>15</sup> not only because of its cities, but also because of the fertility provided by the Guadalquivir valley. Among the urban centres, the following should be mentioned: *Malaca* (Malaga), *Illiberris* (Granada), *Egabrum* (Cabra), *Tucci* (Martos), *Asigi* (Écija), *Corduba* (Córdoba), one of the largest cities since it covered an area of some 70 hectares, *Hispalis* (Seville), *Italica* and *Assidona* (Medina Sidonia). The province of *Baetica* is known for its large estates, great *latifundia*, the majority of which were given over to the cultivation of vines and olives, as well as to horse-raising. Archaeology and epigraphy have made it possible to detect small ecclesiastical centres scattered throughout the region, this being indicative not only of the large number of Roman inhabitants, but also of the dispersed nature of settlement patterns.

*Lusitania*,<sup>16</sup> centred upon *Augusta Emerita* (Mérida), included important urban centres such as the westernmost port of the then-known world *Olisipo* (Lisbon), and cities such as *Ossonoba* (Faro), *Pax Iulia* (Beja) and *Ebora* (Évora). In the northern part of this province were to be found *Egitania* (Idanha-a-Velha), *Conimbrica* (Conimbriga), *Viseum* (Viseo), *Lamecum* (Lamego), *Salmantica* (Salamanca) and *Abela* (Ávila). Both Mérida and its *territorium* seem to have been densely inhabited, this being attested not only by the city itself with its notable architectural features, but also by the large number of villas and rural churches known thanks to archaeology and which are currently undergoing excavation. A number of villas with large tracts of dependent land also stood between the Guadiana and Tagus valleys. The lower and

<sup>15</sup> The general question is considered in: Salvador Ventura, *Hispania meridional entre Roma y el Islam*. Specific aspects are dealt with by: Ripoll López, *L'archéologie funéraire de Bétique d'après la collection visigothique du Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum de Mayence*.

<sup>16</sup> *El medio rural en Lusitania romana*, eds. Gorges and Salinas de Frias; Mateos Cruz, "La cristianización de la Lusitania".

middle Tagus valley, which included extensive pasture, was basically given over to horse-raising. Some agricultural centres which owed their existence to fertile lands watered by the tributaries of the Tagus and the Duero are also recorded in the north-east of the province.

As far as *Gallaecia* is concerned, Roman settlement was not so dense and, moreover, its inhabitants had to live under the powerful kingdom of the Suevians.<sup>17</sup> The majority of Romans were apparently resident in the cities, for example *Bracara* (Braga), *Lucus* (Lugo) and *Asturica* (Astorga), to mention only the most important.

Such was the approximate distribution of population when the first barbarian invasions started. The extant historical and literary sources make it possible to follow the behaviour of the Roman upper classes, but little can be said as regards the great mass of the population who did not enjoy the privileges that were the preserve of those levels of society.

It is well known that a number of great Hispano-Roman families and even some of senatorial rank survived.<sup>18</sup> This can be deduced from the fact that throughout the legislation and fundamentally in the Breviary of Alaric the term *senatores*, and even that of *honorati*, which as a general rule had been used by the emperors and which were now used to indicate city councillors, continued to be maintained. These Roman families were in fact great landholders who exploited their lands located, as has already been seen, in the various provinces. This does not imply that they were permanently resident in the countryside; the opposite would have been the case, for they led their lives in the cities, where they held public office, generally speaking of a municipal nature. *Baetica* was probably the province with the largest number of great families forming part of the Roman senatorial nobility surviving. Within the province they played a key social, political and religious role. The senatorial aristocracy of both *Tarraconensis* and *Lusitania* was also important, although to a lesser degree.

Exploitation of the land was carried out by means of the control of the *actores*, this being the system of exploitation and control that survived throughout the period of the Visigothic Kingdom of Toledo.

<sup>17</sup> On the Suevians in general, although somewhat out-of-date: Reinhart, *Historia general del reino hispánico de los suevos*. Some interesting observations in: Beltrán Torreira, "La conversión de los suevos y el III Concilio de Toledo".

<sup>18</sup> Many interesting suggestions can be found in King, *Law and Society in the Visigothic Kingdom*; Stroheker, "Spanische Senatoren der spätromischen und westgotischen Zeit", should also be consulted.

Direct exploitation lay in the hands of the *conductores* or *coloni* who paid their taxes, although the great Roman landowners, perpetuating a tradition of longstanding, almost always endeavoured to avoid the fulfilment of their fiscal obligations. It should be remembered that the pressure of taxation to which the Romans were subject represented a considerable burden.<sup>19</sup>

The result of the settlement of the Visigoths in *Hispania* was that the Roman provincial aristocracy came to live alongside the Visigothic nobility. This does not allow us to conclude that all the Romans accepted the presence of the barbarians; on the contrary, many of them fought against the Visigoths and energetically avoided being subjected to the control of the newcomers. However, in many cases this coexistence led Romans to hold certain governmental and military posts, and even some writers of obviously Roman origin were in the service of the court.

The integration of Romans in the machinery of the state, both in the initial period of settlement and at a later date, is also noticeable, as has already been noted. Claudius was an example of this phenomenon since he was appointed *dux* of *Lusitania* by Reccared and led an army, because of, or despite, his Roman origins.

#### *The Visigothic population*

The Visigothic population represented a very small number of individuals in comparison with the Roman population.<sup>20</sup> The figures involved oscillate between 80,000 and 200,000 people, including both the civil population and the army. The starting point for this question is that these calculations are based on the number of Goths who crossed the Danube *limes* and assassinated the Emperor Valens in 378, the date of the "victory of Adrianopole". However, estimates of the number of individuals were not consistent for that period, and the written sources are always vague in this respect. At the point when the Visigoths achieved the treaty allowing them to settle in *Gallia* in 418, estimates of their numbers range from 100,000 to 200,000.<sup>21</sup> This would mean that there were approximately 70,000

<sup>19</sup> García Moreno, "Imposición y política fiscal en la España visigoda".

<sup>20</sup> Some suggestions can be found in: Ripoll López, "Características generales del poblamiento y la arqueología funeraria visigoda en *Hispania*".

<sup>21</sup> Wolfram, *History of the Goths*.

to 90,000 Visigoths in the Iberian Peninsula in the sixth century, taking into account the fact that a certain number of families are likely to have remained in Aquitania, and not including those who continued to inhabit *Narbonensis*, which always formed part of the Visigothic kingdom, whether its capital was Toulouse or Toledo. As certain scholars, among them C. Sánchez Albornoz,<sup>22</sup> have aptly pointed out, it is difficult to sustain the hypothesis that the number of individuals who fought at the battle of Adrianople might have remained constant until the battle of Vouillé in 507, and even more so that it continued unchanged until the battle of the river Guadalete in 711. He considers a total of approximately 200,000 Visigoths, including both the civil population and the army, to be the most plausible, an opinion which is also supported by J. Orlandis, who defends an increase in this number once the Kingdom of Toledo was well established.<sup>23</sup> In contrast, R. d'Abadal<sup>24</sup> raises the possibility that the aristocratic and military oligarchy of the Visigothic Kingdom of Spain was in the hands of some 1,500 families, in other words between 7,000 and 10,000 people. He considers that the army would have represented ten per cent of the total number of Visigothic inhabitants in the Iberian Peninsula, so the overall Visigothic population would have numbered some 100,000. W. Reinhart<sup>25</sup> considered it possible that there could have been between 80,000 and 100,000 individuals in the time of Wallia, and that the same number was valid for the earliest stages of settlement, although he was of the opinion that they entered the Peninsula gradually in the form of small groups in the course of the fifth and early sixth centuries. E.A. Thompson<sup>26</sup> also approached the issue in general terms and concluded that the number of 100,000 Visigoths was acceptable.

A rapid calculation, taking into account the current state of knowledge of rural cemetery sites and the re-use of graves, together with the population of the various urban communities, produces a—hypothetical—figure of some 130,000 people, which would correspond to some 20,500 families.<sup>27</sup> These figures are difficult to analyse because

<sup>22</sup> Sánchez Albornoz, "Tradicón y derecho visigodo en León y Castilla".

<sup>23</sup> Orlandis, *Historia económica y social de España visigoda*.

<sup>24</sup> D'Abadal, "A propos du legs visigothique en Espagne".

<sup>25</sup> Reinhart, "Sobre el asentamiento de los visigodos en la Peninsula".

<sup>26</sup> Thompson, *The Goths in Spain*, p. 3.

<sup>27</sup> Ripoll López, "Características generales del poblamiento y la arqueología funeraria visigoda en *Hispania*".

they refer to the entire period of Visigothic settlement in the Iberian Peninsula, particularly to the late fifth and sixth centuries, since the situation arising in the seventh century must have been somewhat different. The possibility that population numbers might have increased as a consequence of the stability of the Visigothic kingdom is a subject which has yet to be analysed; it would need to take into account the problems arising from the repeal of the law concerning intermarriage, the increasingly mixed nature of the population and the advanced state of the process of mutual acculturation between Visigoths and Romans. However, it should not be forgotten that plagues, epidemics and illnesses were frequent events in the period under consideration, and they must have had considerable impact on population numbers.<sup>28</sup>

It is quite likely that the earliest phases of the large cemeteries of the Castilian tableland in practice correspond to the final incursions dating to the late fifth century.<sup>29</sup> This military occupation makes the presence of groups of civilians accompanying such forces even prior to the fall of the Visigothic Kingdom of Toulouse in 507 a distinct possibility. Nevertheless, it would seem that the central part of the Iberian Peninsula, the area between the Duero and the Tagus, was really settled in the opening years of the sixth century, the moment at which the large cemetery sites with burials of Visigothic tradition—even though they form a very short series—commence; these rural cemeteries in the north and centre of *Carthaginensis* are in fact the only reliable evidence for the presence of the Visigoths in *Hispania*. Examples worthy of mention include, for example, the northernmost one, located in Herrera de Pisuerga (Palencia) and, in the central area, Duratón and Castil Tierra, in the present-day province of Segovia. In the upper Tagus valley, smaller but equally important sites, for instance Villeda de Mesa, Palazuelos, Alarilla, Azuqueca and Estables, all in the present-day province of Guadalajara, are to be found. Finally, the cemetery of Cacara de las Ranas (Aranjuez) and El Carpio de Tajo (Toledo) mark the southern limit of settlement. These burial sites therefore correspond to the first generations of Visigoths to settle in the Peninsula and to the period of formation and integration of

<sup>28</sup> Barceló, "Les plagues de llagosta a la Carpetania"; García Moreno, "El campesinado hispanovisigodo entre bajos rendimientos y catástrofes naturales".

<sup>29</sup> Ripoll López, *La ocupación visigoda a través de sus necrópolis*. Some observations on the subject have been put forward, although not conclusively, by Bierbrauer, "Archäologie und Geschichte der Goten vom 1.-7. Jahrhundert", especially pp. 155-171.

the *regnum Visigothorum* in Spain, although it was not to reach its maximum expansion until well into the seventh century, the moment when, as will be seen below, the military presence of Justinian's forces in the south of the Peninsula, particularly in the coastal areas of *Baetica* and *Carthaginensis*, was brought to an end.

While this summary description of these burial sites is restricted to the initial Visigothic settlement in the central area of the Castilian Meseta, it should not be forgotten that other funerary sites with similar characteristics exist in other parts of the Peninsula. Here we refer to cemeteries in *Baetica*, such as Brácan and Marugán both in the province of Granada. The interpretation of these sites should be sought in terms of the presence of substantial military forces settled in the region, troops that would have been accompanied by groups of civilians.

Paradoxically, these cemetery sites are almost never related to settlement sites, with the exception of the El Bovalar (Serós, Lérida) complex,<sup>30</sup> in which a group of burials appears around and inside the church, alongside which lies the settlement, which, as will be seen below, was dedicated to agriculture. Neither have settlement sites such as the city of Reccopolis,<sup>31</sup> built *a fundamentis* by Leovigild in honour of his son Reccared, or the fortified settlement of Puig Rom (Rosas, Gerona),<sup>32</sup> produced any evidence for the possible location of their respective cemeteries, so their relationship is unknown.

Nevertheless, it should not be forgotten that every cemetery, this being the type of site that is best documented for the moment, must have been associated with a settlement site, even though it remains unknown; consequently, each one is communicating to us the existence of a community organised as a hierarchical group whose binding elements were the means of production, from which a series of cultural and economic connotations can be derived. The spread of these funerary sites from the centre of the Meseta was largely a result of the process of accommodation and integration of the Visigoths within the Roman population, of the above-mentioned repeal of the law concerning mixed marriages and of the conversion of the majority of the Visigothic population to catholicism. Archaeologically speaking, evidence for these alterations is presented by inhumations, by

<sup>30</sup> Palol, *El Bovalar*.

<sup>31</sup> Olmo Enciso, "La ciudad visigoda de Reccópolis".

<sup>32</sup> Palol, *Castro hispano-visigodo de Puig-Rom*.

the gradual abandonment of the typically Visigothic form of dress and, at the same time, by the adoption of a new form of dress and, with it, objects of personal adornment of a new style.<sup>33</sup>

#### MIXED MARRIAGES AND THE MIXTURE OF POPULATION

As regards the historiographical problem raised by the existence, or non-existence, of marriages between Romans and Visigoths and the repeal of the law forbidding such marriages,<sup>34</sup> the main historiographical point is that the whole question has been used as an instrument to justify supposed national unity.<sup>35</sup> It is evident that Leovigild's policy was to conquer the maximum amount of territory possible within the Iberian Peninsula; however, from that it should not be deduced that he sought to achieve national unity on the basis of the unity of the population. According to traditional historiography, this unity became possible thanks to the subsequent religious unity, achieved by Leovigild's son, Reccared, by means of the conversion of the great mass of the Visigothic population to catholicism around the year 589, subsequent to the Third Council of Toledo.<sup>36</sup>

The law prohibiting mixed marriages issued by Valentinian and Valens (between 370 and 373) was included in the Breviary of Alaric and was repealed by Leovigild. This law is known because it was included as *Antiqua* in the *Leges Visigothorum* (3, 1, 1). The text states:

*Antiqua. Ut tam Goto Romana, quam Romano Goto matrimonio liceat sociari. . . . Ob hoc meliori proposito salubriter censentes, priscae legis remota sententia, hac in perpetuum ualitura lege sancimus ut tam Goto Romanam quam etiam Goto Romanus si coniugem habere ualuerit . . . facultas eis nobendi subiaceat.*

<sup>33</sup> Ripoll López, "Reflexiones sobre arqueología funeraria, artesanos y producción artística de la Hispania visigoda"; id., "Materiales funerarios de la Hispania visigoda".

<sup>34</sup> Jiménez Garnica, "El origen de la legislación civil visigoda sobre la prohibición para una propuesta de trabajo". See also the contribution by Wolf Liebeschütz, Dietrich Claude and Hagith Sivan in this volume.

<sup>35</sup> Certain ideological assumptions have been aptly clarified by Olmo Enciso, "Ideología y arqueología".

<sup>36</sup> The literature on the subject is abundant; however, a rapid overview of the questions arising can be found in the papers published on the occasion of the celebration of the 14th centenary of the council in 1989: *Actas del Concilio III de Toledo. XIV Centenario, 589-1989* (Toledo, 1991). In order to understand the nationalist feeling Menéndez Fidal, "Introducción: Universalismo y Nacionalismo," should be read. Teillet, *Des Goths à la nation gothique* follows the same line of argument, but on the basis of the texts.

The wording of the law is perfectly clear, alluding as it does to the lack of validity in prohibition and the advantages arising from this repeal, and it places emphasis on the fact that marriages might be between individuals of opposite sex, whether Romans or Goths.

Leovigild's precise reasons for deciding to repeal the law should be sought, it would seem, in its non-observance and, therefore, in the idea that such marriages between Romans and Visigoths were common practice, leading to the gradual elimination of the social, cultural and religious differences existing between the two groups within the population. By means of the law a series of moral values inherent in the Roman tradition itself were being preserved, and, in short, social and religious moral doctrine was being protected. This change encouraged the mixing of the population and accelerated the acculturation process. It is quite likely that, in addition to this symbiosis between the more numerous groupings within the population, the repeal supposed an increase in population levels.

Leovigild's determination to contribute to political unification is manifested in the *Codex Revisus*, which as a legislative tool was one of the principal instruments for the exercise of power. The reorganisation and reworking of earlier legislation applying to both Romans and Visigoths demonstrates the nature of this authority in the form of an *imitatio Imperii*. While it is true that the above-mentioned repeal of the law concerning mixed marriages favoured the intermingling of the different population groups, it is similarly true that this event cannot be converted into a myth or a symbol of unification. The proper interpretation of this law, together with analysis of the acculturation process to which the Visigoths were subject, shows that the newcomers became fully integrated within the Roman social, economic and cultural structure. The differences that can be detected between the different elements within the population in the sixth century from the point of view of material culture were to be almost imperceptible throughout the seventh century and down to the end of the Visigothic Kingdom.

As will be seen below, the archaeological material found in the cemetery burials, as well as other evidence, hints at a mixed population. The information concerning this point offered by the slate tablets with Visigothic cursive writing is highly informative, since the mixture of names of Germanic and Roman origin is a constant feature.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Velázquez Soriano, *Las pizarras visigodas*.

This phenomenon is particularly clear in the case of those pieces that are of value as legal documents and which basically deal with matters referring to dependent peasants or serfs etc. In the initial stages of Visigothic settlement some Visigothic individuals may well have adopted names of Greek or Latin origin, in view of the cultural superiority and prestige of Roman culture. However, it is also highly likely that at a subsequent date, when integration of the population was well-established and the *tria nomina* had effectively disappeared, that names of Germanic origin re-emerged, certain signs of identity thus being recovered.

THE PROBLEMS OF THE PROCESS OF ACCULTURATION AS ILLUSTRATED  
BY THE CEMETERY OF EL CARPIO DE TAJO

The problems of the process of acculturation to which reference was made at the beginning of this article can be illustrated from an archaeological point of view by an example derived from the field of funerary archaeology; I refer to the cemetery of El Carpio de Tajo (Torrijos, Toledo).<sup>38</sup> This funerary site was excavated at the beginning of the 20th century by C. de Mergelina.<sup>39</sup> In spite of the fragmentary nature of the information available about it, despite the fact that it is an old excavation and even though it has only recently been possible to study the plan, I consider that it presents completely new evidence illustrating the existence of mixed, Roman and Visigothic, groups of people.

The cemetery of El Carpio de Tajo is made up by 285 graves, of which 90 contained items of personal adornment and in certain cases a funerary deposit of coins. A total of some 300 objects was found, the majority of which have clearly Visigothic connotations. The importance of the cemetery lies in the fact that it is one of the largest funerary groups known from *Hispania* in this period and that clothed burials which enable relative dates within the cemetery to be established were found; furthermore, a plan showing the distribution of the burials is available,<sup>40</sup> which makes it possible to produce a topo-

<sup>38</sup> De Mergelina, "La necrópolis de Carpio de Tajo"; Ripoll, "La necrópolis visigoda de El Carpio de Tajo" (1985); Ripoll López, "La necrópolis visigoda de El Carpio de Tajo" (1993-94), in which an overall review is carried out on the basis of the study of the cemetery plan. Ripoll López, *La ocupación visigoda a Través de sus necrópolis*.

<sup>39</sup> De Mergelina, "La necrópolis de Carpio de Tajo".

<sup>40</sup> First published in: Ripoll López, "Características generales del poblamiento y

chronological study. Thus, El Carpio de Tajo is a site of fundamental importance for our knowledge of the funerary archaeology of the closing decades of the fifth century and the two subsequent ones, as well as of the process of acculturation.

*General characteristics of the cemetery*

Of the total of 285 graves, 195 contained no grave goods, neither personal adornments nor grave deposits; these represent 68.42% of the total. This detail should be considered with a certain degree of precaution, as it is not known whether some of these graves were disturbed, robbed or destroyed in Antiquity or in more modern times. The 90 clothed inhumations represent 31.57% of the total. Of these only 4 (4.4%) were burials with a funerary deposit made up by bronze coins.

El Carpio de Tajo is one of a series of characteristic burial sites; it should be related to a still-unknown rural settlement, perhaps a *vicus*, which it undeniably reflects. Taking into account the number of graves (although the number of re-used graves remains unknown) and the fact that it covers a maximum time span of a hundred and fifty years, it can be seen that the community was of limited size. Such cemeteries and communities are characteristic of the centre of the Iberian Peninsula and they were particularly associated with agricultural and herding estates.<sup>41</sup>

The cemetery was located directly over the River Tagus valley, on the top of a rise on the right bank. It was therefore situated to the west of *Toletum*, a city whose historical importance was considerable as from the mid-sixth century. It thus fell within the zone of influence of the royal town although there is no element in the cemetery that might suggest a connection between this funerary site and the city. The whole area to the south of the Sierra de Gredos and to the north of the Montes de Toledo was densely populated in late Antiquity, a dispersed pattern of settlement, knowledge of which is continually growing, being particularly noticeable.<sup>42</sup> Nevertheless, within this area,

la arqueología funeraria visigoda en *Hispania*", studied in Ripoll López, "La necrópolis visigoda de El Carpio de Tajo" (1993-94).

<sup>41</sup> Ripoll López, "Características generales del poblamiento y la arqueología funeraria visigoda en *Hispania*", especially pp. 399-403. For a recent reconsideration of the subject: Bierbrauer, "Die Goten vom 1.-7. Jahrhundert n. Chr.", cf. especially p. 34. On the social and economic conditions of dependence cf. Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, pp. 172-82.

<sup>42</sup> Yáñez, López, Ripoll, Serrano and Consuegra, "Excavaciones en el conjunto

the cemeteries of El Carpio de Tajo and that of Cacerca de las Ranas in Aranjuez,<sup>43</sup> both reflecting, as far as is known, rural settlements, continue to be the largest and best known funerary sites for the time being.

Before going on to study the organisation and evolution of the cemetery, a series of clarifications concerning the burials, the personal adornments and the chronological problems should be made.

The typo-chronological table drawn up some time ago aimed to offer a preliminary classification of the most commonly found personal adornments that are considered to be Visigothic or Hispano-Visigothic, which appear from the closing years of the fifth century until the opening ones of the eighth century; it represented the final stage in the analysis of the burials of the majority of Visigothic and Hispano-Visigothic cemeteries known at that time.<sup>44</sup> For this table I adopted the expression "nivel" (level/horizon) for the German *Stufe*.<sup>45</sup> Certain elements can be moved from one level to another, although by and large they appear in one or the other. The levels characterised by a wide range of Visigothic elements are those called II and III, which can be dated to the periods from the end of the fifth to the early sixth centuries and from the early sixth until the middle of the second half of the century respectively. Levels IV and V are basically represented by Latin Mediterranean and Byzantine products, that is to say artefacts from the area of the old Western or Eastern Empires, dating from the end of the sixth century to the early eighth century, a poorly defined break being observable in the first decades of the seventh century.<sup>46</sup>

funerario de época visigoda de La Cabeza", see also: Ardanaz, "Hallazgos de época visigoda en la región de Madrid".

<sup>43</sup> This cemetery is one of the largest excavated in recent years. A preliminary study can be found in: Ardanaz, "Excavaciones en la necrópolis visigoda de Cacerca de las Ranas".

<sup>44</sup> Ripoll López, *La ocupación visigoda a través de sus necrópolis*, pp. 307-309. Ripoll López, "Materiales funerarios de la Hispania visigoda", pp. 113-114 and pp. 120-123; certain clarifications can be found in: Ripoll López, "Archeologia visigota in Hispania".

<sup>45</sup> Böhner, *Die fränkischen Allertümer des Trierer Landes, Germanische Denkmäler der Völkerwanderungszeit* 1; Werner, *Münzdatierte austrasische Grabfunde*; Werner, *Das alamannische Gräberfeld von Bülach*.

<sup>46</sup> The materials of these levels are now better known, cf. Ripoll López, "Bronces romanos, visigodos y medievales en el M.A.N."; Ripoll López, "Los hallazgos de época hispano-visigoda en la región del Estrecho de Gibraltar"; also: Ripoll López, *L'archéologie funéraire de Bétique d'après la collection visigothique du Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum de Mayence*.

Analysis of the personal adornments from the cemetery of El Carpio de Tajo has been carried out on the basis of two fundamental assumptions: the first concerns the existence (or non-existence) of closed groups of finds. Once their existence is accepted, we can endeavour to establish a relative chronology. Secondly, I refer to the problem arising from the study of a relatively dense funerary site covering only a few generations and occupying a very short space of time. The problem is aggravated by the existence of many graves in which no personal adornments or funerary deposits have appeared. To this should be added the presence of Roman material, or at least of material not corresponding to the typical categories of Visigothic metalwork, which is still difficult to identify, while at the same time no information concerning the sex of the skeletons is available. The presence of several Roman coins, the worn state of preservation of which demonstrates that they were in circulation for a long time and which appear to belong to the second half of the fourth century should be mentioned; (*REPARATIO* appears on one of them (tomb 45). However, these problems do not prevent us from going into the available data in greater depth.

#### *Organisation of the cemetery according to its plan*

This cemetery site covers an area of 4,433 m<sup>2</sup>. The longitudinal distribution is a result of its hilltop location, not an unusual position for a burial site of this type. The different heights do not appear on the contours indicated on the plan, so that nothing can be said about the differences in level between the various sectors, except that the central one is the highest point of the ridge. All the graves are perfectly oriented east-west (with the head to the west). Certain variations can be discerned in the central nucleus, where the land lies at a higher level and is therefore somewhat different from the rest.

All the burials are aligned, forming areas or groups which are to a lesser or greater degree regular. The area located to the south is made up by just three groups of alignments (graves 241 to 270); moving northwards, it is followed by a similarly aligned area with a greater abundance of graves (n° 193 to 240). From this area, the density of burials constantly continues to increase towards the north; although they are aligned, there are certain deviations. This central nucleus is taken up by the majority of the burials, from approximately number 164 to 46. Beyond this large, densely occupied area

of burials, there is a far less densely occupied one with graves 1 to 38. In the northernmost part of the site, graves 165 to 275 are laid out in five alignments.

The inhumations, in addition to presenting this layout, seem to be organised in groups, with large spaces being left between one group and another in certain cases. The alignments and the groups made it easier to move within the burial area. It is logical to envisage that movement inside the cemetery took place along paths which, although not indicated, made it easier to communicate and enter the different burial areas. These paths were largely defined by the topography of the site itself.

The distance between the graves varies between 120 cms. and 3 metres on the longer side and 90 to 120 cms. between the foot of one grave and the head of another, with the exception of those cases where the area for movement becomes a true open space. These measurements enable us to suppose that movement within the cemetery itself was possible and that the different funerary structures could be located. If the graves were re-used, at the same time a way of indicating and identifying burials must have existed. This is a problem which arises in the case of the majority of the cemeteries in Spain, since the archaeological evidence on this point is very limited. However, even though on the basis of examples from outside the Peninsula, it is known that there was a clear above-ground structure. These have been well-studied, as any protection constructed over a tomb<sup>47</sup> indirectly demonstrates concern for providing the deceased with spiritual protection.<sup>48</sup>

Little can be said about the funerary structures and the types of burial on the basis of the plan. In C. de Mergelina's original plan all the burials are drawn as rectangular or trapezoidal shapes of similar size and only grave n° 93 is represented as a double burial.

In the case of some graves the body is known to have been deposited directly on the bottom, while in other cases it rested on a wooden structure or in a coffin. Such limited evidence does not make it possible to define the possible graves of the better-off or to identify social and/or family groups on the basis of funerary structures.

<sup>47</sup> On these points Pietri, "Les sépultures privilégiées en Gaule d'après les sources littéraires", cf. especially pp. 135-136, should be consulted.

<sup>48</sup> The case of the cemetery of Vorges is perhaps one of the most representative, as almost all the burials had a grave marker to identify them: Flèche, "La nécropole mérovingienne de Vorges (Aisne)".

Neither is it possible to identify funerary structures or burials that overlie or cut one another, as is usually the case in other cemeteries. Nevertheless, because of the material deposited in certain graves (123, 137 and 203) at El Carpio de Tajo, they are known to have been re-used, probably by individuals belonging to the same family grouping. It can be stated that the two different phenomena—superimposition/re-use—confirm the longitudinal rather than vertical development of the cemetery.

#### *Topographical chronology of El Carpio de Tajo*

The following part of the text should be read in conjunction with the accompanying plans drawn in order to illustrate the distribution of the material and the interpretations arising from it. In view of the fragmentary nature of the evidence available concerning El Carpio de Tajo, this study is subject to a series of limitations.<sup>49</sup>

The basic limitation is due to the fact that, since no information concerning the different types of structural techniques used for the graves is available, nothing can be said about areas or groups of burials with a specific form of inhumation that might be indicative of social and/or family ties, nor can any reference be made to possibly well-off burials.

The distribution of the different personal adornments has been plotted in accordance with various criteria so as to obtain a topographical chronology, although the possibility of the grave goods of a burial being confused should always be borne in mind. In order to plot the objects from clothed inhumations, the material which can be considered most significant for chronological purposes, in the light of our standard types, has been selected.<sup>50</sup>

The distribution of the different types of material over the plan of the site as a whole makes it possible to detect the chronological development of this cemetery in the light of the specific characteristics of the clothed burials. However, it should also be taken into account that the number of clothed burials or of graves with a clear date is very limited.

<sup>49</sup> For further details see Ripoll López, "La necrópolis visigoda de El Carpio de Tajo" (1993-94).

<sup>50</sup> Ripoll López, "Materiales funerarios de la Hispania visigoda", pp. 120-122, figg. 1-3.



The graves containing material that can be classified as personal adornments are to be found throughout the burial area although there is one sector without such material in the northern part of the site (graves 1 to 46). Similarly, the northernmost edge of the cemetery produced a very restricted amount of material. In the majority of cases these were female burials covering a time span stretching from the late fifth until the late sixth centuries. Because of the types of material, certain burials—and this is precisely the subject of interest here—can be considered to be typically Visigothic, while others may have belonged to the Roman population, or at least their contents are not characteristic of Visigothic personal jewellery.<sup>51</sup> The Roman material is difficult, but not impossible, to identify, although one always needs to remain in the realm of hypothesis.

The different chronological groups are defined by the typo-chronological table<sup>52</sup> and they have been compared with the intrinsic chronology provided by the material from the cemetery of El Carpio de Tajo itself. The distribution of the material across the plan makes it possible to trace the evolution of the cemetery and the different groups within the population on the basis of the material found within it.

Graves C, 96, 102, 116, 119, 123, 136 and 137 correspond to my level II, with a projected date of 480/490 to ca. 525; these represent 8.8% of the total number of clothed inhumations. To level III, dated between ca. 525 and 560/580 belong the following graves: A, B, 152, 203, 204, 210, 242, 258, and 262 (10%). A further series of burials are known to belong to the first half of the sixth century, although no further information can be offered. These are burials 44, 60, 74, 89, 95?, 110, 131, 139, 155, 158, 159, 162, 192, 194, 197, 198, 206, 211, 227, 229, 246, 250, 266, 267, 271? and 272?, which make up 28.8% of the clothed burials. The following could be considered to be graves without typically Visigothic metalwork, and it may be

<sup>51</sup> The same phenomenon can be found in the cemetery of Duratón. See the distribution plans drawn up by Bierbrauer, "Frühgeschichtliche Akkulturationsprozesse in den Germanischen Staaten am Mittelmeer (Westgoten, Ostgoten, Langobarden) aus der Sicht des Archäologen". This same author has recently returned to the subject: Bierbrauer, "Die Goten vom 1.-7. Jahrhundert n. Chr.", pp. 28-34. Analysis of certain cemeteries in Pannonia led Bierbrauer to detect a population mixture: Bierbrauer, "Zur chronologischen, soziologischen und regionalen Gliederung des ostgermanischen Fundstoffes des 5. Jahrhunderts in Südosteuropa", cf. especially p. 141, fig. 20.

<sup>52</sup> Ripoll López, *La ocupación visigoda a través de sus necrópolis*, pp. 307-309. Ripoll López, "Materiales funerarios de la Hispania visigoda", pp. 113-114 and pp. 120-123.

possible to provide them with a Roman attribution and assign them to the same period: 59, 61, 91, 93?, 118, 128, 146, 163?, 209, 215, 221, 228?, 256 and 263, which constitute 17.7% of the total. It can therefore be seen that the graves with characteristically Visigothic material and those with Roman objects occupied the same parts of the cemetery without any distinction being given to a specific zone and without them being grouped in particular parts chosen for that purpose. We are therefore in the presence of a group of burials starting in the late fifth century and which gradually occupied the funerary area until a date well into the second half of the sixth century. The earliest burials were located in the most densely occupied area of the cemetery (the northern central part) and from there they expanded towards the south.

The latest material falls within my levels IV and V; in the majority of cases, it is difficult to attribute it to male or female burials with any degree of certainty. The earlier of these two levels, level IV, should be dated between 560/580 and 600/640. Burials 45, 49, 73, 94, 103, 104, 105, 120, 123, 130, 137, 140, 160, 177, 188, 193, 199, 200, 203, 248, 258 and 268, which make up 24.4% of the clothed inhumations, correspond to this level. As for level V, which starts 560/580 and continued throughout the seventh century, there are very few burials, only 171 and 196. Without a precise date, but chronologically attributable to the latter part of the second half of the seventh century, there are graves 141?, 145, 149?, 151?, 176, 201, 216, 257 and 259, which represent 10% of the total. This, the latest phase of the cemetery, occupied the spaces left free in the central area and the southern part and inaugurated use of the northern sector, where there had hitherto been no burials. Finally, 4.4% of the clothed inhumations (numbers 172, 191, 218 and 222) cannot be attributed to a specific period.

#### *The chronological development of the cemetery*

On the basis of what has been described above, and bearing in mind that we only have 90 clothed inhumations at our disposal, it has proved possible to put forward a series of working hypotheses concerning the establishment and development of the different burials within the funerary areas as a whole.

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in the central area of all the longitudinal space occupied by the cemetery; in addition, this is the widest, the most densely occupied and the highest part. This information is provided by the burials (listed above) which contain material that can be dated with a relatively reliable degree of certainty to level II. This initial nucleus of occupation may also have developed towards the northern part, in the area where material is totally absent, although nothing can be definitely confirmed as no information has come down to us concerning the possibility of some graves being destroyed on this part of the site at the time when the cemetery was discovered. Other graves which densen and expand the burial area were added around and alongside this initial group of burials. At El Carpio de Tajo the limits of the burial area were determined by the topography of the site, and not by military rank, a phenomenon that can be detected in the case of some cemeteries, and, in addition, they respond to social and/or family groupings, a subject to which we shall return.

During a second phase of occupation, the cemetery became more densely occupied in the central part of the site and expanded slightly towards the north. The greatest expansion was seen—in longitudinal terms—in the southern sector as a whole. Material that can be associated with my level III makes an appearance on these parts of the site. Whatever the case, although it is possible that among the burials chronologically assigned to the late fifth century and the first half of the sixth century there may have been some attributable to the cemetery's initial occupation, the majority of them seem to reflect a moment towards the end of first half of the sixth century. The new burials were to be found throughout the area of the cemetery, occupying available space and respecting the paths and distances—which appear to have been controlled—between one grave and another. At the same time, more extensive spaces can be identified between the different grave groups, as has already been noted.

The cemetery complex was filled in and completed from the second half of the sixth century onwards, with the material attributable to levels IV and V, together with that which has been classified, in general terms, as belonging to the second half of the sixth century. The process of inserting graves alongside other, previously existing ones, respecting their dimensions, continued apace in this phase. As a result, the central and southern parts of the site became increasingly densely occupied and the open spaces left by previous phases were gradually eliminated. It would seem to have been in this third

phase that the entire area located to the north of the cemetery was established. In the latter sector there is a large number of graves without material, while those that do contain artefacts are always attributable to a late date.

The re-use of certain graves, as was the case of numbers 123 and 137, is indicative of the existence of a desire to be buried alongside members of one's own social and/or family grouping. This same fact is corroborated by the location and insertion of certain burials next to others, each of them apparently being of a different date. Almost all the examples listed in the section dealing with the topographical chronology of the site can be included in this category,<sup>53</sup> although it remains to be seen whether these are cases of family groupings or of social groupings with their consequent hierarchical structure.

All this enables us to speak, after the analysis of the topographical chronology of the material, of the simultaneous development of the cemetery in different periods. It should be emphasised that the cemetery of El Carpio de Tajo did not grow in a concentric fashion, but rather that it expanded little by little and became increasingly densely occupied in the course of time. Growth took place longitudinally, with new graves being placed in the open spaces left by earlier burials, the end product being a densely packed burial site within which movement came to be difficult. The organisation of the burial area apparently did not follow a well-defined pattern; however, detailed analysis (cf. the plans) makes it possible to detect the various phases and the layout of the different burials with groups of several generations corresponding to clearly identifiable periods, however close in time they may have been.

#### *Interpretation*

Our deficient knowledge of the details of the cemetery and the fact that certain aspects have been detected for the first time force us to handle any interpretation that may be offered with caution, and to indicate what are working hypotheses and what can be considered to be relatively definite conclusions.

The first significant point is illustrated by the organisation and

<sup>53</sup> The same phenomenon is recorded in cemeteries such as Daganzo de Arriba (Madrid) and Camino de los Afligidos (Alcalá de Henares), to mention just two examples.

development of the cemetery itself. On the one hand, the oldest burials, the so-called foundational ones, were located on the highest part of the site, that which offered the best conditions for burial. No details distinguish one burial from another, that is to say that there are no indicators of a greater or lesser degree of wealth or poverty, nor are there any privileged burials. The cemetery was thus governed and organised according to social and family criteria. Even though it is true that the archaeological and anthropological evidence does not shed any light on this aspect,<sup>54</sup> an attempt will be made to defend this hypothesis.

The development process of the cemetery is based on a clear preliminary plan and the subsequent in-filling of the various sectors, and it also exhibits a wish to organise the burial area on the basis of certain groupings. I consider that the latter can only be identified as social or family groups which are interrelated by certain ties.<sup>55</sup> This interpretation is supported by the fact that burials do not overlay each other, while some graves were reused in undefined circumstances. If people were keen to be buried alongside specific burials, and there is no evidence either for a possible ecclesiastical hierarchy or for burials *ad sanctos*, this phenomenon must surely lead us to propose that the different burial zones were the property of separate families.

Throughout the Roman period, as is demonstrated by epigraphy, funerary property, although administered by the clergy, formed part of the family's estate and could be inherited.<sup>56</sup> In contrast, Germanic law did not concern itself with the question of funerary property and only did so in the case of the possessions or patrimony belonging to kinsfolk.<sup>57</sup> The kinship system offered each individual ample protection, but at the same time obliged him to perform certain services as a consequence of adoption or vassalage. Be that as it may, with the

<sup>54</sup> There are no anthropological studies of the bones from El Carpio de Tajo, although neither would such research make it possible to identify the members of the same family group. The problem is widespread; see the reflections put forward by: Privati, *La nécropole de Sézégmin*.

<sup>55</sup> Funerary practices are marked by family detail, and burials are always organised in accordance with family groupings, corporations and different collectives. Young and Périn, "Les nécropoles (III<sup>e</sup>-VIII<sup>e</sup> siècle)".

<sup>56</sup> A preliminary consideration of the subject can be found in: Prieur, *La mort dans l'antiquité romaine*, p. 58, pp. 75-76. Additional documentation in: Cumont, *Lux Perpetua*, pp. 15-58 and pp. 387-419. See also: Brown, "La antigüedad tardía", pp. 274-77.

<sup>57</sup> On Germanic law, a number of observations that defend the Germanist thesis can be found in: Pérez-Prendes, and Azcarraga, *Lecciones de Historia del Derecho Español*, pp. 91-167. See also Calabrús Lara, *Las relaciones paterno-filiales en la legislación visigoda*.

passing of time and contact with Romano-Christian civilisation, the influence of kinship was gradually weakened, while the single-cell family centred upon a married couple, in which the ties of relationship were much closer, but at the same time more restricted, gained in importance.<sup>58</sup> From this fact it thus emerges that the funerary space also tended to be controlled by the family and not by the social group or the kinship grouping.

Although specific textual evidence concerning funerary property of a family nature is not available, what is known, and it further supports this idea, is that payment for the funeral, and everything that it implied, as well taking care of the grave, were strictly family responsibilities.<sup>59</sup> What has been said demonstrates that there was concern and respect for pre-existing burials; that is to say, in the same way as when privileged tombs were in existence,<sup>60</sup> their topographical location and ownership rights were respected.

It is well known that any cemetery is a reflection of the community of the living.<sup>61</sup> In the case of the interments at El Carpio de Tajo social differences are imperceptible on an archaeological level, although none the less in existence, for, in the majority of cases, the only evidence that we have at our disposal is for female decorative metalwork. It is quite possible that these objects are thereby demonstrating the importance possessed by the movable part of the dowry or *ornamenta muliebria*, which was exclusively part of the wife's property and not part of what was known as the "family patrimonial community",<sup>62</sup> at the same time they may have been indicative—insofar as Visigothic society is concerned—of the predominant role of women in the transmission of the lineage.<sup>63</sup> As a result, at the end of the fifth century

<sup>58</sup> King, *Law and Society in the Visigothic Kingdom*, pp. 222-223; Rouche, "Alta Edad Media occidental", pp. 58-59.

<sup>59</sup> On funerary rites, although on the basis of sources of various periods, cf. Paxton, *Christianizing Death*. See also Young and Périn, "Les nécropoles (III<sup>e</sup>-VIII<sup>e</sup> siècle)", p. 115 and p. 120.

<sup>60</sup> Pietri, "Les sépultures privilégiées en Gaule d'après les sources littéraires", p. 134. Young, "Quelques réflexions sur les sépultures privilégiées, leur contexte et leur évolution surtout dans la Gaule de l'Est".

<sup>61</sup> Demolon, "Les sépultures privilégiées mérovingiennes de Vorges (Aisne)", p. 60; Young, "Quelques réflexions sur les sépultures privilégiées, leur contexte et leur évolution surtout dans la Gaule de l'Est", p. 76.

<sup>62</sup> Pérez-Prendes and Azcarraga, *Lecciones de Historia del Derecho Español*, p. 146.

<sup>63</sup> Even though the importance of women in this respect seems certain, it is also true that it was the man who was the real head of the kinship group or the lineage, and for that reason the guardian of the purity of the blood and the authenticity of descendants, as Rouche, "Alta Edad Media occidental", p. 59 argues.

and in the first half of the sixth century, we can speak, with a certain degree of certainty, about clear differences on the grounds of sex and about social differences in a more hypothetical way. As far as the second half of the sixth century is concerned, the problem requires a different approach, since it is not known with any degree of certainty what type of personal adornments were worn by one sex or the other, or to what extent women continued to play a significant role.

Everything that has so far been discussed corroborates the intrinsic internal development of the cemetery of El Carpio de Tajo and the way in which the burial space was organised; instead of displaying a concentric pattern of growth, what happened was that it was structured starting from the initial phase of occupation and its central nucleus. The importance of this central nucleus is demonstrated by its location at a predominant point within the cemetery, the highest and most spacious part. It is quite likely, although it must remain in the realm of hypothesis, that the foundational, Visigothic nucleus was governed by a kinship system and only gradually gave way to the monogamous family structure that the catholic Church so fervently encouraged and promoted.<sup>64</sup> This hypothesis would also be borne out by the appearance in the second phase of occupation of burials which can no longer be defined as strictly speaking Visigothic, but which instead incorporate elements of a Roman nature; these may have belonged to Roman individuals absorbed into Visigothic family groupings. We are therefore in the presence of a cemetery that should be identified as representing a mixed, Visigothic and Roman, settlement site, rather than one exclusively used by Visigothic leaders and their followers, as traditional historical works would claim.<sup>65</sup>

The organisation of the burial groups within the cemetery area of El Carpio de Tajo was established from the very beginning. It evolved

<sup>64</sup> In rural contexts, as is our case, it would seem that social structures resisted change longer than in urban surroundings. See: Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, pp. 173 ff.

<sup>65</sup> It would require an excessive amount of space to list here the necessary bibliography, which is, on the other hand, well-known. It is common knowledge that it has always been claimed that Visigothic society, centred upon the Castilian plateau, was exceptionally closed, and that it was not until after the so-called "territorial union" carried out by Leovigild and the supposed "confessional unity" brought about by Reccared that there was any fusion between Visigoths and Romans. The idea of a mixed population already detectable in the opening years of the first half of the sixth century needs to be clarified gradually. The subject has recently been reconsidered in Ripoll López and Velázquez, *La Hispania visigoda*.

in such a way that the various spaces were gradually filled in, adopting what can be described as a longitudinal pattern dependent on the topographical features of the site where the initial nucleus of the cemetery was located and eventually coming to form a very densely occupied area. As an immediate conclusion, although we are moving in the realms of hypothesis, it might be proposed that the cemetery of El Carpio de Tajo seems to exhibit three different phases of occupation. The first of these was restricted to the foundational nucleus in the central part of the site, datable to the closing years of the fifth century and the opening years of the following one. The second phase of occupation was laid out both to the north and to the south and spanned practically all the first half of the sixth century; the burials of the second half of the sixth century subsequently gradually filled in these areas. Finally, the third phase witnessed the inauguration of a new sector further north and, as has just been noted, the in-filling of unused burial space of the previous phases.

\* \* \*

In the preceding pages an attempt has been made to demonstrate that the composition of the population in *Hispania* in late Antiquity, particularly after the arrival of a new population group, the Visigoths, provides clear signs concerning the mixture of the two largest groups within the population, the Visigoths and the Romans. The problems arising from the repeal of the law prohibiting intermarriage, which have been considered together with the example of the mixed cemetery site of El Carpio de Tajo, point to a line of research dealing with the fusion of the population and the acculturation process.

Translated by P. Banks



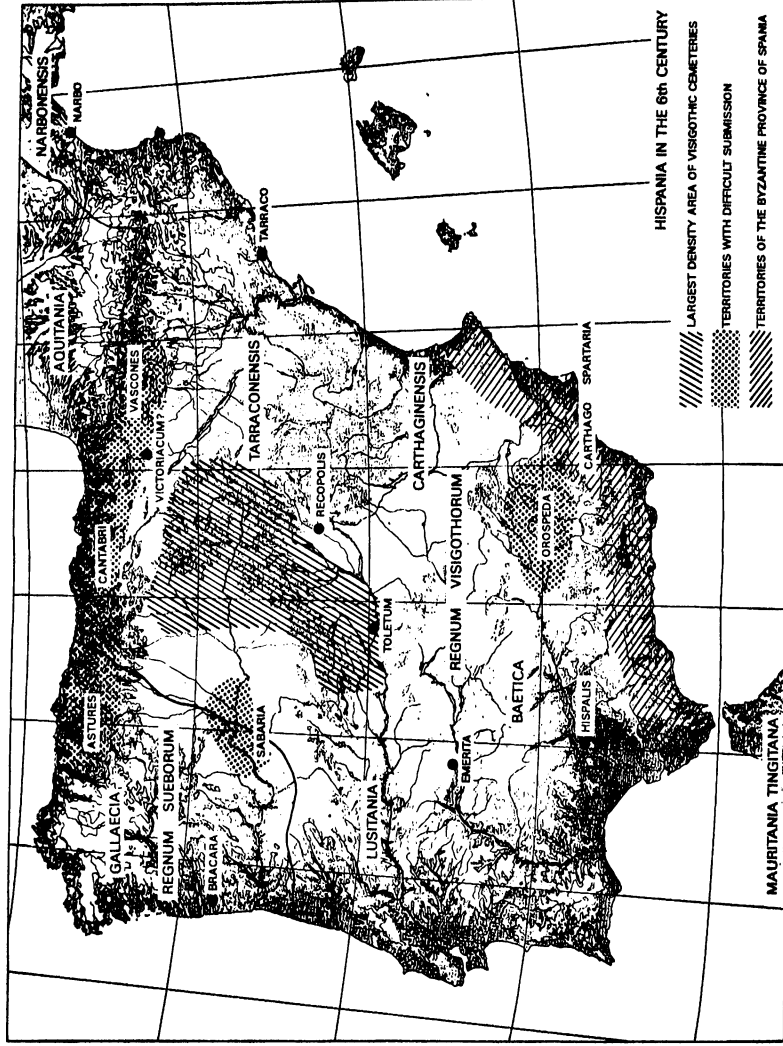


Fig. 3. Hispania in the sixth century (the Byzantine territories are only theoretical).

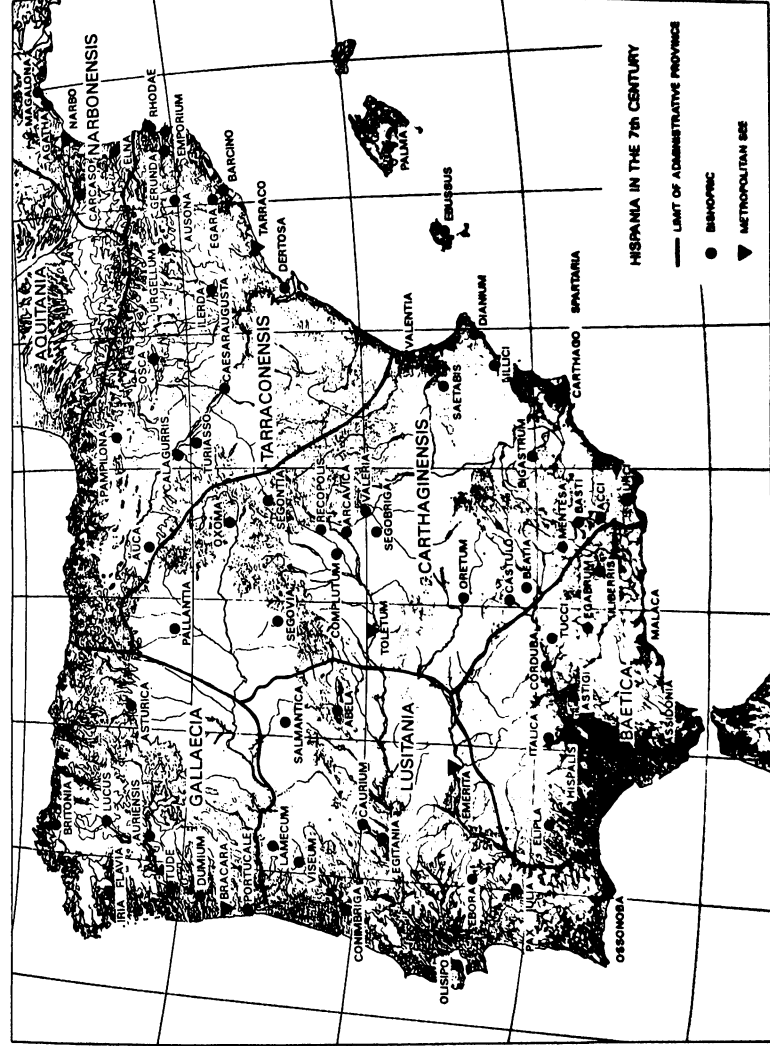


Fig. 4. Hispania in the seventh century.

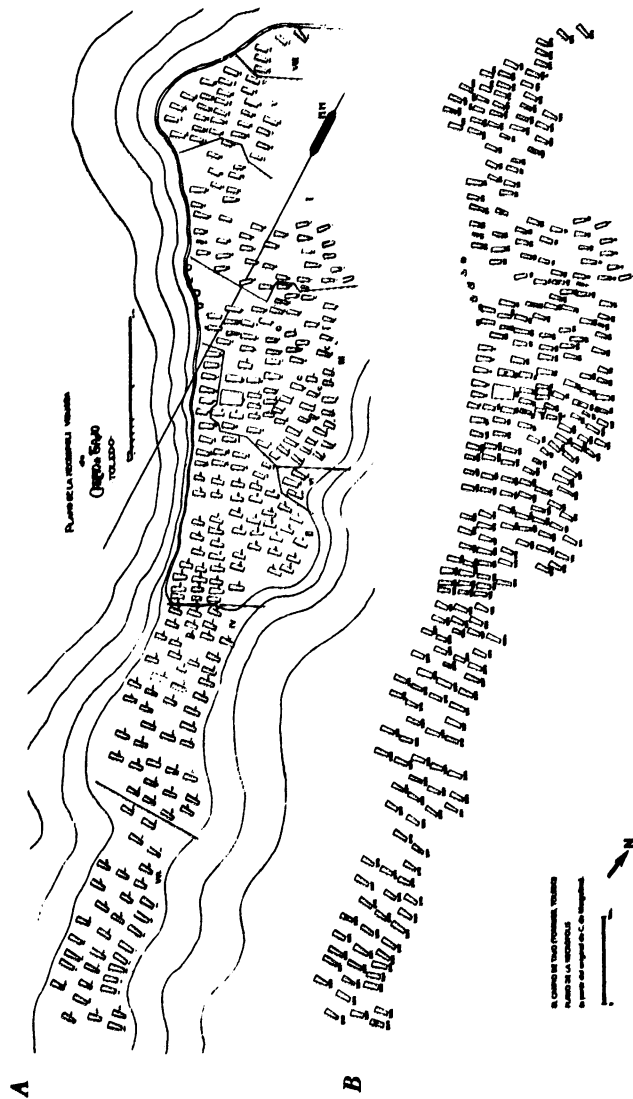


Fig. 5. El Carpio de Tajo. A: Original plan; B: Corrected plan.



Fig. 6. El Carpio de Tajo. A: Distribution of clothed inhumations and funerary deposits; B: Distribution of Visigothic and non-Visigothic ornaments.





Fig. 7. El Carpio de Tajo. A: Materials of level II, III of the first half of the sixth century; B: Materials of level IV, V of the second half of the sixth century.



Fig. 8. El Carpio de Tajo. A: Phases of occupation; B: Chronological development (A: founder-burials; B: burials of the sixth century; C: burials of the second half and end of the sixth century).

THE APPROPRIATION OF ROMAN LAW IN BARBARIAN  
HANDS: "ROMAN-BARBARIAN" MARRIAGE IN  
VISIGOTHIC GAUL AND SPAIN<sup>1</sup>

Hagith Sivan

As an example of the textual heritage of barbarian presence on Roman soil, the Roman-ethnic law codes provide a remarkable testimony of the emergence of a new ethnic discourse.<sup>2</sup> Preserved in Latin, compilations like the *Lex Romana Visigothorum* or the *Breviarium Alarici* (hereafter *BA*) of 506 show how barbarian monarchs utilised the power of Roman legal rhetoric for political purposes.<sup>3</sup> Largely deprived of any recognisable Germanic stamp, the *BA* nonetheless reflects a process of adaptation to contemporary and local usage which can also highlight specific situations. Its successor, the *Lex Visigothorum* (654), the first surviving legal compilation of Visigothic Spain, contains excerpts of older legal codes (the late fifth century Codex of Euric and the late sixth century codex of Leovigild, both as *antiqua*). Whether these codes also betray signs of "supra-national" thinking, intending to rise above boundaries of ethnicity, disparate traditions, and different religious affiliation, is a question to which no clear-cut answer has been found to date.<sup>4</sup>

Amidst the subjects that both the *Breviarium Alarici* and the *Lex Visigothorum (antiqua)* discuss are matters pertaining to private life, and particularly the issue of marriage. It is here, too, that one expects to find traces of Germanic customs, yet, in the area of marital impediments, and specifically with regard to intermarriage, the laws issued under the authority of the Gothic kings in both Visigothic Aquitania and Spain appear to have faithfully followed Roman patterns. To be precise, already in 373 the Roman government issued a law (*CTh* 3, 14, 1) that banned marriage between Romans and barbarians. This

<sup>1</sup> I am very grateful to Lellia Cracco Ruggini for reading a draft of this paper and for her suggestions.

<sup>2</sup> Sirks, "Shifting frontiers in the law: Romans, provincials and barbarians". Wood, "Roman law in the barbarian kingdoms".

<sup>3</sup> Lambertini, *La codificazione di Alarico II*, for a recent view of this complex code.

<sup>4</sup> Wallace Hadrill, "Gothia and Romania", p. 39, for a negative opinion which denies any such mature attitudes prior to Leovigild and even before Recceswinth.

law was then taken into the *Breviarium* with an added interpretation (*BA* 3, 14). Some two centuries after its issuance, Leovigild banned the ban and allowed marriage between Goths and Romans (*LV* 3, 1, 1 *antiqua*). Straightforward as this process may appear, it is far from either simple or direct.

Past interpretations of the ban on Roman-barbarian marriage and its subsequent history in Gothic hands offered two explanations. One, "nationalistic", regards the Gothic garb as an expression of a desire for national purity.<sup>5</sup> The other, religious, or politico-religious, claims that the prohibition on intermarriage reflects religious antagonism, namely the well-known divisions of arian-Goths versus catholic-Romans.<sup>6</sup> In spite of apparent differences, both these theories imply that the Goths had a specific self-image which required complete separation from "the other". While this may not be entirely incorrect, such modern interpretations fail to account for the precise timing, the terminology and the contemporary intent of either *BA* 3, 14 or *LV* 3, 1, 1.

In what follows I offer a different analysis of the Visigothic adaptation and eventual nullification of the original Roman ban on mixed ethnic marriage. Elsewhere I have discussed the precise circumstances in which *CTh* 3, 14, 1 was issued in 373.<sup>7</sup> I then concluded that it was neither an expression of "nationalistic" Roman sentiments nor even of anti-barbarian trends. Such general attitudes fail to account for the date of *CTh* 3, 14, 1, its recipient (a military official) or its terminology (with an emphasis on *provinciales*, members of the local society in the region to which the original was addressed). Similarly, to understand in full the interpretation which accompanies this law in the *Breviarium*, it is necessary to take into account not vague feelings of anti-barbarism or anti-arianism but concrete problems and threats which faced the issuing authority at the time of the law's reissuance or abolishment.

<sup>5</sup> Soraci, *Ricerche sui conubia tra Romani e Germani IV-VI s.*, *passim*. Demougeot, "Le conubium dans les lois barbares du VI<sup>s</sup>."

<sup>6</sup> Jimenez Garnica, "El origen de la legislación civil visigoda sobre la prohibición de matrimonios entre romanos y godos: un problema de fundamento religioso"; Bianchini, "Ancora in tema di unioni tra barbari e romani".

<sup>7</sup> Sivan, "Why not marry a barbarian? Marital frontiers in late Antiquity (The example of *CTh* 3, 14, 1)". See also Elton, "Defining Romans, barbarians and the Roman frontier", esp. pp. 131-5.

### 1. *CTh* 3, 14, 1: MARRIAGE AND AFRICAN REBELS

When Valentinian I issued *CTh* 3, 14, 1 to Theodosius, his *Magister Equitum*, the latter was involved in a difficult campaign against Firmus, an African Moorish rebel.<sup>8</sup> One threatening aspect of this revolt was the close contacts which the "barbarian" enemies had with the locals in the province.

*Nulli provincialium, cuiusque ordinis aut loci fuerit, cum barbara sit uxore coniugium, nec ulli gentilium provincialis femina copuletur. Quod si quae inter provinciales atque gentiles adfinitates ex huiusmodi nuptiis extiterint, quod in his suspectum vel noxium detegitur, capitaliter expietur* (*CTh* 3, 14, 1, May 28, 373).

No provincial of whatever class or place he may be, shall enter matrimony with a barbarian woman, nor shall a provincial woman be united with any *gentilis*. Should affinities based on this marriage exist between provincials and *gentiles*, if something suspect or criminal be detected in them, it shall be subject to capital punishment.

Undesirable matches, as this law proclaims, included barbarians or *gentiles*, both living within the orbit of Roman imperial law.<sup>9</sup> In the society of Roman north Africa, where the revolt of Firmus took place, even rebels were, strictly speaking, not barbarians in the sense of non-residents or foreigners. Firmus was a tribal leader who belonged to a family that had numbered Roman citizens for decades and had produced military men who had served in the Roman army throughout the fourth century. Among his father's more memorable deeds was the acquisition of a relic of the true cross, all the way from the Holy Land.<sup>10</sup> People like Firmus also married provincial Roman women and were, in all likelihood, accepted as desirable spouses. There was nothing objectionable in such marriages in themselves, as even the law grudgingly acknowledged.

In times of danger, however, traditional social alliances were perceived in a different light, particularly by a court residing at a considerable distance from the events which it tried to regulate and control. When non-Roman inhabitants of Roman Africa united to

<sup>8</sup> What follows is based on Sivan, "Why not marry a barbarian". The main ancient account is Ammianus 29, 5. See also Soraci, *Ricerche sui conubia tra Romani e Germani IV-VI s.*, pp. 73 f., and Bianchini, "Ancora in tema di unioni tra barbari e romani".

<sup>9</sup> On *gentiles*, foreigners and barbarians see Cracco Ruggini, "I barbari in Italia nei secoli dell'impero"; and id., "Intolerance: equal and less equal in the Roman world".

<sup>10</sup> ILCV 1822 = CIL 8, 9255, with Elton, "Defining Romans, barbarians and the Roman frontier", p. 132.

undermine Roman rule, they became "the enemy", namely hostile barbarians. In Mauretania, where the revolt of Firmus spread, ethnic divisions were not always clear or desirable. Valentinian I and Theodosius attempted to create such a dichotomy by discouraging mixed marriage in the province. While recommending separation between all provincials on the one hand and barbarian women or *gentiles* on the other, the imperial law did not penalise existing marriages. What it did was to threaten with dire penalties any suspicious activity that such marriages could potentially engender. The precise nature of these acts is not defined, an ambiguity which left the authorities with a wide scope for reaction and retaliation.

## 2. BA 3, 14: THE MARRIAGE BAN IN GALLIC-GOTHIC HANDS

That this law was included in the Theodosian code of 438 is understandable in view of its applicability to situations in which mixed ethnic marriages carried a potential risk to a government which continually faced unrest in the provinces.<sup>11</sup> Somewhat less comprehensible, at first sight, is its inclusion in the *Breviarium*. By the time of the issuance of the *Breviarium* in 506, the original circumstances which had prompted *CTh* 3, 14, 1 were beyond recovery. The editors of the Theodosian code had removed most of the clues that disclosed the context in which the emperor had issued the law in 373.<sup>12</sup> They retained the very principle of the *lex*, namely the prohibition on mixed marriage, as well as the penalty on marriages which harboured risks for the government. By 506 the prohibition itself still made sense to Alaric's compilers, but the proviso about an inherent danger in such marriages lost its clarity.

*Nullus Romanorum barbaram cuiuslibet gentis habere praesumat uxorem, neque barbarorum coniugiis mulieres Romanae in matrimonio coniugantur. Quod si fecerint, se capitali sententiae noverint subiacere (BA 3, 14. Interpretatio).*

<sup>11</sup> On the real or perceived Germanic threat in the east, Cameron and Long, *Barbarians and Politics at the Court of Honorius*. Needless to say, the Code did not include only laws which had a practical application well beyond their date and sphere of original application. Archi, *Teodosio II e la sua codificazione*. See also the remarks of Tuplin, "The purpose of Roman law codes", and below on editorial procedures.

<sup>12</sup> *CTh* 1, 1, 5-6, on editorial procedures, with Honoré, "The making of the Theodosian Code"; Harries, "The Roman imperial *quaestor* from Constantine to Theodosius II"; and the various contributions in *The Theodosian Code*, eds. Harries and Wood.

No Roman should presume to have as wife a barbarian woman of any *gens*, nor should Roman women ally in matrimony with barbarians. Should they do so, let them know that they will be subject to capital punishment.

This is the interpretation that had been transmitted with the Valentinianic ban. Neither the history nor the sources of the interpretations attached to the legal provisions of the *Breviarium* have been established.<sup>13</sup> While the roots of many of the interpretations may be sought in the so-called vulgar law, as well as in legal circles and legal schools of fifth century Gaul, a number of the interpretations belong to a less theoretical and a more concrete context. One such, I think, is *BA* 3, 14 on mixed ethnic marriages.<sup>14</sup>

Even a cursory reading of the interpretation reveals the disappearance of two critical terms of the original law, *provinciales* and *gentiles*, and their substitution by two other denominations, *Romani* and *barbari*. This is important, for such a change of terminology is indicative of the precise circumstances in which the ban was reissued. The law no longer argues a specific wrongdoing as a result of this union, nor is there punishment attached to such suspect activities. The "Gothic-Gallic" interpretation of the *Breviarium* merely declares that mixed marriages are forbidden under threat of death. The affiliation of the barbarians concerned is designated by *gens*, tribe or nation.<sup>15</sup>

Who were the "Romans", and who were the "barbarians" whose unholy alliance the *Breviarium* contemplates with displeasure? That the former were local provincials, or Gallo-Romans of sorts, seems likely enough. That the latter were Goths, as has been argued in the past, is extremely unlikely.<sup>16</sup> In the surviving documents which were issued under Gothic authority, such as the *Codex* of Euric, the Goths never refer to themselves as barbarians.<sup>17</sup> They are invariably *Gothi*.

<sup>13</sup> This is a difficult subject. For one recent attempt, Kreuter, *Römisches Privatrecht im 5. Jahrhundert: Die Interpretatio zum westgotischen Gregorianus und Hermogenianus*.

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<sup>15</sup> The grammar of this law does not enlighten us as to who bore the punishment—the Roman spouses alone or the couples.

<sup>16</sup> As has been maintained by virtually every single scholar who has dealt with this law, including Soraci, Bianchini and Demougeot.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Cassiodorus's caution in Italy when referring to Theodoric or the Ostrogoths, esp. *Variae* 9, 25 (533) on the Goths as custodians of Roman history. But see also the lax Burgundian attitude in the Burgundian law codes, with Amory, "The meaning and purpose of ethnic terminology in the Burgundian laws", pp. 1-28.

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. Cassiodorus's caution in Italy when referring to Theodoric or the Ostrogoths, esp. *Variae* 9, 25 (533) on the Goths as custodians of Roman history. But see also the lax Burgundian attitude in the Burgundian law codes, with Amory, "The meaning and purpose of ethnic terminology in the Burgundian laws", pp. 1-28.

In the *Breviarium*, as in the Theodosian code, *barbari* usually meant "the enemy", hostile raiders and "the other".<sup>18</sup> To be precise, then, the barbarians of *BA* 3, 14 are not the Goths. *CTh* 7, 1, 1 provides a nice illustration of the care with which the *Breviarium* removed all ambiguity on this score. The original, *si quis barbaris scelerata factione facultatem depraedationis in Romanos dederit* (should anyone provide barbarians with an opportunity to rob Romans through a criminal collaboration), has been recast in the interpretation as *si quis cum quibuslibet hostibus praedas egerit* (should anyone venture on a robbery with any type of enemy). How likely, in fact, were the Goths to exclude themselves from marrying locals in their own Gallic domains?

If the barbarians are not the Goths, can the term designate "arians", as has been often assumed? Such an assumption is not only incorrect but also circular. Nowhere in Roman law are heretics, arians or any other group, also called barbarians.<sup>19</sup> But modern scholars who have espoused a political-religious interpretation of *BA* 3, 14 (and, even more surprisingly, of *CTh* 3, 14, 1) automatically assume that, legally speaking, the term "Romans" implies catholics and, by implication, "barbarians" implies arians. Also problematic for this hypothesis is the fact that Roman law knew of only one marital impediment based on *disparitas cultus*, namely Jewish-Christian marriage.<sup>20</sup> Above all, marriage between "catholics" and "heretics", including arians, had been prohibited by ecclesiastical authorities already from the very beginning of the fourth century.<sup>21</sup> The council of Agde, which took place only a few months after the issuance of the *Breviarium*, reiterated the general ban on mixed religious marriage of all sorts.<sup>22</sup> It was therefore both superfluous, as well as without precedent, for the compilers of the *Breviarium*, to do the same in a civil law code. The conspicuous absence of civil laws regarding marriage between cath-

<sup>18</sup> Ruggli, *Die Barbaren in den spätrömischen Gesetzen: Eine Untersuchung des Terminus Barbarus*.

<sup>19</sup> *CTh* 16, 5 with Nöthlich, *Die gesetzgeberischen Maßnahmen der christlichen Kaiser des 4. Jahrhunderts gegen Häretiker, Heiden und Juden*. Cracco Ruggini, "Equals and less equals". In fact, the main underlying assumption of missionaries, like Patrick, was that Christians were Roman by definition, and barbarians idol worshippers (*Epistula ad Milites Corothici*).

<sup>20</sup> *CTh* 3, 7, 2 = 9, 7, 5 (*Codex Euricianus* 388) with Linder, *The Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation*, no. 18. See also my "Rabbinics and Roman Law: Jewish-Christian marriage in late Antiquity" (forthcoming).

<sup>21</sup> Elvira (c. 300), canon 15, with Laeuchli, *Power and Sexuality*, *passim*.

<sup>22</sup> *Concilium Agathense*, c. 20 (CCSL 259, ed. Munier, p. 148): *quoniam non oportet cum omnibus hereticis miscere connubia et vel filios vel filias dare, sed potius accipere, si tamen se profitentur christianos futuros esse catholicos*.

olics and heretics indicates that this problem was left in the hands of the church.

No less relevant for a proper understanding of the Visigothic adaptation of *CTh* 3, 14, 1 are the historical circumstances in which it was reissued. The *Breviarium* was compiled and issued at a critical stage of the relations between Goths and Franks, and specifically between Alaric II (484–507) and Clovis (481–511). Already in the late 480s, when Syagrius of Soissons sought refuge at the court of Alaric in Toulouse, Clovis demanded, successfully, what amounted to a betrayal of Syagrius and to a violation of the rules of political asylum.<sup>23</sup> Alaric forced Syagrius to leave the Gothic kingdom of Aquitaine to a certain death in Frankish territories. In the 490s Clovis raided Aquitaine at least twice and temporarily held both Saintes and Bordeaux.<sup>24</sup> Each of these raids must have been rather lucrative from the point of view of booty. The agreement which Clovis and Alaric signed on the island of Amboise, near Tours, about 500 made the river Loire into a boundary that the Franks and the Goths were required to respect.<sup>25</sup>

The complexity of the situation along the Loire is not exhausted by a survey of the fluctuating relations between Clovis and Alaric. Ecclesiastical realities contributed another factor which confused diplomatic theories and political-geographical realities. Thus the diocese of the city of Tours extended both south and north of the Loire, into territories controlled by both the Visigoths and the Franks, while the bishop of Tours was the metropolitan of several bishoprics which lay north of the Loire, beyond direct Visigothic sovereignty.<sup>26</sup> And although Alaric exiled two bishops of Tours (Volusianus and Verus), the vacancy hardly solved the anomaly of Tours episcopal authority.<sup>27</sup> Tours also occupied a strategic location on the Loire, and, needless to add, enjoyed the vast reputation of its famed saint, Martin.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Liber Historiarum* 2, 27. In general, Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, on Gothic viewpoint. On Clovis, among recent studies, Daly, "Clovis, how barbaric, how pagan?". Syagrius's title *rex Romanorum* has been contested by E. James who claims that he was merely *comes civitatis*: *Bull. de liaison de l'Assoc. française d'archéologie mérovingienne (Journée mérovingienne de Soissons)* 10 (1986), pp. 28–31.

<sup>24</sup> Addit. Prosper, a. 496 and 498.

<sup>25</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Liber Historiarum* 2, 27; id., *Vitae Patrum* 18, 2, on appointment of a Gothic commander in charge of a *castrum* on the Loire.

<sup>26</sup> Chadwick, *Early Brittany*, p. 197. Pietri, *La ville de Tours du IV au VI., passim*.

<sup>27</sup> Griffe, "L'épiscopat gaulois et les royaumes barbares 482–507".

<sup>28</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Liber Historiarum* 2, 37, records two visits of Clovis to Tours, one as soon as he crossed the Loire on his way to Vouillé, the other on his way back from victory, both in 507.

Now, the history of the regions north of the Loire, and in particular of Armorica, in the closing decades of the fifth century and the beginning of the sixth is far from clear.<sup>29</sup> The human geography of the area consisted of a network of multi-ethnic settlements of Armoricans or British migrants, Roman soldiers, descendants of Alan settlers, Franks and Gallo-Romans. To understand the intricacies of the situation, therefore, along the northern frontiers of the Gothic kingdom of Aquitaine, and Gothic reactions to the developing menace of the Franks, it is necessary to turn to Procopius.

There are many lakes in that region (west of the Rhine, modern Belgium), and this is where the Germans lived of old, a barbarous nation (βάρβαρον ἔθνος), not of much consequence in the beginning, who are now called Franks. Next to these lived the Arborychi who, together with all the rest of Gaul, and, indeed Spain also, were subjects of the Romans from of old. . . .

But as time went on, the Visigoths forced their way into the Roman Empire and seized all Spain and the portion of Gaul lying beyond the Rhône, and made them subject and tributary to themselves. By that time it so happened that the Arborychi had become soldiers of the Romans. And the Germans, wishing to make this people subject to themselves, since their territory adjoined their own and they had changed the government under which they had lived from of old, began to plunder their land and, being eager to make war, marched against them with their whole people. But the Arborychi proved their valour and loyalty to the Romans and showed themselves brave men in this war, and since the Germans were not able to overcome them by force, they wished to win them over and make the two people kin by inter-marriage. This suggestion the Arborychi received not at all unwillingly; for both, as it happened, were Christians. And in this way they were united into one people, and came to have great power.

Now other Roman soldiers, also, had been stationed at the frontiers of Gaul to serve as guards. And these soldiers, having no means of returning to Rome, and at the same time being unwilling to yield to their enemy who were arians, gave themselves, together with their military standards and the land which they had long been guarding for the Romans, to the Arborychi and Germans. . . . (BG 1, 12, trans. Dewing).

Although Procopius's account has been dismissed by some as fictional, its core is authentic enough.<sup>30</sup> Procopius's sources of information in-

<sup>29</sup> Chadwick, *Early Brittany*, provides the most lucid account. See also Fleuriot, *Les origines de la Bretagne*, and Provost, *Le val de Loire dans l'antiquité*.

<sup>30</sup> Lot, "La conquête du pays d'entre Seine et Loire par les Francs"; and id., "La

cluded members of a Frankish delegation to the court of Constantinople in 552, and his narrative corresponds, *grosso modo*, to what is known about the troubled history of the region in the fifth and early sixth century. Allowing for some confusion regarding geographical and chronological details which, in itself, is not unexpected from the eyes of an eastern observer of western events, the passage preserves valuable testimony regarding the strategies of Frankish expansion into the provinces of Lugdunensis III and IV (roughly corresponding to modern Brittany, or the area north of the Loire, from Tours to Nantes, including Armorica).

Procopius presents the Arborychi as soldiers who had been under Roman rule but were independent when they clashed with the Franks. These Arborychi have been identified, plausibly, with the Armorici, dwellers of the north-western regions of the Loire whose ethnic composition was largely "Roman". They included recent British migrants and descendants of the British troops whom Magnus Maximus had brought with him in 383 from Britain to Gaul. Procopius's narrative highlights a process of acculturation and integration between older locals and newer settlers in a contested region.<sup>31</sup>

Following a series of battles in which the "Armorici" valiantly defended local "Roman" interests against the Franks, an agreement was reached between the two "peoples". According to Procopius, the treaty was followed by a series of intermarriages, and cemented by a common creed. That mixed marriage appeared a major means of diplomacy for the Byzantine Procopius is hardly surprising. After all, such arrangements had a long history as a part of the networking of the Roman government with friends and foes alike.<sup>32</sup> In the 490s, the emperor Zeno, for example, promised Theodoric the Ostrogoth large quantities of gold and silver as well as the hand of a refined Roman

victrice sur les Alamans et la conversion de Clovis", pp. 63-9, was the most disparaging of Procopius's critiques. But see Bachrach, "Procopius and the chronology of Clovis's reign". Procopius's passage has also been analysed by Rouche, *Clovis*, pp. 533-47. I cannot, however, understand whence Rouche (p. 542) derives his assertion that *CTh* 3, 14, 1, was abolished in time to accommodate Frankish matrimonial plans vis-à-vis the Armoricans.

<sup>31</sup> The life of Samson of Dol (seventh or ninth century) still distinguished between *Britannia* (= northern Brittany) and *Romania* (Gallo-Roman Brittany), as does the second council of Tours (567), between *Romani* and *Britanni*, Chadwick, *Early Brittany*, pp. 217, 226.

<sup>32</sup> Demandt, "The osmosis of late Roman and Germanic aristocracies". See also *La noblesse romaine et les chefs barbares du III<sup>e</sup> au VII<sup>e</sup> s.*, eds. Vallet and Kazanski.

matron in return for fighting Rome's enemies.<sup>33</sup> Behind the amicable arrangement lurk two factors: Frankish need to obtain military allies, and Armorican tenacity in protecting Gallo-Roman interests against both the Franks and the Goths.

The story of the marital alliances between Armoricans and Franks as a measure of conflict resolution is, of course, reminiscent of Livy's account of early encounters between the Romans and the Sabines at the dawn of Roman history, as well as of Herodian's tale of a Roman-Parthian proposed marriage between Caracalla and a Parthian princess.<sup>34</sup> On the other hand, the commonality of Christianity, particularly as a basis of sexual intimacy, seems original within the Procopian tale. The Frankish envoys to the court of Byzantium may have wanted to impress their hosts with their christian antiquity as well as with their familiarity with Roman antiquities. Perhaps they even wanted to show their willingness to accept Romans into the Frankish fold.<sup>35</sup> That the "Roman" inhabitants of Armorica, be they Gallo-Romans or Britons, were indeed christians is likely enough. Frankish Christianity, on the other hand, is an aspect which dates the episode of the Frankish-Armorican truce to a period between 496 and 506, namely to the period usually assigned to Clovis's conversion to catholicism.

Procopius's Armorican tale demonstrates that by the late fifth century mixed marriages between "Romans" and Franks were not only possible but also desirable. It also shows that new ethnic identities, based on common interests between various population groups, were being formed along the Loire. Within this context, Procopius's reference to "other Roman soldiers" who followed the example of the Armorici and the Franks is instructive. The precise military affiliation of such soldiers after 476 is unclear. They were, for all intents and purposes, mercenaries free to serve whoever offered them sufficient inducement. One such attraction was the army that the Visigothic kings assembled, as Procopius hints. Whether these soldiers rejected the option of serving in the Gothic army on religious grounds is an open question. Instead, they opted to join the newly created Frankish-Armorican alliance.

The treaty between the Franks, the Armoricans and the "Roman

<sup>33</sup> Malchus fr. 3, ed. Blockley.

<sup>34</sup> Herodian 4, 10.

<sup>35</sup> The Franks even had a claim to common Trojan ancestry with the Romans (*Liber Historiae Francorum* 1).

soldiers" signalled the appearance, around 500, of a major threat to the Visigothic kingdom along its northern frontiers. The presence of a formidable army just north of the Loire also constituted an attraction for Romans living under Gothic rule and seeking their fortunes through serving barbarian overlords. Alaric could do little besides deploring the wholesale marriages between locals and Franks in areas north of the Loire over which he had no real control. But he could, and did, threaten with capital punishment, anyone from Aquitaine who contemplated a similar bond. To be precise, the thrust of the interpretation of *BA* 3, 14 was aimed at a society in which marriages between "the enemy", either Franks or any other barbarians besides the Goths, and locals, namely the Roman inhabitants of Aquitania, were perceived as a threat to the welfare of the Gothic monarchy. Wholly ignorant of the circumstances in which the original ban on mixed marriage had been conceived, the Visigoths reissued it as a rhetorical extension of their geo-political pretensions. Like Valentinian I, Alaric attempted to encounter with legal rhetoric a dangerous situation in order to reassert his power. *BA* 3, 14 appears, therefore, largely as a preventive measure to forestall a repetition of the Armorican "Roman"-Frankish pact. The situation which the interpretation envisaged in 506 is one of marital alliances between locals over whom the Gothic monarchs exerted some measure of control, and the enemy, primarily the Franks.

A last minute measure, such as a reiteration of a marital prohibition on mixed marriage, even when accompanied with an up-to-date interpretation, was too late to prevent Frankish aggression. The original area where the Goths had settled at the beginning of the fifth century (Aquitania II) extended by the dawn of the sixth to cover substantial portions of what had been Roman Gaul and must have been increasingly difficult to control from Bordeaux or Toulouse. Particularly vulnerable would have been frontier areas that lay between the Goths, the Burgundians and the Franks. There, locals could mix freely with barbarians to become, potentially, sources of hostile activities. Like the original *CTh* 3, 14, 1, the ban of the *Breviarium* originated in circumstances of conflict when the security of the government was threatened by cooperation between its enemies and its own subjects. As its Valentinianic predecessor, the Alarican reiteration is best perceived as a temporary measure taken under pressure. And like its model, it remained a threat without substance.



3. *LV* 3, 1, 1: THE MARRIAGE BAN IN SPAIN

In 580, if the *antiqua* of the 654 *Lex Visigothorum* indeed relate to the law code which Leovigild had issued, the ban on mixed marriage was abolished.

*Antiqua. Ut tam Goto Romana, quam Romano Gotam matrimonio liceat sociari. Sollicita cura in principem esse dinoscitur, cum pro futuris utilitatibus beneficia populo providentur; nec parum exultare debet libertas ingenita, cum fractas vires habuerit prisce legis abolita sententia, que incongrue dividere maluit personas in coniuges, quas dignitas conparet exequabil in genere. Ob hoc meliori proposito salubriter censentes, prisce legis remota sententia, hac in perpetuum valitura lege sancimus: ut tam Gotus Romanam, quam etiam Gotam Romanus si coniugem habere voluerit, premissa petitione dignissimam, facultas eis nubendi subiaceat, liberumque sit libero liberam, quam voluerit, honesta coniunctione, consultum perquirendo, prosapia sollempniter consensu comite, percipere coniugem (Lex Visigothorum 3, 1, 1).*

Ancient Law: That it is permitted both to a Roman woman to marry a Goth and to a Roman man to marry a Gothic woman.

Careful attention is discerned in a prince when benefits are provided to the populace for their future enjoyment; nor should freeborn liberty rejoice merely a little because of the (final) shattering of the abolished decree of an ancient law that had incongruously preferred to divide persons with respect to marriage in spite of their equality of rank. For this reason, contemplating beneficially a better proposal we decree the abolition of the former law and the following to be valid in perpetuity. A Goth, should he wish to marry a Roman, and a Roman, should he wish to marry a Goth, providing either woman is most worthy of such solicitation, should have the power to marry; as a free man, he can take a freeborn woman as wife in an honest alliance whomever he may desire, after seeking permission and the blessing of her family, as well as the consent of the count.

Beyond the maze of Gothic legal rhetoric, a few facts emerge: Romans and Goths had been held as equals before the law but for their inability to freely choose a spouse from members of the other ethnic camp. However, even the newly conferred formal freedom to marry at will was circumscribed by a requirement to obtain the permission of the count, presumably the *comes civitatis* and, even more significantly, by the impediments of status and rank. The law, not unnaturally, does not clarify whether the count's permission was simply a formal stamp of approval and a matter of ceremony.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>36</sup> King, *Law and Society in the Visigothic Kingdom*, p. 54. Visigothic marriage procedure included, in principle, three stages, two of which are fully reflected in *LV* 3, 1, 3,

Similarities between the verbose *LV* 3, 1, 1 and the curt interpretation of *BA* 3, 14 are few but potentially significant. Both deal with mixed marriage between partners of different ethnic affiliation. But while Romans remain as one of the parties involved, the forbidden other party is variously designated as *gentiles*, barbarians, and Goths. In fact, the chief concern of *LV* 3, 1, 1 is the equality in status between the spouses, an aspect which had remained wholly outside the scope of both *CTh* 3, 14, 1 and its interpretation in *BA* 3, 14.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, the repeal of the ban on mixed marriage is included in a section of the *LV* which deals with marriage contracts and particularly with dowries. Of the *antiqua* in this part, besides the abrogation of the ban on mixed marriage, *CTh* 3, 1, 6 deals with the return of a dowry to the woman's family, *CTh* 3, 1, 7 discusses family marital responsibilities in the absence of parents, and *CTh* 3, 1, 8 siblings' rivalry over future inheritance. In such company, the abrogation of the ban on mixed marriages implies that Romans, as well as Goths, were expected to abide by Gothic marital regulations.

Whether or not the *prisca lex* of *LV* 3, 1, 1 which refers to a ban on mixed marriages between Goths and Romans is a lost provision of Euric or *BA* 3, 14 is a moot point.<sup>38</sup> In the absence of provisions regarding marriage in the surviving portions of the *Codex* of Euric, the most economical hypothesis is to assume that *LV* 3, 1, 1 abrogated *BA* 3, 14. Such a theory further indicates that Leovigild was unaware of the circumstances which had prompted either *CTh* 3, 14, 1 or *BA* 3, 14. By 580, it was assumed that both the imperial constitution and its later interpretation applied to Romans and Goths. The very abrogation of a hypothetical marriage ban between Goths and Romans emphasises this ignorance.

It is also difficult to gauge whether the reinforcement of the ban in its Gothic-Roman categories throughout the sixth century was viable

namely the suit (*petitio*), the betrothal and the marriage, King, *Law and Society in the Visigothic Kingdom*, p. 224. The betrothal entails parental consent as well as that of the *comes*.

<sup>37</sup> As is the case with Visigothic legislation on marriage in general, such as 3, 1, 8, which stipulates that a woman can chose a spouse providing he belongs to the same social class. King, *Law and Society in the Visigothic Kingdom*, p. 232, n. 1, notes that equality of status was basic to the notion of *honesta coniunctio*.

<sup>38</sup> King, *Law and Society in the Visigothic Kingdom*, p. 14, opts for a lost Eurician provision against Garcia Gallo, "Nacionalidad y territorialidad del derecho en la epoca visigoda", for the *BA* 3, 14 as the ancient law. See also d'Ors, "La territorialidad del derecho de los visigodos".

or even necessary. Assuming that the Elviran and the Agathan canon regarding unions between catholics and non-catholics remained valid throughout the fifth and the sixth century, the Breviary's ban in its Spanish garb was in practice unnecessary. As long as the Goths remained arian, even a formal repeal of *CTh* 3, 14, 1/*BA* 3, 14 was unlikely to achieve unity in Spain. As Roger Collins correctly observed, the last decade of the reign of Leovigild was significant not because of the conflict between catholics and arians but because such a clash was a symptom of the search for unity of both Roman and Gothic leaders.<sup>39</sup> In fact, it is entirely possible that *LV* 3, 1, 1 was issued as an anti-catholic measure. Since the church continued to advocate separation between catholics and arians, the removal of the marriage ban from the civil law code valorised and validated marital unions across religious boundaries. The action further implies that ecclesiastical opposition to marriage between catholics and heretics could no longer rely on a civil provision to provide it with ammunition.

Indeed, it is the very emphasis of *LV* 3, 1, 1 on social rank as a basis for valid matrimony that invalidates scholarly hypotheses which emphasise religion as the law's *raison d'être*. As the *antiqua* insists, the unity of Goths and Romans had been retarded because the law, in theory at least, prevented marriage between people who nonetheless shared social affiliation. The *facultas nubendi*, as *LV* 3, 1, 1 proclaims, must be available to people who are free, who belong to the same class and who have the approval of their families. In its Spanish-Gothic phase, then, the law was understood as an instrument of class distinctiveness and not of voluntary religious separation.

That Alaric's interpretation of 506 was misunderstood in Visigothic Spain is hardly surprising. But then, the ban made sense only as a prohibition on marriage between Goths and Romans. It is perhaps ironic that the apparent continuing validity of *CTh* 3, 14, 1/*BA* 3, 14 was due to the resumption of its original Roman intent of erecting internal social boundaries. The Gothic rulers who had to ensure the transition of their kingdom from its Aquitanian base to its Spanish territory may have regarded the ban as a useful tool to maintain the superior position of the Gothic minority in Spain. When Leovigild contemplated a united Spanish kingdom, with both Goths and Romans loyal to their Gothic monarch, the ban on intermarriage ceased to

<sup>39</sup> Collins, "King Leovigild and the conversion of the Visigoths", p. 12.

serve its purpose. Rather, it had become an obstacle which prevented valid unions between Goths and Romans.

Nearly two centuries after its original issuance *CTh* 3, 14, 1 was formally abrogated under complete misapprehension. But the compilers of the *LV* deemed it worthy of inclusion, should an objection ever arise to mixed marriages in Spain. Just how irrelevant the ban had become is reflected in the centrality of not so much the idea of ethnic unity as of common class interests and the adoption of appropriate marital procedures. Marriage, according to *LV* 3, 1, 1, had become a matter not only of the two individuals involved and the bride's family, but an affair of the state. The primary requirement had become not compatibility of creed but of rank and social status. In Visigothic hands, then, a law which started its life as an anti-rebel measure in 373, became a safeguard against the power of a rising enemy in 506 and finally an expression of ethnic diversity.

The repudiation of the original ban on mixed marriage also reflects what has been called a fundamental conflict in sixth-century Spain between two different concepts of the ruler's relationship to the law.<sup>40</sup> One regarded the law as a tool of the ruler; the other saw it as being above both the ruler and the ruled. The former entailed continuous ethnic and religious separation; the latter implied unity. If the *rex*, *gens*, and *patria Gothorum* were to become more than mere literary and legal topoi, the realities of provincial life had to be taken into account by the king.<sup>41</sup> By acknowledging the practicalities of the marriage market in Spain, *LV* 3, 1, 1 facilitated the gentle demise of Gothic Arianism.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Linehan, *History and the Historians of Medieval Spain*, p. 25.

<sup>41</sup> On these terms and their usage, Teillet, *Des Goths à la nation gothique*, pp. 503 f.

<sup>42</sup> To use an expression of Linehan, *History and the Historians of Medieval Spain*, p. 28.

## LEGAL PRACTICE AND ETHNIC IDENTITY IN LOMBARD ITALY

Brigitte Pohl-Resl

Analysing legal practice allows consideration of the role of ethnic identity in legal context as well as in everyday life. Law-codes and charters are the main sources for legal practice. Commonly, law-codes are considered as the expression of the will of rulers, whereas charters document the actual consequences of laws for everyday life. The Lombard material offers a more differentiated picture. It can be shown quite clearly how everyday legal practice influenced and changed the laws. Furthermore, charters often fall short of giving a precise picture of actual events. The "construction kit" for charters was made up of only a small set of building-bricks in the form of stereotyped phrases out of which even most complicated and varying transactions had to be textually created. But, even more importantly, most early medieval Lombard charters are only transmitted as copies or in manuscripts from later centuries. In these cases, the legal practices depicted frequently refer more to the times when the charters were copied than when the originals had been issued. What can be said about the role of ethnic identity in legal practice in this context?

Two levels have to be considered when studying law-codes and charters within an ethnic context. One lies in the texts themselves. Do ethnic terms occur there at all, and if so, at what occasions are they quoted? What may the appearance or the absence of ethnic terms in law-codes and charters mean for the role ethnic identity played in everyday life? Secondly, legal practice itself is significant for the role ethnicity could have. In the case of the Lombard kingdom, the most important ethnic distinction reflected in the legal system is the one between Romans and Lombards. Romans and barbarians each had their own legal traditions and the interaction between both has been much discussed with differing conclusions.<sup>1</sup>

In order to check law-codes and charters for reflections of the

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<sup>1</sup> See also Dietrich Claude and Wolf Liebeschuetz in this volume, with further literature.

concept of ethnicity, it is necessary to begin by collecting all passages including explicit ethnic terms.<sup>2</sup> This has shown that the main use of ethnic terms in Lombard charters from the period before 774 was for local or chronological distinctions. In the Lombard territories next to those of the Byzantines in the south of Italy, for example, *Langobardi* and *Romani* clearly had a territorial meaning.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, in the famous conflict between the bishops of Arezzo and Siena, *a tempore Romanorum* and *a tempore Langobardorum* were used to distinguish chronological periods.<sup>4</sup>

Apart from geographical and territorial definitions, the term *Langobardi* is frequently mentioned in prayer clauses. In 772 King Desiderius and his son Adelgis, for example, gave the monastery of S. Salvatore at Brescia huge woods *ob amorem et retributionem ipsius redemptoris nostri atque anime nostre mercedem et stabilitatem gentis ipsius Langobardorum*. Their hopes for stability went sadly unfulfilled, but the ethnic rhetoric is similar to that employed in the prologues of the law-codes.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, ethnic terms are used to differentiate between various forms of social status or when legal systems are to be distinguished. I will come back to such cases later. On the whole, ethnic terms appear only rarely in Lombard charters before 774. Apart from a few exceptions, they usually refer to Lombards and Romans.<sup>6</sup>

The term *Romani*, however, can be ambiguous in itself. It can designate either Romans living within the Lombard territories or Byzantines or the inhabitants of Rome. The examples quoted above concerning geographical or chronological distinctions clearly refer to Byzantines. Byzantines are also mentioned in the law-codes, as in a paragraph on merchants from the year 750:

Let this be observed likewise concerning those men who conduct business with a Roman without the king's consent: if it was a judge who

<sup>2</sup> The results of this investigation have been published in Pohl-Resl, "Ethische Bezeichnungen und Rechtsbekenntnisse", pp. 163 ff.

<sup>3</sup> See e.g. CDL 5/1 (703 [748], March 7, Benevento): cf. Pohl-Resl, "Ethische Bezeichnungen und Rechtsbekenntnisse", p. 164.

<sup>4</sup> See e.g. CDL 1/17 (714, August, Siena), CDL 1/20 (715, July 5, S. Genesio in Vallari), CDL 1/21 (716, February, S. Pietro in Neure), CDL 3/13 (715, October 14, [Pavia]): cf. Pohl-Resl, "Ethische Bezeichnungen und Rechtsbekenntnisse", pp. 163 f., with note 2.

<sup>5</sup> CDL 3/41 (772, June 14, Pavia). Cf. Pohl-Resl, "Ethische Bezeichnungen und Rechtsbekenntnisse", p. 164, with notes 5 f., with further literature. For the prologues of the law-codes see Dick Harrison in this volume.

<sup>6</sup> See the examples in Pohl-Resl, "Ethische Bezeichnungen und Rechtsbekenntnisse", pp. 167 ff.

presumed to do this, he shall pay his *wergeld* as composition and shall lose his position of honor. If it was a freeman, he shall lose his property and, having been shaved (*decabatus*), he must go about crying out: "Those who conduct business with a Roman contrary to the king's wish, as long as the Romans are our enemies, suffer thus. . . ."

In this context "Romans" clearly does not indicate the king's subjects, but the inhabitants of the exarchate. More frequently, however, *Romani* is used for Romans living in Lombard territories. Among the wide range of terms used to distinguish the social status of a person, "Roman" seems to have a special meaning. When Guinifred and his sons gave *casae massariciae* to a church in the year 767, for example, they also decided what should happen to the people living there. The *Romani* were to pay for the lighting of the church, whereas the *massarii* should continue to do the *angaria*, a common duty of unfree people.<sup>8</sup>

Looking for explicit ethnic terminology in the sources, however, is only one way of approaching the role of ethnicity in everyday legal practice. Further conclusions can be drawn from an analysis of legal practice itself. Issuing laws, writing charters, and a belief in the legal value of charters are Roman traditions. When settling in Italy, the Lombards were confronted with this elaborate legal system characterised by an inseparable connection between law and literacy, *Recht und Schriftlichkeit*. After the Lombard conquest of Italy, Roman legal practice was initially impaired, but it never came to a complete end, and certainly not within the Church.<sup>9</sup> Gradually the Lombards adapted to Roman legal traditions. The law-codes and the charters document this process. Various legal practices significant for both Roman and barbarian societies show disruptions, changes and continuities clearly; inheritance law provides the best illustration.

*Heredes tamen successoresque sui cui liberi et nullum testamentum.*<sup>10</sup> This is how Tacitus brought the differences between Roman and Germanic

<sup>7</sup> Aistulf 4, ed. Bluhme, MGH LL 4. Trans. Fischer Drew, *The Lombard Laws*, pp. 228 f.

<sup>8</sup> CDL 2/206 (767, April 9, Pistoia). Pohl-Resl, "Ethische Bezeichnungen und Rechtsbekenntnisse", p. 165, with further examples and literature. Well-known is the debate about the *ancilla Romana* in Rothari's edict: Rothari 194, ed. Bluhme, MGH LL 4. Cf. Pohl-Resl, "Ethische Bezeichnungen und Rechtsbekenntnisse", p. 165, with note 10.

<sup>9</sup> For the problem of disruption and change in early medieval Italy see Wickham, *Land and Power*, pp. 99 ff.

<sup>10</sup> Tacitus, *Germania*, c. 20.

inheritance law to the point. Frequently, this has led historians to the conclusion that written wills ceased to exist once barbarians had settled in formerly Roman territories, either rather abruptly or in a process of "slowly dying out".<sup>11</sup> The alleged reason for this would be that the barbarians did not need written wills because they had strict inheritance laws, or even that written wills were explicitly forbidden. In this perspective, all last wills transmitted from the seventh and eighth centuries are—rather paradoxically—considered as examples for the process in which they ceased to exist, and in any case are explained by their ecclesiastical context.<sup>12</sup>

To a certain extent, the idea that Germanic law does not allow for wills is not unfounded in the case of the Lombards. Rothari's edict contains a large number of paragraphs establishing detailed inheritance rules for all conceivable cases. There is practically no scope left for free decision, and it is free decision, *institutio heredis*, that is characteristic of classical Roman wills.<sup>13</sup> This might justify the application of Tacitus's account from the end of the first century to the seventh and eighth centuries. However, it has been shown that the *institutio heredis* stopped being an essential part of wills as early as the late Roman period.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, this argument neglects the general opinion that Rothari's edict is a compilation of the old laws, and is often regarded as the most archaic of all barbarian law-codes.<sup>15</sup> But even if we interpret it as an up-to-date reflection of the legal situation in seventh century Lombard Italy, the familiar and crucial difference between legal norms and their actual effects should at least be considered.

Furthermore, the deduction from this evidence that written wills had ceased to exist can only be valid if it is assumed that everybody had to live according to Lombard law. The problem of territoriality and personality of law in the barbarian successor states of the Roman empire has been widely discussed with various conclusions.<sup>16</sup> One

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Nonn, "Merowingische Testamente", pp. 1 ff.; Spreckelmeyer, "Zur rechtlichen Funktion frühmittelalterlicher Testamente", pp. 91 ff., especially p. 95, with further literature.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Spreckelmeyer, "Zur rechtlichen Funktion frühmittelalterlicher Testamente", p. 96.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Nonn, "Merowingische Testamente", pp. 54 ff.; Spreckelmeyer, "Zur rechtlichen Funktion frühmittelalterlicher Testamente", p. 91.

<sup>14</sup> Nonn, "Merowingische Testamente", p. 14.

<sup>15</sup> Gasparri, *Prima delle nazioni*, p. 151.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Wood, "Ethnicity and the ethnogenesis of the Burgundians", pp. 53 ff.; Wormald, "Lex scripta and verbum regis", pp. 105 ff.

social field generally excluded from this discussion is the Church. There the continuity of Roman law, last wills included, is accepted by most scholars.<sup>17</sup> In Lombard Italy, some basic answers to this problem are given by the law-codes themselves. In the time of King Rothari Lombard law was already not the only one to be applied. According to his edict, foreign warriors, *uaregangi*, settling down in his kingdom were to live according to Lombard law unless he granted them a different one:

All *waregang* who come from outside our frontiers into the boundaries of our kingdom and yield to the jurisdiction of our power ought to live according to the Lombard laws, unless through our grace they have merited another law. If they have legitimate children, these shall live just as do the children of Lombards. . . .<sup>18</sup>

It is clear therefore that it was up to the king to decide whether specific persons were allowed other laws.

As for Roman law, a paragraph of King Liutprand's laws makes it clear that this was in common usage in Lombard Italy. In 727 he stated that charters could be written according to either Lombard or Roman law. People were free to choose between these two law-codes and free to agree on the form of their legal transactions. Only when dealing with matters concerning inheritance did everybody have to stick closely to his or her law:

In the case of scribes we decree that those who prepare charters should write them either according to the law of the Lombards—which is open to everybody and known to nearly everybody—or according to that of the Romans; they shall not do otherwise than is contained in these laws and they shall not write contrary to the laws of the Lombards or of the Romans. . . . For if men wish to go outside the law and make a pact or agreement among themselves, and both parties consent, this shall not be regarded as contrary to law. . . . However, anything that pertains to inheritance must be written according to law.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Pessimists deny the continuity of written wills even there: cf. the discussion in Spreckelmeyer, "Zur rechtlichen Funktion frühmittelalterlicher Testamente", pp. 92 ff.

<sup>18</sup> Rothari 367, ed. Bluhme, MGH LL 4.

<sup>19</sup> Liutprand 91, ed. Bluhme, MGH LL 4: *sive ad legem Langobardorum, quoniam apertissima et pene omnibus nota est, sive ad Romanorum*. Fischer-Drew, *The Lombard Laws*, pp. 183 f. This paragraph does not leave any doubt about the parallel uses of Lombard and Roman law-codes. The emphasis on the wide currency of the Lombard law may indicate that Roman law was more common but that the king tried to promote the use of Lombard law. For the impact this paragraph had on the situation of women see Pohl-Resl, "Quod me legibus contangeret auere", pp. 218 ff.

Consequently, there are numerous charters showing that Roman and Lombard law were both used for legal transactions. Ethnic distinctions are, nevertheless, explicitly noted in a few cases. Let me mention just two examples clearly showing the impact of Liutprand's paragraph on charters. The subdeacon Iobianus, Amantius, the son of Liberus, Martinus, Stephanus, the son of Albinus, Beatus, the relatives Lupicenus and Martinus, and Benenatus donated their *sors* at Rio Torto to the abbess Anselperga of S. Salvatore in Brescia.<sup>20</sup> The signatures at the end of the charter state that, unlike all the others, Benenatus lived according to Lombard law. He was the only one to receive *launegild, iuxta lege sua Langobardorum*.<sup>21</sup> The text of the charter does not allow for any distinction in the legal position of the donors. The only difference is the few added words in Benenatus's signature.

In 758, the *honestia femina* Gunderada sold property to Heldepert with the consent of her husband Domninus. The text of the charter as well as Gunderada's signature stress the fact that Gunderada was a *Romana mulier*.<sup>22</sup> As a Roman woman, living according to Roman law, she would have been allowed to decide on her own what to do with her property. The consent of her husband is mentioned in the text of the charter and in the *signum* line. This would be appropriate for a woman living according to Lombard law.<sup>23</sup> With this signature Lombard men demonstrated their right of consenting to the legal transactions of their wives. As a consequence of the laws on intermarriage and inheritance a Roman woman marrying a Lombard would probably have to live according to Lombard law, at least as far as matters of inheritance were concerned. This case might simply illustrate such a practice—despite the Roman sounding name of the husband.<sup>24</sup> However, the fact that Domninus gave his consent to his wife's transactions may equally demonstrate how Romans could adapt to Lombard legal traditions.

What is so important about Liutprand's law of 727 is that it puts emphasis on the fact that free choice of law in any case was allowed. Only questions of inheritance had to be dealt with using special care. How serious Liutprand and his successors were in this respect can

<sup>20</sup> CDL 2/212 (767, December 6).

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Gasparri, *Prima delle nazioni*, p. 156. For *launegild* cf. Rothari 175.

<sup>22</sup> CDL 2/130 (758, September 25).

<sup>23</sup> Pohl-Resl, "*Quid me legibus contanget auere*", p. 219.

<sup>24</sup> For the ethnic significance of names, and further literature, cf. Jörg Jarnut in this volume.

be seen in the way the people to whom the laws were addressed were designated. Usually, the single paragraphs in the law-codes simply begin with the words *si quis*.<sup>25</sup> Only demands concerning inheritance cases of any kind start with the words: *si quis Langobardus* or, alternatively, *si quis Romanus homo*.<sup>26</sup> The Romans are explicitly addressed when discussing intermarriage. These cases referred to Lombard inheritance law as well. Apart from this, new inheritance regulations brought changes for the Lombards only.

However, we also have to remember that there is a broader spectrum of laws dealing with matters of inheritance than just those about specific regulations on how property had to be passed on to family members. The laws on intermarriage have to be considered in this context, as for example Liutprand's law of 731 which states that Lombard women marrying Roman men should live according to Lombard law—regarding matters of inheritance.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, donations to the Church and the manumission of slaves after one's death concern family property and inheritance rights as well. An analysis of the law-codes clearly shows how in this respect the Lombards gradually adopted Roman legal practice. In the context of Rothari's compilation there was no scope for free testamentary dispositions. His successors progressively provided opportunities to decide freely what to do with part of one's property. Contrary to the archaic character of Rothari's edict, the Lombard laws gradually become more innovative than other barbarian law-codes.<sup>28</sup> A comparison of the different chronological layers clearly demonstrates the changes which took place, one significant feature of which is more and more adoption of Roman legal traditions.

In 713, the first year of his kingship, Liutprand started "to subtract and add", *subtrahere et addere*, to the laws of his predecessors, significantly with six clauses making major changes to inheritance law. Five of them were intended to improve the rights of daughters.<sup>29</sup> Daughters had a far better legal position in Roman law. The sixth clause

<sup>25</sup> They are made more precise only when a certain social group was addressed, either people distinguished according to their social status, or officials, like judges.

<sup>26</sup> Contrast Liutprand 7; 13; 102; 113; 153; with 127; cf. Aistulf 11; 12; 13; 14; 16. Further to the character of Rothari's edict, it is significant that not a single paragraph starts with *si quis Langobardus* there.

<sup>27</sup> Liutprand 127.

<sup>28</sup> Gasparri, *Prima delle nazioni*, p. 151.

<sup>29</sup> Liutprand 1-5.

concerned donations to the Church. The new law allowed a Lombard who was sick and confined to his bed the right to give whatever and to whomever he wanted, *quid aut qualiter cui voluerit*, on behalf of his soul, *pro anima sua*.<sup>30</sup> Later on, more and more laws were issued to regulate such donations. These covered all kinds of donations to an ecclesiastical institution and do not necessarily imply written wills. Many scholars have made strict distinctions between Roman and barbarian traditions in stating that only Romans had written wills, while barbarians simply made donations to the church, either in form of a *donatio post obitum* or in donating *a die praesente* but reserving the usufruct. However, a clear line like that cannot be drawn for Lombard Italy, as the following example shows.

Auderisius donated all his possessions to the monastery of Farfa in 777. He reserved part of the usufruct for himself and part of it for his two sisters. It might be objected that although it is called a *testamentum*, the charter does not meet the formal definitions of such a document by modern legal historians. However, the testator's intention was the same; to decide to whom his possessions should go after his death.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, he used the Roman terms for a practice which had retained some of its barbarian form. A strict formal distinction according to diplomatic rules misses the point. But even if we were to accept the usual differentiation between "barbarian" *post-mortem*-donations and "Roman" wills, Lombard Italy does not conform to the underlying theory that Germanic law did not allow for written wills. There are many last wills in the strict sense transmitted from Lombard Italy, and not, of course, only from clerics.

A man called Theuderacius, for example, who lived in the duchy of Spoleto, had to follow his patron on a military expedition in 768. Considering the *humana fragilitas* he decided to have his last will written down. He made donations for the sake of his soul and divided the remaining property among his family. He endowed a church with many properties and gave it to his son, a cleric. After his death, the properties were to belong to the monastery of Farfa. His wife

<sup>30</sup> Liutprand 6: *Si quis Langobardus, ut habens casus humana fragilitas, egrotaverit, quamquam in lecto reiaceat, potestatem habeat, dum vivit et recte loqui potest, pro anima sua iudicandi vel dispensandi de rebus suis, quid aut qualiter cui voluerit; et quod iudicaverit, stabilem debeat permanere.* This is another typical example of a passage starting with the words *si quis Langobardus*.

<sup>31</sup> CDL 5/55. Of course the word *testamentum* may refer to various legal transactions in the early Middle Ages. However, it could be proved that the term designates a last will in certain phrases, *hoc testamentum meum* being one of them: cf. Spreckelmeyer, "Zur rechtlichen Funktion frühmittelalterlicher Testamente", pp. 92 f.

was to own the house and everything belonging to it. She had to give all possessions to a monastery after her death, but she could decide freely to which one. His daughter also inherited a house and lands. After her death, these estates were to be given to Farfa as well (CDL 5/52). The form and the contents of this charter conform with all the necessary requirements for a classic Roman will. However, there is no hint whatsoever that the family might be Roman. Thus it is apparent that in judging whether the Lombards used written wills or not one should not rely on Tacitus but on Lombard wills instead.

The example of Auderisius illustrates another point. It has often been assumed that the increasing popularity of wills among eighth-century Lombards was mainly to the benefit of the Church, and had been made possible by its pressure.<sup>32</sup> However, the desire to care for the soul is only one reason why Lombards composed last wills. Closer examination suggests that the primary intention was to provide for female family members. Lombard men made use of the right to give properties to an ecclesiastical institution to grant their female family members more goods or rights than would have been permissible.<sup>33</sup> To make sure his wife and daughter would not have any troubles with their inheritance, Auderisius donated all his possessions to the eventual benefit of the Church. It is interesting that he did not bother to name a specific church in all cases. His intention was obviously not to rely on the protection a powerful monastery could offer to his wife after his death, but rather to justify what he left for her. Other men gave properties directly to an ecclesiastical institution but reserved the usufruct for the lifetimes of their female relatives. The *strator* Gisulf, for example, gave half of his property to the bishop of Lodi in order for him to sell it and distribute parts of the money among the poor. For as long as his wife lived, however, she should have all the usufruct.<sup>34</sup> Other men even founded monasteries, endowed them with all their properties, and allowed their wives and daughters to live there. There are many examples for these practices and they all show that law-codes alone can never reflect everyday legal practice.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Frequently, scholars saw this as the main reason for the survival or renaissance of this Roman practice: for this discussion cf. Spreckelmeyer, "Zur rechtlichen Funktion frühmittelalterlicher Testamente", pp. 91 ff.

<sup>33</sup> Pohl-Resl, "Quod me legibus contanget auere", pp. 214 ff.

<sup>34</sup> CDL 2/137 (759, September 17, Pavia). Cf. Pohl-Resl, "Quod me legibus contanget auere", pp. 215 f.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Pohl-Resl, "Quod me legibus contanget auere", pp. 215 ff. For similar practices

The changes in inheritance law, the gradual improvement of the position of women, as well as the growing acceptance of last wills demonstrate how Roman legal traditions influenced the Lombard attitude towards women. This is clearly shown by last wills containing no religious dispositions whatsoever, but featuring elaborate regulations about wives and daughters instead. In 773 for example, David took precautions for the time after his death. His wife Ghiserada was granted the right to continue living in his house, and to keep all her possessions and the usufruct from some of David's properties. His two daughters were to inherit houses and the estates and movables belonging to them. His slaves were to be set free after his death except for those that were to be given to his wife. David's sons, however, were only mentioned in the context of Ghiserada's *mundium* which was to pass to a monastery after David's and his sons' deaths.

This is an excellent mixture of Roman and Lombard legal traditions. That David's sons were not given anything explicitly might indicate that they got their legal portions anyway. However, David explicitly forbade them to challenge his dispositions. If we assume the sons got the minimal legal portions, all the other dispositions would conform with Lombard law, even if they stretch it as far as possible to the benefit of the women. The writing down of these dispositions, however, was a Roman legal practice, which is even more accentuated by the fact that David wrote his last will with his own hands: *et hanc iudicati me pagina ego ipsi David manibus meis scripsi*.<sup>36</sup> Valentinian III had decreed in 446 that a last will could be written with one's own hands.<sup>37</sup> In this case, no witnesses were necessary. Here again, however, David stuck to Lombard tradition. Although he had written his will with his own hands, there were three witnesses testifying to and signing the document.

A court ruling from the year 806 demonstrates how pious dispositions could be added to a last will. A man called Ragefredus had come to the monastery of Farfa to have his last will composed there. After it was written the charter was read to the whole congregation. The monks asked Ragefredus whether he did not want to care better for his soul and give all his property to the monastery, *ut securius et viriliter pro anima sua deum ex toto corde precarentur*. He agreed, and an-

in early medieval Bavarian and Alamannic charters see Pohl-Resl, "Vorsorge, Memoria und soziales Ereignis", pp. 271 f.

<sup>36</sup> CDL 2/287 (773 [August], Lucca).

<sup>37</sup> Nov. 21, 2.

other charter had to be written. The advocates of his son under age tried to contest his decision. In the end, the judges decided that Ragefredus had given Farfa all his possessions, and that this should stand. However, he had not mentioned his son's portion at all, and this—amounting to half of all his possessions—should belong to the child. The judgement referred to the Lombard laws allowing donations to ecclesiastical institutions.<sup>38</sup> The argumentation of both parties in this case is quite revealing. The child's advocates insist on inheritance laws. The monastery's representatives produce the written documents and use them in their argumentation. The judges, however, consult the Lombard law-codes. Even if Lombard inheritance laws are not explicitly mentioned in a charter, they still constitute a necessary condition for free disposition of the rest of the property as specified in this text.

Analysing legal practice in Lombard Italy from an ethnic point of view reveals various stages and forms of disruption and change for Romans as well as for Lombards. Roman institutions based on the existence of civic authorities ceased, such as depositing written documents in various forms of civic records, for instance the *gesta municipalia*. Such practices, however, survived in a modified form in ecclesiastical institutions. On the other hand, the Lombards gave up many of their oral legal practices. How both Roman and barbarian legal traditions influenced the development of Lombard law in the course of time can be shown in the significant field of social boundaries as, for example, the manumission of slaves. In his fundamental study on "Skavenrecht zwischen Antike und Mittelalter" Hermann Nehlsen analysed the clauses on slaves in Lombard laws.<sup>39</sup> However, he did not consider the problems of manumission. Rothari's edict, as usual, presents an archaic, oral version of manumission by taking the slave to a crossroads and letting him or her choose freely where to go. Liutprand added a variant, taken from the ecclesiastical sphere. Slaves could be set free by being conducted around an altar by a priest. Charters provide evidence that this practice was performed. The *gasindius* Taïdo, for example, in his last will, donated all his properties to several churches, reserving the usufruct to his wife for the time of her life. After her death, all the slaves were to be brought to a church in

<sup>38</sup> *Regestum Farfense* 2, no. 183, pp. 150 f. Cf. *Chronicon Farfense* 1, pp. 171 f. The judges cited Aistulf 12, a paragraph explicitly mentioning donations to churches being frequently challenged by relatives.

<sup>39</sup> Nehlsen, *Skavenrecht zwischen Antike und Mittelalter*, pp. 358 ff.



Bergamo and led around an altar. From then on they should be free *sicut a principibus huius gentis catholice Langubardorum in aedicti pagina est institutum*—"as the princes of this catholic gens of the Lombards had instituted in an edict".<sup>40</sup>

A man called Lucius was set free in exactly the same way. He could prove this with a charter. Years after his manumission, however, judges decided that he could not be free but should be a mere *aldius*, a half-free man, because the charter he owned dated from before the time when King Liutprand had issued the law allowing this practice.<sup>41</sup> What can be seen here, however, is how daily legal practice influenced the laws. The king had adapted the laws to a practice which was already being performed. This can be shown frequently with the Lombard laws. In 755, King Aistulf went even further in reforming the old regulations. From then on, slaves could be freed by simply expressing this in a charter.<sup>42</sup> This was a Roman tradition soon to be taken over by many Lombards in their wills. The afore-mentioned case of David offers a good example. Clerics and Romans had done this all the time.

As I began by stating, a major problem lies in the ways in which charters are transmitted. Only a small fraction of the Lombard documents from the period before 774 have survived as originals. Most are copies from later centuries, in various forms. Looking for ethnic terms in Lombard charters I came across the famous charter of 769 in which the vendor was stated to be living according to Gothic law.<sup>43</sup> This has been interpreted as the last piece of evidence for the survival of Ostrogoths in Lombard Italy, or as proof for Visigoths having come to Italy after 711. The charter has not survived as an original but only as a copy from the eleventh century, and includes a lot of later emendations, the profession of law being one of them. The editor, Schiaparelli, acknowledged some of the emendations but found no reason to doubt the clause containing the *professio legis*. But given that this is the only example predating 774, there is no reason why it should be authentic. There are only two other documents

<sup>40</sup> CDL 2/293 (774, May, Bergamo).

<sup>41</sup> CDL 1/81 (721-744?). Cf. Pohl-Resl, "Ethnische Bezeichnungen und Rechtsbekenntnisse", p. 170, with further literature.

<sup>42</sup> Aistulf 11. Cf. Pohl-Resl, "Ethnische Bezeichnungen und Rechtsbekenntnisse", pp. 165 f.

<sup>43</sup> CDL 2/228 (769, May 15, Leno). For the debate about this charter and the vendor, Staviles, see Pohl-Resl, "Ethnische Bezeichnungen und Rechtsbekenntnisse", pp. 167 ff., with further literature.

dating from before 774 with a similar passage. In both cases these too are only transmitted as copies from the eleventh or twelfth centuries, and both charters have already been proved to be forgeries.<sup>44</sup> The passages about professions of law fit perfectly into the time when the forgeries were produced. The eleventh century saw the climax of this clause in charters. It was not used in Lombard Italy before the Frankish invasion and became more and more frequent from the ninth century onwards.

In the southern parts of Lombard Italy, the duchies of Spoleto and Benevento, practically all charters dating from before 774 survive only as copies from the period around 1100. They are included in a series of manuscripts which might be called cartularies, but are also termed chronicles. Basically, they all incorporate various types of texts with the intention of telling the history of a monastery. In the narrative, charters are inserted, whether copied word for word, or only paraphrased. In analysing the charter material from the eighth century which is included in these manuscripts, we have to be aware of the reasons and circumstances which led to their composition.<sup>45</sup>

Merely to distinguish between forgeries and authentic documents, as has usually been done in diplomatic analysis, is not enough. We have to try to trace the strategies of the copyists, to reconstruct their "tools of remembering",<sup>46</sup> to borrow Patrick Geary's phrase, in order to be able to decide which parts of the texts are reliable copies from authentic documents, where we are confronted with emendations by the copyists, and in which cases the texts are outright forgeries. Even with the latter, the problem is a more complex one, as the cartulary of the monastery of San Vincenzo al Volturno shows. When the monastery was destroyed in the year 881 by the Saracens, all the documents were lost. After the reconstruction, the written documentation for land titles and all possessions had to be reconstructed as well—from memory alone.

How problematic the proper analysis of early medieval charters transmitted by manuscripts from the eleventh or twelfth centuries can be even if the author is said to be very reliable, becomes apparent in the case of Farfa. In a period of nearly 40 years around the

<sup>44</sup> CDL 1/63 (737, July, Cairate) and CDL 1/107 (753, March 3, Cremona). Cf. Pohl-Resl, "Ethnische Bezeichnungen und Rechtsbekenntnisse", p. 169.

<sup>45</sup> For the specific problems of this type of source see Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance*, pp. 81 ff.

<sup>46</sup> Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance*, p. 124.

year 1100, one of the monks, Gregory of Catino, sorted and copied the monastery's documents over and over again. In the introduction to his first collection, the so-called *Regestum Farfense*, he declared that all he wrote was the absolute truth; he had only emended the texts in cases of linguistic mistakes or passages which he could not read.<sup>47</sup>

Apart from the difficulty of reconstructing what emendation meant for Gregory, we are also confronted with his particular concept of truth. In the course of his lifetime, Gregory composed four different collections of charters, drawing on identical sources, but rearranging their order or using varying examples. In the last book he wrote, the "Liber Floriger", he repeated how carefully he treated his material. He said that he had always done so, but now, in his old age, he could tell what was true far better than he could when he was young.<sup>48</sup> One further example from Gregory of Catino will show what impact this could have on questions of ethnicity. All of his books start with a narration of Farfa's mythical and early history. One of the episodes included there is the destruction of the monastery by the Lombards when they conquered Italy. In his last work, the "Liber Floriger", Gregory retells this story, and adds some reflections. Considering the generous donations of Lombard dukes and noblemen throughout the Lombard period, he comes to the conclusion that not the Lombards but the Vandals must have destroyed the monastery. If we try to reconstruct social realities from early medieval charters only transmitted as copies from later centuries we should always bear in mind that we might be confronted with interpretations of the past rather than authentic representations.

As for the usage of explicit ethnic terms, the cartularies give a similar picture to the original charter material. For the eighth century, there are only a few mentions. The Romans and the Lombards seem to have found a common basis for legal practice which needed no further mention of ethnic distinction. Only with the arrival of the Franks does the situation change again and ethnic terms start becoming more important, as has been shown for the *professio legis* above.

Many Franks came to Italy as pilgrims and monks long before the territory was politically conquered. Duke Lupo of Spoleto, for example, together with his wife Hermelinda, founded a monastery at Rieti. The congregation should consist of women from the region or

<sup>47</sup> *Regestum Farfense* 2, p. 6.

<sup>48</sup> *Liber Floriger*, preface. Cf. *Chronicon Farfense* 1, pp. 121 ff.

from abroad, *undique Dominus adauferit, hoc est Langobardas vel Francas*.<sup>49</sup> Frankish abbots played significant roles when the monasteries were established or reformed in the eighth century.<sup>50</sup> The cartularies from Farfa or San Vincenzo prove the importance of Frankish monks in the second half of the eighth century. When Abbot Potho of San Vincenzo found himself in difficulties in the 780s ten of the monks had to swear an oath in his favour, five of whom were Franks and five Lombards. Interestingly, this story is transmitted not by the *Chronicon Vulturense* but by Frankish sources only.<sup>51</sup> In the *Regestum Farfense*, Farfa's charter collection, short lives of the abbots precede the copies of the charters issued during their reign. From the early eighth century onwards, beginning with Abbot Thomas, each abbot is characterised by his origin. First, the men came from Aquitaine, then from the end of the eighth century onwards they all were Franks, except for the Anglo-Saxon Guicpertus, *Anglorum exortus gente*. His tyrannical rule became so unbearable for the monks that they asked King Desiderius for help, who ousted the abbot.<sup>52</sup>

With the arrival of monks from the north then, ethnicity began to matter even in monasteries. Frankish rule introduced an increasing awareness of ethnic distinctions in Italy, where not only being a Frank, a Lombard or a Roman counted, but also, for instance, an Anglo-Saxon, Bavarian, Alaman or *theotiscus*.<sup>53</sup> From the ninth century onwards there is increasing evidence in charters that legal practice and ethnic identity were closely connected. Before 774 such evidence is relatively rare, and, more often than not, it does not add up to a clear overall picture of ethnic communities separated by strict legal barriers. In the last century of Lombard rule both Lombard and Roman legal practices existed, but the boundary between them, like so many frontiers, had become *incertaine* and *toujours perméable*.<sup>54</sup> It should not be taken to reflect any strong sense of ethnic identity.

<sup>49</sup> CDL 4/13 (751, April, Spoleto).

<sup>50</sup> For the early history of Farfa and San Vincenzo see Felten, "Zur Geschichte der Klöster Farfa und S. Vincenzo", pp. 1 ff., esp. on the role of Frankish monks and abbots *ibid.*, pp. 11 ff., and pp. 27 ff. respectively.

<sup>51</sup> The *Chronicon Vulturense* only gives the dates of Potho's reign. For the episode and its transmission in the *Codex Carolinus* as well as further literature see Felten, "Zur Geschichte der Klöster Farfa und San Vincenzo", pp. 29 ff., esp. 32.

<sup>52</sup> *Chronicon Farfense* 1, p. 155. For the Frankish abbots of Farfa cf. Felten, "Zur Geschichte der Klöster Farfa und San Vincenzo", pp. 11 ff.

<sup>53</sup> Jarnut, "Theotischis homines".

<sup>54</sup> Derrida, *Passions*, p. 13.

year 1100, one of the monks, Gregory of Catino, sorted and copied the monastery's documents over and over again. In the introduction to his first collection, the so-called *Regestum Farfense*, he declared that all he wrote was the absolute truth; he had only emended the texts in cases of linguistic mistakes or passages which he could not read.<sup>47</sup>

Apart from the difficulty of reconstructing what emendation meant for Gregory, we are also confronted with his particular concept of truth. In the course of his lifetime, Gregory composed four different collections of charters, drawing on identical sources, but rearranging their order or using varying examples. In the last book he wrote, the "Liber Floriger", he repeated how carefully he treated his material. He said that he had always done so, but now, in his old age, he could tell what was true far better than he could when he was young.<sup>48</sup> One further example from Gregory of Catino will show what impact this could have on questions of ethnicity. All of his books start with a narration of Farfa's mythical and early history. One of the episodes included there is the destruction of the monastery by the Lombards when they conquered Italy. In his last work, the "Liber Floriger", Gregory retells this story, and adds some reflections. Considering the generous donations of Lombard dukes and noblemen throughout the Lombard period, he comes to the conclusion that not the Lombards but the Vandals must have destroyed the monastery. If we try to reconstruct social realities from early medieval charters only transmitted as copies from later centuries we should always bear in mind that we might be confronted with interpretations of the past rather than authentic representations.

As for the usage of explicit ethnic terms, the cartularies give a similar picture to the original charter material. For the eighth century, there are only a few mentions. The Romans and the Lombards seem to have found a common basis for legal practice which needed no further mention of ethnic distinction. Only with the arrival of the Franks does the situation change again and ethnic terms start becoming more important, as has been shown for the *professio legis* above.

Many Franks came to Italy as pilgrims and monks long before the territory was politically conquered. Duke Lupo of Spoleto, for example, together with his wife Hermelinda, founded a monastery at Rieti. The congregation should consist of women from the region or

<sup>47</sup> *Regestum Farfense* 2, p. 6.

<sup>48</sup> *Liber Floriger*, preface. Cf. *Chronicon Farfense* 1, pp. 121 ff.

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<sup>53</sup> Jarnut, "Theotischis homines".

<sup>54</sup> Derrida, *Passions*, p. 13.

## LE ROYAUME DE VINITHARIUS: LE RÉCIT DE JORDANÈS ET LES DONNÉES ARCHÉOLOGIQUES

Michel Kazanski

Au début des années 70 du IV<sup>e</sup> s., les Huns et leurs alliés, les Alains, affrontent les Greuthunges-Ostrogoths. Ces derniers conduits par leurs rois Hermanaric puis Vitimir sont vaincus.<sup>1</sup> Une partie d'entre eux deviennent les sujets des Huns.<sup>2</sup> D'autres, sous la direction d'Alatheus et de Saphrac et accompagnés par quelques tribus d'Alains et de Huns, reculent vers l'Ouest en emmenant avec eux le jeune roi Vidéric, héritier d'Hermanaric.<sup>3</sup>

A en croire Jordanès, les Greuthunges-Ostrogoths demeurent, dans leur majorité, sur leur ancien territoire, donc dans la région au nord de la mer Noire et, bien que placés sous la domination des Huns, ils restent gouvernés par la dynastie des Amales:

*... quos constat morte Hermanarici regis sui, decessione a Vesegothis divisos, Hunnorum subditos ditioni, in eadem patria remorasse, Vinithario tamen Amalo principatus sui insignia retinente. ...*<sup>4</sup>

D'autres sources écrites confirment la présence des Goths à l'époque hunnique dans cette zone. Ainsi, dans les années 380, les Greuthunges, les Skires et les Carpodaces font une tentative pour échapper à la domination hunnique et essaient de traverser le Danube inférieur mais ils sont repoussés par l'armée romaine.<sup>5</sup> Les Ostrogoths, toujours selon Jordanès, mènent à la fin du IV<sup>e</sup> siècle et au début du V<sup>e</sup> s. trois guerres. La première, organisée par Vinitharius contre les Antes (incontestablement les Slaves pour Jordanès), se solde par un échec en raison de l'intervention, aux côtés des Antes, des Huns conduits par le roi Balamber ainsi que des Goths de Gesimund.<sup>6</sup> Deux autres guerres, contre les Suèves et les Gépides, s'avèrent plus heureuses.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ammien Marcellin 31, 3, 2, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Jordanes 246.

<sup>3</sup> Ammien Marcellin 31, 3, 3.

<sup>4</sup> Jordanes 246, 247.

<sup>5</sup> Zosime 4, 34, 38.

<sup>6</sup> Jordanes 245-250.

<sup>7</sup> Jordanes 250, 251.

Sur quel territoire se passent ces événements? Où se trouvent les centres du pouvoir chez les Ostrogoths à cette époque? Voici les questions que nous nous proposons d'examiner dans cette étude.

Le texte de Jordanès est sans équivoques: à l'époque hunnique les Ostrogoths restent sur leur ancien territoire (*in eadem patria*), c'est-à-dire dans la région de l'ancien royaume d'Hermanaric. Ce royaume, selon la logique du récit d'Ammien Marcellin, se localise en 375 entre les territoires des Alains-Tanaïtes du Don et ceux des Tervingues-Wisigoths du Dniestr.<sup>8</sup> Ainsi, les Ostrogoths à l'époque hunnique ont pour les voisins Huns de Balamber dans les steppes pontiques et les Vénèdes-Antes du roi Boz, considérés par Jordanès comme Slaves, dans la partie orientale de la zone forestière d'Europe de l'Est. En effet, seule la civilisation archéologique dite de Kiev, qui occupe le bassin du Dniepr en Ukraine septentrionale, en Biélorussie méridionale et dans les régions limitrophes de Russie occidentale peut être considérée actuellement comme appartenant incontestablement aux Slaves du IV<sup>e</sup> s.<sup>9</sup> Les Ostrogoths se divisent apparemment à cette époque en deux groupes: celui de Vinitharius d'une part, sans doute localisé au nord car on sait qu'il voisine avec les Antes-Slaves et d'autre part celui de Gesimund, plus lié avec les Huns et donc probablement plus méridional.<sup>10</sup>

En archéologie les Goths du IV<sup>e</sup> s. sont représentés par la civilisation de Černjahov, dont la partie orientale, entre le Dniestr et le Donetz, appartient sans aucune doute aux Ostrogoths. La date de disparition de cette culture (la fin du IV<sup>e</sup> ou la première moitié du V<sup>e</sup> s.) est actuellement le sujet d'une discussion. Cependant, nous avons montré ailleurs que certains ensembles clos dans la partie orientale de la culture de Černjahov appartiennent à la fin du IV<sup>e</sup>-première moitié du V<sup>e</sup> s.,<sup>11</sup> ce qui correspond aussi à l'opinion de M.B. Ščukin.<sup>12</sup> En effet, une série d'objets, connus notamment en Ukraine sur des sites de la partie orientale de Černjahov appartiennent, à en juger surtout d'après les parallèles existant en Europe centrale et septentrionale, au dernier quart du IV<sup>e</sup> s. et à la première moitié du V<sup>e</sup> s. (à notre avis, en l'état actuel des recherches, une datation plus précise n'est

<sup>8</sup> Ammien Marcellin 31, 3, 2, 3.

<sup>9</sup> Voir en dernier lieu Kazanski, "Les relations entre les Slaves et les Goths du III<sup>e</sup> au V<sup>e</sup> siècle. L'apport de l'archéologie", avec une bibliographie.

<sup>10</sup> Jordanes 247, 248.

<sup>11</sup> Kazanski, "Les Goths et les Huns".

<sup>12</sup> Ščukin, "Kvoprosy o verhnej hronologičeskoj granice černjahovskoj kul'tury".

guère possible). Nous pensons en particulier aux grandes fibules en arbalète à pied attaché, aux boucles d'oreilles à pendentif polyédrique, aux grandes et moyennes fibules à tête semi-circulaire et pied losangé, aux miroirs métalliques du type nomade, aux gobelets du type Högöm, à ceux de forme conique à pastilles bleues etc. (figg. 2.1-6, 12, 13, 15-18). D'autre part l'importation méditerranéenne consistant en amphores et en céramique sigillée confirme cette datation (figg. 2.14, 19).<sup>13</sup>

L'opinion selon laquelle la civilisation de Černjahov doit obligatoirement disparaître vers 375, avec l'arrivée des Huns, a pour fondement l'image de la migration hunnique, considérée comme une catastrophe à l'échelle européenne. Mais, aujourd'hui, il est clair qu'on a souvent surestimé l'ampleur du désastre provoqué en Europe orientale par cette invasion. On lui a attribué notamment la dévastation de la Crimée, la destruction des villes antiques du nord de la mer Noire et, bien entendu, la disparition totale de la civilisation de Černjahov elle-même. A la lumière des recherches actuelles, tout cela se révèle faux. Pour ce qui est de la civilisation de Černjahov, elle ne disparaît pas au nord de la mer Noire à la fin du IV<sup>e</sup> s., mais ses sites sont connus jusqu'à la première moitié du V<sup>e</sup> s. et ne portent pas à cette époque de traces de bouleversements importants. Et de fait, les Huns, comme d'ailleurs d'autres puissants peuples de la steppe, étaient intéressés par la présence de sédentaires qui leur étaient soumis et qui pouvaient leur fournir les produits agricoles nécessaires à leur subsistance. En outre, les guerriers des populations sédentaires assujetties—en particulier les guerriers goths—constituaient une excellente force auxiliaire et, avec leurs rois à leur tête, prenaient une part active aux guerres menées par les Huns.<sup>14</sup>

Même le moment de l'arrivée des Huns, qui a tellement impressionné les auteurs anciens, n'a pas laissé de témoignages archéologiques manifestes sur les sites de la culture de Černjahov. Certes, on peut supposer que des traces d'incendies sur plusieurs habitats de la phase finale de la culture ou l'enfouissement de trésors monétaires et d'objets en sont le reflet. Mais en fait, seule la nette diminution du nombre des sites de Černjahov à la fin du IV<sup>e</sup> s. et pendant la première moitié du V<sup>e</sup> s. témoigne réellement d'un changement.

<sup>13</sup> À propos de la chronologie de tous ces objets voir en dernier lieu Kazanski, "Les Goths et les Huns".

<sup>14</sup> Kazanski, "Les Goths et les Huns".

Les tombes de l'époque hunnique ont généralement été mises au jour en Ukraine sur des nécropoles utilisées dès l'époque antérieure telles sont celles de Ranževoe ou Gavrilovka dans la steppe, ou celles de Kompanijcy, Sumy-Sad, Danilova Balka, Žurovka ou Kosanovo dans la steppe forestière. Ces tombes, qui peuvent être des inhumations ou des incinérations, se distinguent uniquement par la présence d'objets datés de la fin du IV<sup>e</sup> s. et de la première moitié du V<sup>e</sup> s. On estime souvent que le nombre d'inhumations où les défunts sont placés la tête à l'Ouest augmente alors, mais il ne s'agit là que d'une supposition car l'absence de tout mobilier dans ce type de tombes empêche de les dater. A l'époque hunnique, les habitats de la culture de Černjahov, le plus souvent des villages non fortifiés, composés de plusieurs unités agricoles (Kamenka-Ančekrak, Kapulovka, Lugovoe etc.), conservent le même aspect qu'à l'époque antérieure. La culture matérielle de la civilisation de Černjahov ne montre pas non plus de changements notables. Quelques types d'objets d'origine étrangère, principalement nomade, mis au jour sur des sites de la culture, permettent de les dater avec certitude de cette époque. Nous pensons tout d'abord à la céramique alaine et aux parures décorées d'orfèvrerie polychrome, d'un style attribué aux nomades, retrouvées notamment sur l'habitat de Kapulovka dans la région du Dniepr inférieur (figg. 2.7, 11, 20). D'autres objets ont une provenance identique: citons les miroirs métalliques de Borohtjanskaja Ol'sanka et de Bizjukov Monastery (figg. 2.12, 13). La culture de Černjahov subit également à l'époque hunnique des influences apportées par de nouvelles vagues de populations venues du Nord. Certaines proviennent de la culture de Przeworsk comme en témoignent la tombe n° 86 de Kompanijcy (fig. 4)<sup>15</sup> ainsi que la céramique non tournée des niveaux stratigraphiques supérieurs de l'habitat fortifié de Bašmačka. D'autres doivent être attribuées à des porteurs de la culture de Wielbark (une civilisation germanique orientale située en Pologne). Elles se manifestent notamment par les fibules à bouton mises au jour dans le contexte de la fin du IV<sup>e</sup>-première moitié du V<sup>e</sup> s. en Crimée, et sur le Don, à Tanaïs (figg. 3.2 et 4.6).<sup>16</sup> On peut établir un lien entre cet apport allogène et la diminution de population observée à la même

<sup>15</sup> Voir à ce propos Kropotkin, "Denkmäler der Przeworsk-Kultur in der Westukraine und ihre Beziehungen zur Lipica- und Černjachov-Kultur", p. 191.

<sup>16</sup> Kazanski, "Contribution à l'étude des migrations des Goths à la fin du IV<sup>e</sup> et au V<sup>e</sup> siècles: le témoignage de l'archéologie".

époque par K. Godlowski en Pologne. Selon ce chercheur, les Barbares de cette région se seraient déplacés par tribus entières vers le Sud car ils auraient été attirés par l'activité militaire des Huns contre l'Empire et auraient été désireux de partager avec eux le butin de leurs victoires.<sup>17</sup>

Si le nombre des sites est sensiblement diminué, le territoire de leur diffusion demeure à peu près le même. On observe alors l'existence de groupes locaux: celui de la steppe et celui de la steppe forestière. Il est tentant de faire correspondre ces particularismes régionaux au témoignage de Jordanès mentionné ci-dessus. Le groupe de la steppe serait constitué par les Greuthunges-Ostrogoths de Gesimund, fidèles alliés des Huns, tandis que les Ostrogoths de Vinitharius, voisins des Antes-Slaves (civilisation de Kiev), occuperaient le territoire de la steppe forestière, dans la région du Dniepr.

En revanche, sur la frontière nord-ouest de la culture, en Volhynie, on remarque des changements notables. Les groupes archéologiques dits "de Volhynie" et "de Maslomecz", occupaient une position intermédiaire entre la civilisation de Wielbark qui appartenait aux Germains orientaux, Goths et Gépides en premier lieu, et celle de Černjahov aussi bien du point de vue de leur localisation que de l'évolution de leur culture. Le groupe de "sites de Volhynie", disparaît alors dans cette région. En revanche, des trésors de l'époque hunnique—Kačín, Boročicy et Laskov par exemple—y ont livré de très nombreuses monnaies romaines, des récipients en argent également importés de l'Empire ainsi que des accessoires du costume et des pièces de harnachement caractéristiques de l'aristocratie germanique orientale du début de l'époque des Grandes Migrations. Il s'agit à notre avis de trésors enfouis lors d'une période de troubles car la Volhynie semble se dépeupler: on n'y a mis au jour aucune nécropole et aucun habitat datés de cette époque. Aussi n'est-il pas exclu que ce bouleversement corresponde justement à l'affrontement entre Ostrogoths et Gépides dont Jordanès fait mention.<sup>18</sup> Certains chercheurs localisent des Gépides dans la région des Carpates,<sup>19</sup> mais en fait, on ne sait rien sur leur localisation entre 291, période où ils sont repoussés de

<sup>17</sup> Godlowski, *Przemiany kulturowe i osadnicze w południowej i środkowej Polsce w młodszy okresie przedrzymskim i w okresie rzymskim*, pp. 155-6; Godlowski, "Ziemia polskie w okresie wędrowek ludów", pp. 28-30.

<sup>18</sup> Jordanes 250; Kazanski, "Les Goths et les Huns".

<sup>19</sup> Par exemple Nemeth, "Frühgépidsche Gräberfunde an der oberen Theiss"; Bona, *Das Hunnenreich*, p. 136.

Transylvanie par les Goths, et 455, quand ils occupent la partie orientale du bassin des Carpates. Les Gépides reçoivent ce territoire—y compris la Transylvanie et la Transcarpatie—après la chute de “l’empire” d’Attila, ce qui plaiderait plutôt en faveur du fait qu’auparavant, ils habitaient ailleurs.

Les Ostrogoths qui restent en Ukraine ne semblent pas avoir souffert. Le matériel archéologique montre de toute évidence que ces Goths conservent à l’époque hunnique un artisanat, une agriculture et un commerce aussi développés qu’auparavant. Manifestement, les Huns ont, comme nous le disions, cherché à préserver à leur périphérie des sédentaires, capables de leur fournir des produits agricoles et des troupes auxiliaires. On peut en conclure que les Ostrogoths constituant la population de la culture de Černjahov en Ukraine formaient un ou deux royaumes-vassaux des Huns, ce que confirmeraient d’ailleurs les sources écrites.

Où se trouvaient les centres du pouvoir du royaume ostrogothique à l’époque hunnique? L’archéologie peut-elle contribuer à éclaircir cette question? Pour répondre à cela, il faut examiner les antiquités de “l’empire” hunnique sur une grande échelle géographique.

Chez les Barbares d’Europe, à l’époque romaine et à celle des Grandes Migrations, on voit apparaître de grandes unions tribales, parfois polyethniques, où les liens politiques et militaires l’emportent sur les liens tribaux et sur ceux de parenté. Ces unions (celles des Huns, des Alains, des Goths, des Alamans, des Burgondes ou des Vandales par exemple), essentiellement à vocation militaire, se caractérisent par l’importance croissante d’une aristocratie guerrière, alors qu’habituellement, en temps de paix, la place des chefs de guerre est insignifiante dans les sociétés primitives. La dynastie royale sacralisée, dont la fonction militaire devient prépondérante, joue un rôle considérable dans la consolidation de ces unions ainsi que dans leur transformation en peuples médiévaux, bien que parfois ces dynasties soient absentes (chez les Alamans, les Saxons continentaux, les Slaves et les Bavarois par exemple).<sup>20</sup> Dans la fédération hunnique, les peuples barbares sédentaires possèdent leur propre aristocratie et, tout en faisant partie de “l’empire” des Huns, gardent une large autonomie. Les textes ont conservé les noms des chefs de ces peuples. Mentionnons par exemple le roi des Slaves-Antes Boz, le roi gépide

<sup>20</sup> Wolfram, “Le genre de l’*Origo gentis*”; Pohl, “Conceptions of ethnicity in early medieval studies”.

Ardarich ou une série de rois ostrogothiques de la dynastie des Amales. L’organisation “pyramidale” de la fédération hunnique illustre à notre avis la notion de chefferie (*chieftdom*), élaborée par les ethnologues et les protohistoriens. Une chefferie se caractérise avant tout par la présence d’un chef, souvent sacralisé, qui a des fonctions culturelles, militaires, administratives et économiques (notamment la réception et la redistribution des dons des autres membres de la communauté). Ce chef est à la tête d’une hiérarchie sociale fondée sur l’inégalité des lignées de familles et de clans. On ne peut en aucun cas considérer qu’il s’agit d’un système étatique, car la bureaucratie, les lois écrites obligatoires pour tous ainsi que les structures permanentes pour les appliquer (l’armée, la police et les tribunaux par exemple) sont absentes. L’ordre repose sur la tradition, le droit coutumier, le prestige du chef et de son clan. Une chefferie peut correspondre à une tribu, c’est-à-dire à un groupe dont les clans ou les communautés qui la composent se considèrent comme parents à cause d’une origine commune, souvent imaginaire d’ailleurs. Habituellement, une tribu possède un territoire déterminé—même chez les nomades—et parle une même langue. Sa religion est partagée par tous ses membres sans exception et certaines institutions comme la réunion tribale, les sanctuaires, le conseil des notables lui sont communes. Il existe des chefferies “complexes” lorsqu’autour d’une chefferie centrale ayant un chef suprême se forment plusieurs chefferies périphériques subordonnées. C’est justement le cas de la fédération hunnique. L’évolution ultime d’une chefferie “complexe” est une formation socio-politique appelée parfois “royaume barbare”, dirigée par un roi sacralisé tel que le fut Attila. Dans un royaume de ce type, les divisions tribales disparaissent peu à peu et les chefs locaux sont progressivement remplacés par les représentants du roi, issus de son entourage immédiat, souvent d’origine étrangère et qui n’appartiennent donc pas à l’ancienne aristocratie tribale. Ce ne sont pas encore de vrais États car la loi écrite codifiée et les structures nécessaires pour les appliquer n’existent toujours pas, tandis que le prestige personnel du roi ainsi que la tradition et les coutumes jouent un grand rôle dans la vie de la société.<sup>21</sup>

Parmi les indices archéologiques qui permettent de déterminer l’existence d’une chefferie, citons les témoignages de stratification sociale dans les pratiques funéraires, c’est-à-dire la présence de tombes

<sup>21</sup> Pour la bibliographie sur cette question voir: Kazanski, “Les relations entre les Slaves et les Goths du III<sup>e</sup> au V<sup>e</sup> siècle. L’apport de l’archéologie”, pp. 12-14.

privilegiées. L'archéologie confirme l'existence d'une "chefferie complexe" dans "l'empire hunnique". Ainsi, les concentrations de tombes aristocratiques, de trésors de monnaies en or et d'objets de luxe isolés, à la périphérie de "l'empire" hunnique, montrent, comme Gy. László l'avait supposé dès 1951,<sup>22</sup> l'existence de plusieurs royaumes barbares satellites des Huns.

L'un de ces royaumes se localise probablement en Transylvanie, en Transcarpatie et dans la partie est de la plaine hongroise, comme en témoignent de riches découvertes telles que Simleul-Silvaniei/Szilágyosmlyó, Rebrin/Nagy-Mihály/Veliki Mihajlovcy, Břestov, etc. (figg. 1/1.18, 20, 57). Cette zone était occupée, au moins en partie, par un groupe sarmate à fort composant germanique.<sup>23</sup> Une autre série de trésors de l'époque hunnique a été retrouvée en Volhynie et dans les régions limitrophes de la Pologne à Kačín, Laskov, Boročicy et Zamosc/Zamosťe. On peut y associer le trésor monétaire de Metelin (figg. 1/1.13-16, 30). Comme nous l'avons dit plus haut, nous considérons ces découvertes comme appartenant au royaume gépide. Deux autres séries de découvertes "princières" ont été effectuées sur le territoire de la culture germanique de Przeworsk, vraisemblablement inclus à l'intérieur de "l'empire" hunnique. Ainsi, à Jakuszowice, à côté d'un grand habitat fortifié, sans doute une résidence princière, on a mis au jour la tombe d'un chef militaire, avec un mobilier de caractère hunnique. Le trésor de *solidi* de Witow (fig. 1/1.32) provient de la même région. Un autre groupe de tombes et de trésors aristocratiques a été mis au jour, toujours dans le cadre de cette culture, en Silésie: à Hochricht/Jedrzychowice, Zagorzyn, Lugi, Redzin, Kozminek (figg. 1/1.29, 35, 37, 38). La présence de chaudrons hunniques et d'autres objets caractéristiques des nomades à Jakuszowice, Hochricht/Jedrzychowice et Opawa témoigne des contacts qu'entretenait la population de ce territoire avec les Huns. En Bohême, occupée à cette époque par les Germains dits de l'Elbe (le groupe archéologique Vinárice), mentionnons également une série de riches tombes de l'époque hunnique: Briža, Mecholupy, Prague-Karlin, Uherce (figg. 1/1.39-42).<sup>24</sup> Sur la rive nord du Danube, occupée par les Suèves,<sup>25</sup> le trésor moné-

<sup>22</sup> László, "The significance of the Hun golden bow".

<sup>23</sup> Istvanovits and Kulcsar, "Some archaeological data on the history of the Carpathian basin in the 4th-5th centuries".

<sup>24</sup> Zeman, "Böhmen im 5. und 6. Jahrhundert".

<sup>25</sup> Tejral, "Zur Chronologie der frühen Völkerwanderungszeit im mittleren Donauraum", pp. 228-231, et id., "Einige Bemerkungen zur Chronologie der späten römischen Kaiserzeit in Mitteleuropa"; Pieta, "Slowakei im 5. Jahrhundert".

taire de Bina et peut-être la tombe de Charvaty témoigneraient de la présence possible d'un royaume vassal (figg. 1/1.17, 61). En revanche, on ne peut déterminer si les découvertes effectuées plus à l'Ouest, en Autriche, notamment à Untersiebenbrunn, Kronberg ou Laa (figg. 1/1.43, 45, 47) doivent être attribuées à des vassaux des Huns ou à des fédérés de l'empire romain. Enfin, aux confins orientaux de "l'empire" hunnique, mentionnons les sites princiers du Caucase du Nord, tels Lermontovskaja Skala ou Brut (figg. 1/1.11, 12), laissés par les chefs des tribus locales alaines, sans doute "vassales" des Huns.<sup>26</sup> On doit y associer d'autres riches découvertes sur des nécropoles caucasiennes comme Rutha, Giljac ou Iragi, qui ne peuvent cependant être considérées comme "princières". Certains objets découverts dans le Caucase, en particulier les chaudrons (à Habaz) ou les selles à appliques métalliques, témoignent de l'influence directe des Huns. Il n'est pas exclu que quelques découvertes isolées effectuées aux confins des steppes comme celles de Kruglica entre l'Oka et le Don supérieur, de Coșoveni et de Velț en Roumanie, ou encore de Sinjavka à l'embouchure du Don signalent elles aussi, l'existence de petits royaumes clients des Huns (figg. 1/1.1, 5, 21). Il nous reste à mentionner le cas du royaume du Bosphore Cimmérien, en Crimée orientale et sur la péninsule de Taman (figg. 1/1.9, 10), dont l'aristocratie s'enrichit visiblement à l'époque hunnique, si l'on en juge d'après le mobilier exceptionnel des tombes privilégiées de cette région.<sup>27</sup> Cependant on ne possède pas de preuve que le royaume du Bosphore Cimmérien ait été vraiment soumis aux Huns.

Dans la zone de la culture gothique de Černjahov, on observe à l'époque hunnique trois groupes de sites "princières". Le premier, en Munténie est représenté par le célèbre trésor de Petrossa (Pietroasa) et par une tombe aristocratique à Chiojd (figg. 1/1.27, 28). Le second, en Moldavie, correspond à la tombe princière de Concesti et à une série de trésors monétaires en or retrouvés à Kirileny, Kremenčuk, Malkoč et Kichenev II (figg. 1/1.22-26). Enfin, un troisième groupe de sites, qui nous intéresse ici plus spécialement, est attesté dans la

<sup>26</sup> Runič, "Zahoronenie voždja epohi rannego srednevekov'a iz Kislovodskoj kotloviny"; Gabuev, "Epoca delle Grandi Migrazioni etniche IV-V sec. d. C."

<sup>27</sup> Zaseckaja, "Bosporskie sklepy gunnskoj epohi kak hronologičeskij etalon dlja datirovki pamjatnikov vostočnoevropejskikh stepej" et id., "Materialy bosporskogo nekropolja vtoroj poloviny IV-pervoj poloviny V v. n.e."; Tejral, "Zur Chronologie und Deutung der südöstlichen Kulturelemente in der frühen Völkerwanderungszeit Mitteleuropas"; Damm, "Goldschmiedarbeiten der Völkerwanderungszeit aus dem nördlichen Schwarzmeergebiet. Katalog der Sammlung Diergardt 2".



steppe forestière du Dniepr-rive gauche (figg. 1/2.3-6). Il s'agit d'une série de tombes et de trésors de l'époque hunnique qui ne peuvent appartenir qu'à une population sédentaire. Rappelons que la région fait partie intégrante de la civilisation de Černjahov<sup>28</sup> et que certaines tombes témoignent de l'existence d'une population de Černjahov dans la région du Dniepr-rive gauche à l'époque hunnique (figg. 1/2.1, 2).<sup>29</sup> Nous avons écrit déjà à plusieurs reprises que l'umbo de bouclier du type Malacšty/Zieling I3, provenant de la tombe 86 de Kompanijcy (fig. 4.1), a été attesté uniquement dans des tombes datables de l'époque des Grandes Migrations (par ex. Kertch, deux tombes 24.6.1904 et Ovoščnaja 1954).<sup>30</sup> La tombe 4 de la nécropole Sumy-Sad (figg. 5.2-4) contenait une plaque-boucle avec un arduillon aplati, qui apparaît à l'époque romaine tardive et à celle des Grandes Migrations (fig. 5.3).<sup>31</sup> Elle contenait aussi une boucle d'oreilles à pendentif polyédrique de l'époque des Grandes Migrations (fig. 5.3).<sup>32</sup> Il est bien possible que la tombe voisine 5 de Sumy-Sad (fig. 5.5-27) appartienne, elle aussi, à l'époque hunnique. En effet, les petites fibules à tête semi-circulaire et pied losangé provenant de cette sépulture possèdent 5 boutons sur la tête (figg. 5.10, 11),<sup>33</sup> particularité attestée seulement jusqu'aujourd'hui sur les fibules datables à partir du V<sup>e</sup> siècle.<sup>34</sup> La pièce la plus ancienne provient du trésor Zamosc, daté de la période D2 (années 410-440) grâce à la présence d'une plaque-boucle et d'un ferret.<sup>35</sup>

Un trésor a été mis au jour à Žigajlovka (district de Trostjanec, de la province de Sumy, Ukraine), au bord de la rivière Boromlja. Il se compose de deux cruches en argent de fabrication byzantine de l'extrême fin du IV<sup>e</sup> s. ou du tout début du V<sup>e</sup>.<sup>36</sup> La découverte a été interprétée comme une partie du mobilier d'une tombe princière

<sup>28</sup> Voir en dernier lieu Žurko, "Pamjatniki černjahovskoj kul'tury v lesostepnom Dneprovskom Levoberež'e".

<sup>29</sup> Kazanski, "Les Goths et les Huns".

<sup>30</sup> Kazanski, "Les Goths et les Huns", p. 196.

<sup>31</sup> Nous les avons vues dans le mobilier de l'Europe centrale, à Kostelec, Jakuszowice et Opatow, que nous avons pu examiner grâce à l'amabilité des Messieurs Jaroslav Tejral et Kazimierz Godlowski.

<sup>32</sup> Kazanski, "Les Goths et les Huns", p. 197.

<sup>33</sup> Nekrasova, "Ohoronni rozkopki černjahiv'skogo mogil'nika poblizu M. Sumy", figg. 4, 3, 4.

<sup>34</sup> Ambroz, *Fibuly juga evropejskoj casti SSSR*, p. 113.

<sup>35</sup> Tejral, "Zur Chronologie der frühen Völkerwanderungszeit im mittleren Donauraum", pp. 274, 275, figg. 9, 6, 7.

<sup>36</sup> Pucko, "Serebrjanye kuvčiny iz Žigajlovki".

nomade.<sup>37</sup> Or l'argenterie est extrêmement rare dans les tombes nomades de l'époque hunnique.<sup>38</sup> En fait on ne peut citer que la tombe de Pavlovka-Sulin dans la région du Don.<sup>39</sup> Ainsi, il est préférable de considérer cette découverte comme le trésor ou la tombe d'un chef de peuple sédentaire. La présence de récipients en argent dans des tombes de chefs germaniques est effectivement notoire depuis l'époque romaine.

Un autre trésor, cette fois-ci incontestablement germanique, a été découvert en 1873 près de Nežin (province de Tchernigov, Ukraine). Le trésor se composait d'un grand nombre de monnaies romaines du I<sup>er</sup> II<sup>e</sup> s. (1312 ex. recensés), d'un anneau en fil de bronze et de deux fibules en argent couvertes de tôle d'or, à tête ovale et pied losangé de style polychrome (figg. 3, 1).<sup>40</sup> Ces fibules sont caractéristiques du costume des princesses germaniques orientales et appartiennent à l'époque hunnique. En effet, les grandes fibules à pied losangé élargi à l'extrémité sont connues à Simleul-Silvanici/Szilágysomlyó, à Kozminék et à Untersiebenbrunn.<sup>41</sup> La tête ovale de la fibule rappelle celle provenant de la nécropole de type Černjahov à Izvorul (Munthenie)<sup>42</sup> ou encore la fibule du trésor Zamosc en Pologne orientale.<sup>43</sup>

Un trésor contenant 201 monnaies romaines en or (de 375-392 à 450-457) et deux bracelets en or aux extrémités élargies a été découvert à Rublevka (district de Kotelva, province de Poltava, Ukraine).<sup>44</sup> Ce trésor appartient sans le moindre doute à une population sédentaire car il est notoire que les nomades, en principe, n'en laissent pas. Les bracelets en or aux extrémités élargies sont d'ailleurs bien connus dans les tombes princières germaniques du IV<sup>e</sup>-V<sup>e</sup> s.<sup>45</sup> Rappelons que les monnaies de la fin du IV<sup>e</sup> et de la première moitié du V<sup>e</sup> s. et spécialement celles en or sont extrêmement rares dans la partie orientale de la zone de Černjahov. On ne peut guère citer

<sup>37</sup> Pucko, "Serebrjanye kuvčiny iz Žigajlovki", p. 88.

<sup>38</sup> À propos de ces tombes voir en dernier lieu Zaseckaja, *Kul'tura kočevnikov južnorusskikh stepej v gunn'skaju epohu (konec IV-V vv.)*.

<sup>39</sup> "Protokoly zasėdanij"; Kropotkin, *Rimskie importnye izdelija v Vostočnoj Evrope*, n° 733, fig. 55.

<sup>40</sup> Kropotkin, *Klady rimskih monet na territorii SSSR*, n° 1297; Kropotkin, *Rimskie importnye izdelija v Vostočnoj Evrope*, n° 1109.

<sup>41</sup> Ambroz, *Fibuly juga evropejskoj casti SSSR*, p. 86.

<sup>42</sup> Mitrea and Preda, *Necropole din secolul al IV-lea s.n. în Muntenia*, figg. 183, 1.

<sup>43</sup> Godlowski, "Zakonczienė", figg. 220, 1, 3.

<sup>44</sup> Kropotkin, *Klady rimskih monet na territorii SSSR*, n° 813.

<sup>45</sup> Werner, "Der goldene Arming des Frankenkönigs Childerich und die germanischen Handgelenkringe der jüngeren Kaiserzeit".

comme exemples que les monnaies d'Honorius, de Gratien et de Théodose Ier découvertes à Beleluja<sup>46</sup> une monnaie de Théodose Ier découverte à Mežigorcy,<sup>47</sup> une monnaie de Théodose Ier à Ostrog,<sup>48</sup> une monnaie d'Eudoxie la Jeune à Kiev,<sup>49</sup> et enfin une monnaie de Théodose Ier à Poltava.<sup>50</sup>

Enfin deux découvertes funéraires appartiennent sans aucune doute au même groupe des sites. Toutes deux ont été faites près du village Bol'koj Kamenec (district de Sudža, région de Kursk, Russie), au bord de la rivière Sudža. La première date de 1918-1919. Les paysans ont découvert avec les ossements une cruche byzantine en argent de la fin du IV<sup>e</sup> ou du début du V<sup>e</sup> s., un récipient en argent à une anse (seule l'anse est conservée), une phalère en argent, un seau byzantin en bronze doré, des plaques-appliques géométriques en or (fig. 3.2), un torque en or à décor cloisonné (non conservé), deux bracelets (non conservés), une bague en or (non conservée), un gobelet et un plat en verre (non conservés). L'autre tombe a été mise au jour en 1927, à peu près à 800 m. de la première. Le mobilier a été découvert par des enfants et se compose d'un torque en or à décor cloisonné (fig. 3.4), de deux bracelets en chaîne d'or avec des têtes d'animaux opposées (fig. 3.5), et d'une chaîne en or (fig. 3.3).<sup>51</sup> L.A. Maculevič a bien identifié ces deux tombes comme appartenant à l'époque hunnique (400 ap. J.C. environ) et a précisé quels étaient les parallèles pour le mobilier. Ajoutons que ces deux tombes proviennent à notre avis d'une population sédentaire. Comme nous l'avons déjà indiqué, les récipients en argent sont très peu connus dans les tombes de nomades et, au contraire, bien représentés dans des tombes de chefs germaniques. Quand aux bracelets à têtes animales opposées, ils sont, eux aussi caractéristiques de bijoux de la population sédentaire.<sup>52</sup> En revanche ils sont pratiquement inconnus

<sup>46</sup> Kropotkin, *Klady rimskih monet na territorii SSSR*, n° 871-872.

<sup>47</sup> Kropotkin, *Klady rimskih monet na territorii SSSR*, n° 909.

<sup>48</sup> Kropotkin, *Klady rimskih monet na territorii SSSR*, n° 855.

<sup>49</sup> Kropotkin, *Klady rimskih monet na territorii SSSR*, n° 472.

<sup>50</sup> Kropotkin, *Klady rimskih monet na territorii SSSR*, n° 810.

<sup>51</sup> Maculevič, *Pogrebenie varvorskogo knjazja v Vostočnoj Evropie. Novye nahodki v verhov'j reki Sudži*.

<sup>52</sup> Par ex. Bakodpuszta, Sennaja/Phanagorie, Tournai, Simleul-Silvaniei/Szilágyosomlyó, Regöly, Kertich, la région de Kiev, les découvertes faites en Picardie etc., voir Maculevič, *Pogrebenie varvorskogo knjazja v Vostočnoj Evropie. Novye nahodki v verhov'j reki Sudži*, pp. 70-73; Kiss, "Die Skiren im Karpatenbecken, ihre Wohnsitze und ihre materielle Hinterlassenschaft", figg. 5.3, 8, 17; Zaseckaja, *Kul'tura kočevnikov južnorusskich stepoj v gunnskiju epohu (koniec IV-V vv.)*, pl. 18, 1; Damm, "Goldschmiedarbeiten

chez les nomades. Il est bien possible que ces bracelets aient été fabriqués dans des ateliers byzantins pour l'aristocratie barbare.<sup>53</sup> On connaît chez les nomades des torques à têtes animales (Karjazskoe-Tatarka en Russie méridionale, et Kara-Agač au Kazakhstan), mais il semble qu'ils soient, en tout cas en Russie méridionale postérieurs à l'époque hunnique. En effet, la tombe de Tatarka a livré, outre le torque, une plaque-boucle rigide apparentée au type dit "méditerranéen" et bien daté du VI<sup>e</sup> s. en Europe occidentale.<sup>54</sup> Le torque en or massif à médaillon cloisonné a son parallèle le plus proche dans le monde germanique: c'est le torque de Rausern/Redzin en Silésie.<sup>55</sup> D'autre part le motif cloisonné sur le médaillon est similaire à ceux des récipients de l'époque hunnique provenant de Szeged-Nagyazékaos (découverte hunnique) en Hongrie et du trésor germanique de Simleul-Silvaniei/Szilágyosomlyó en Roumanie.<sup>56</sup> Les plaques-appliques en or provenant de la tombe du 1918-1919 sont aussi bien connues dans des tombes des nomades que dans des tombes de l'aristocratie à dominante gréco-sarmate du Bosphore Cimmérien<sup>57</sup> et dans des sépultures "princières" à caractère germanique (par ex. à Airan, Hochfelden, Regöly, Kudiat-Zateur, Bakodpuszta, Unterniebrunn, Sinjavka).

De la même région provient encore une découverte funéraire, effectuée en 1849 dans le district d'Obojan, dont on connaît une coupe en verre, un torque à jonc lisse et des plaques-appliques en or.<sup>58</sup> Malheureusement ce mobilier ne permet aucune conclusion sur l'attribution de la sépulture, car des objets semblables sont aussi bien connus chez les nomades que chez les sédentaires.

En 1978, dans le cadre des travaux de la Mission archéologique

der Völkerwanderungszeit aus dem nördlichen Schwarzmeergebiet. Katalog der Sammlung Diergardt 2", n° 64, 65, comparer également les pendentifs zoomorphes d'Apahida, voir Kiss, "Über ein Insigne des Gepidenkönigs Omhars von Apahida (Siebenbürgen)".

<sup>53</sup> Sur leur origine voir Arrhenius, "Die Schraube als Statussymbol. Zum Technologietransfer zwischen Römern und Germanen", pp. 121-123.

<sup>54</sup> Zaseckaja, *Kul'tura kočevnikov južnorusskich stepoj v gunnskiju epohu (koniec IV-V vv.)*, pl. 17, 11.

<sup>55</sup> Maculevič, *Pogrebenie varvorskogo knjazja v Vostočnoj Evropie. Novye nahodki v verhov'j reki Sudži*, pp. 64-5; Godlewski, "Kultura przeworska", pp. 131-2, fig. 34.

<sup>56</sup> Comparer Bóna, *Das Hunnenreich*, fig. 26.1, pl. 7.

<sup>57</sup> Voir de nombreux exemples dans Damm, "Goldschmiedarbeiten der Völkerwanderungszeit aus dem nördlichen Schwarzmeergebiet. Katalog der Sammlung Diergardt 2", Zaseckaja, "Materialy bosporanskogo nekropolja vtoroj poloviny IV-pervoj poloviny V v. n.e.".

<sup>58</sup> Maculevič, *Pogrebenie varvorskogo knjazja v Vostočnoj Evropie. Novye nahodki v verhov'j reki Sudži*, pp. 79-86.

du Dniepr-rive gauche (Institut d'Archéologie, Leningrad) sous la direction d'E.A. Goriunov, nous avons pu effectuer une prospection dans le lieu de ces découvertes. Bien entendu, il était impossible en 1978 d'établir la position topographique exacte des tombes découvertes en 1918-1927. Cependant notre mission a pu identifier l'endroit de découverte de ces tombes et, grâce à la prospection sur le terrain, constater la présence dans cet secteur de la céramique caractéristique de la culture de Černjahov—signe incontestable d'existence d'un habitat.

Nous l'avons vu, la civilisation de Černjahov est attestée à l'époque hunnique. Aussi peut-on mettre en liaison directe ces découvertes avec la population germanique et non germanique de l'ancienne fédération gothique demeurée sur place sous la domination des Huns.<sup>59</sup>

Il est donc possible que l'un des centres politiques des Ostrogoths se soit situé dans la steppe forestière du Dniepr-rive gauche, c'est à dire sur le territoire de la civilisation de Černjahov, au voisinage direct des terres des Vénèdes-Antes, représentés archéologiquement par la civilisation de Kiev. La date des découvertes principales, l'époque hunnique, englobe l'époque de Vinitharius et de Balamber. Certaines découvertes, comme celle de Rublevka, appartiennent à la première moitié du V<sup>e</sup> s. Cela montrerait la persistance d'un royaume ostrogothique dans cette région jusqu'au départ des Ostrogoths vers la Pannonie après la bataille de Nedao en 454/455 et "le partage du monde" hunnique entre les Germains vainqueurs. C'est seulement à partir de cette date que Jordanès et d'autres auteurs attestent d'une façon irrévocable le séjour des Ostrogoths en tant que peuple sur le Danube moyen.

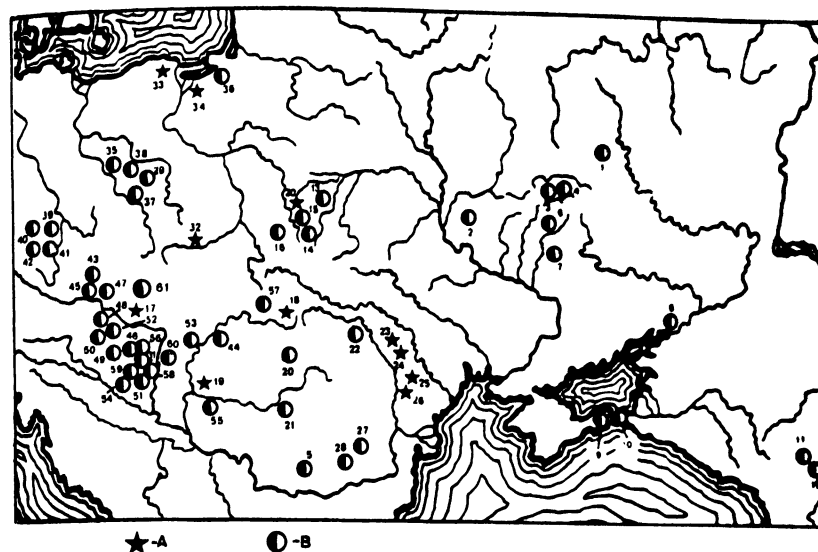


Fig. 1.1. Les trésors de monnaies en or de la fin du IV<sup>e</sup>-première moitié du V<sup>e</sup> s. dans le Barbaricum (A); les sites (tombes, trésors d'objets et de monnaies, découvertes isolées) des chefs barbares non hunniques (horizon Untersiebenbrunn-Kačín-Sinjavka) (B).

1: Kruglica (Poršnino), 2: Nežin, 3: Bol'soj Kamenec, 4: district d'Obojan, découverte de 1849, 5: Coșoveni, 6: Žigajlovka, 7: Rublevka, 8: Sinjavka, 9: Kertch, 10: Fontal/Ahtanizovskaja, 11: Lermontovskaja Skala, 12: Brut, 13: Kačín, 14: Laskov, 15: Boročicy, 16: Zamosc (Zamost'e), 17: Bina, 18: Brestov, 19: Szikancs, 20: Simleul-Silvaniei (Szilágysomlyó), 21: Velč, 22: Concești, 23: Kirileny, 24: Kremenčuk; 25: Malkoč, 26: Kichenev' II, 27: Chiojd, 28: Pietroasa (Petrossa), 29: Zagorzyn, 30: Metelin, 31: Szabadbattyán, 32: Witow, 33: Strabienino, 34: Trabki, 35: Lugi, 36: Hammersdorf (Moteczno), 37: Redzin (Raufern), 38: Kozminek, 39: Briža, 40: Mecholupy, 41: Prague-Karlin, 42: Uherce, 43: Laa-Thaya, 44: Kistokaj, 45: Untersiebenbrunn, 46: Keszthely-Ziegelei, 47: Kronberg, 48: Lébény, 49: Lengyeltóti, 50: Rábapordány, 51: Nagydorog, 52: Csorna, 53: Maklar, 54: Kővágószőlős, 55: Perjam, 56: Papkeszi, 57: Rebrin (Nagy-Mihály, Veliki Mihajlovcy), 58: Györkény, 59: Regöly, 60: Szömör, 61: Charvaty.

Note: compte tenu de l'échelle de la carte, la localisation des sites archéologiques est souvent approximative. L'attribution des tombes de chefs de Fontal/Ahtanizovskaja, Laa-Thaya, Keszthely-Ziegelei, Lébény, Lengyeltóti, district d'Obojan, découverte de 1849 à la population non hunnique n'est pas certaine.

<sup>59</sup> Kazanski, "Les Goths et les Huns".

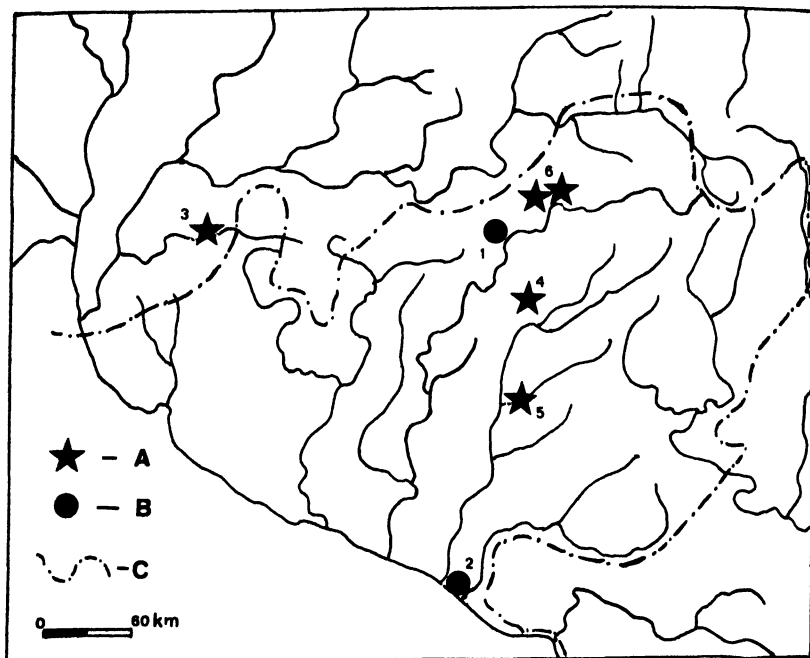


Fig. 1.2. Les sites germaniques de la région du Dniepr-rive gauche à l'époque hunnique. A: les tombes et les trésors "princiers", B: les découvertes appartenant à la phase finale de la civilisation de Černjahov, C: la frontière de la civilisation de Černjahov dans la région du Dniepr-rive gauche en l'état actuel des recherches (d'après Žurko, 'Pamjatniki černjahovskoj kul'tury').

1: Sumy-Sad, 2: Kompanijcy, 3: Nežin, 4: Žigajlovka, 5: Rublevka, 6: Bol'šoj Kameneč.

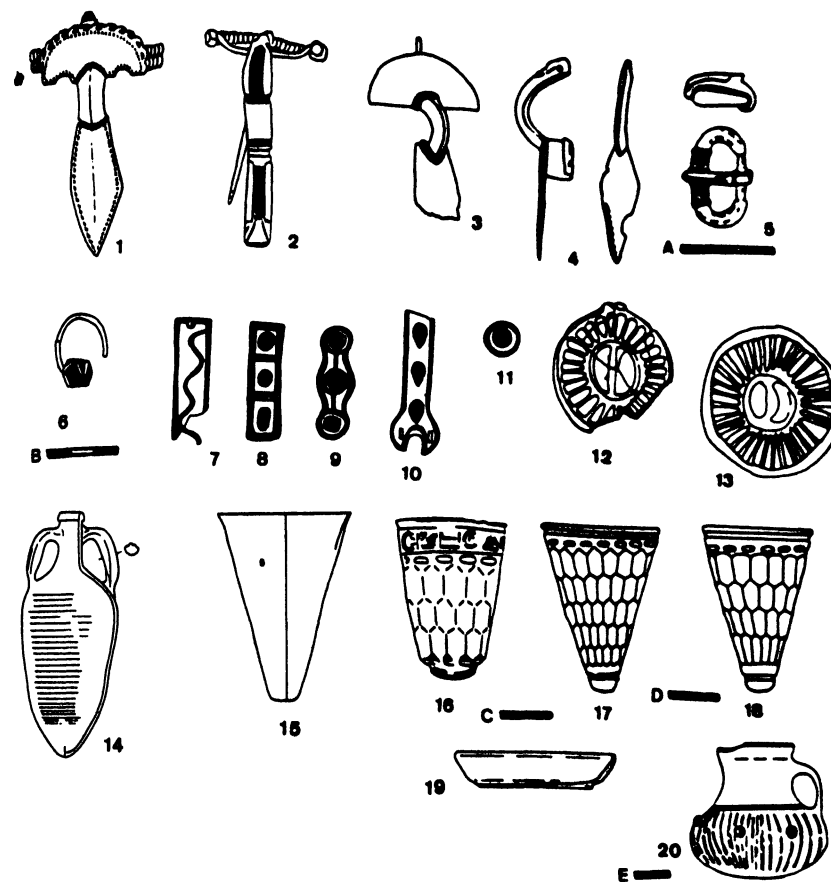


Fig. 2. Les fossiles - directeurs de l'époque hunnique dans la zone de la culture de Černjahov en Ukraine.

1, 16: Ranževoe, tombe 14; 2, 18: Gavrilovka, tombe 5, 3, 13: Bizjukov Monastyř (Krasnyj Majak), 4: Kiev, 5, 12: Borohťanskaja Ol'sanka, 6-11, 20: Kapulovka, 14, 19: Kamenka-Ančekrak, 15: Danilova Balka, tombe 17 de 1978, 17: Ranževoe, tombe 12.

Or, argent, bronze, fer, verre, céramique, grenats.

Echelle: a - 3, 5, 12, 13, b - 1, 2, c - 16, 17, d - 18, e - 19, 20, 4, 6-11, 14, 15 - sans échelle. 1, 2: d'après Tejral, "Fremde Einflüsse und kulturelle Veränderung nördlich der mittleren Donau am Beginn der Völkerwanderung".

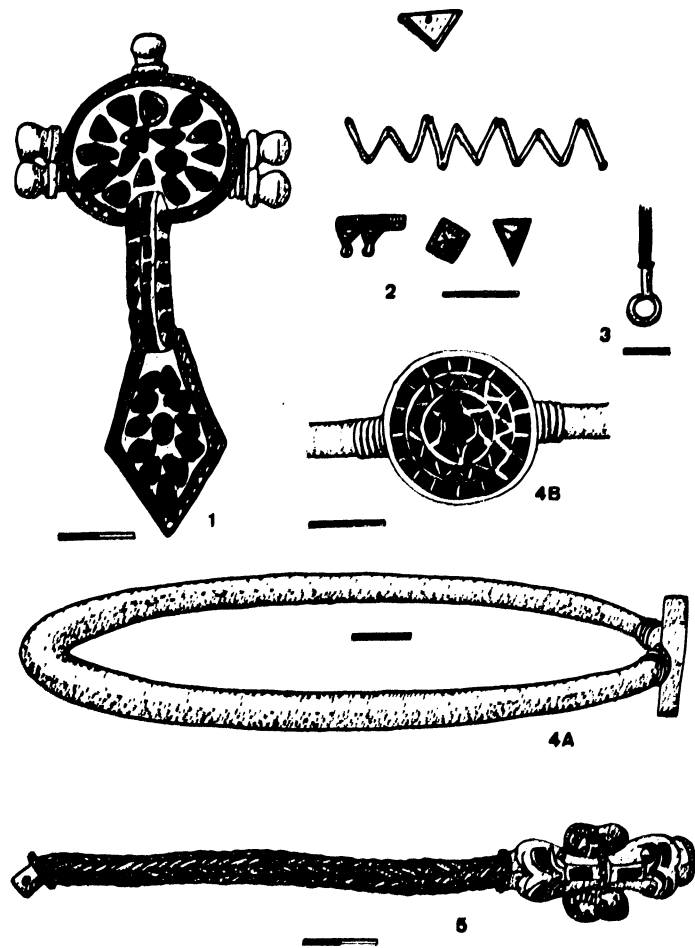


Fig. 3. Les objets provenant de découvertes "princières" de l'époque hunnique dans la région du Dniepr-rive gauche.

1: Nezín, 2: Bol'koj Kameneč, tombe de 1918-1919, 3-5: Bol'koj Kameneč, tombe de 1927.

1: argent, or, grenats, 2, 3: or, 4, 5: or, grenats.

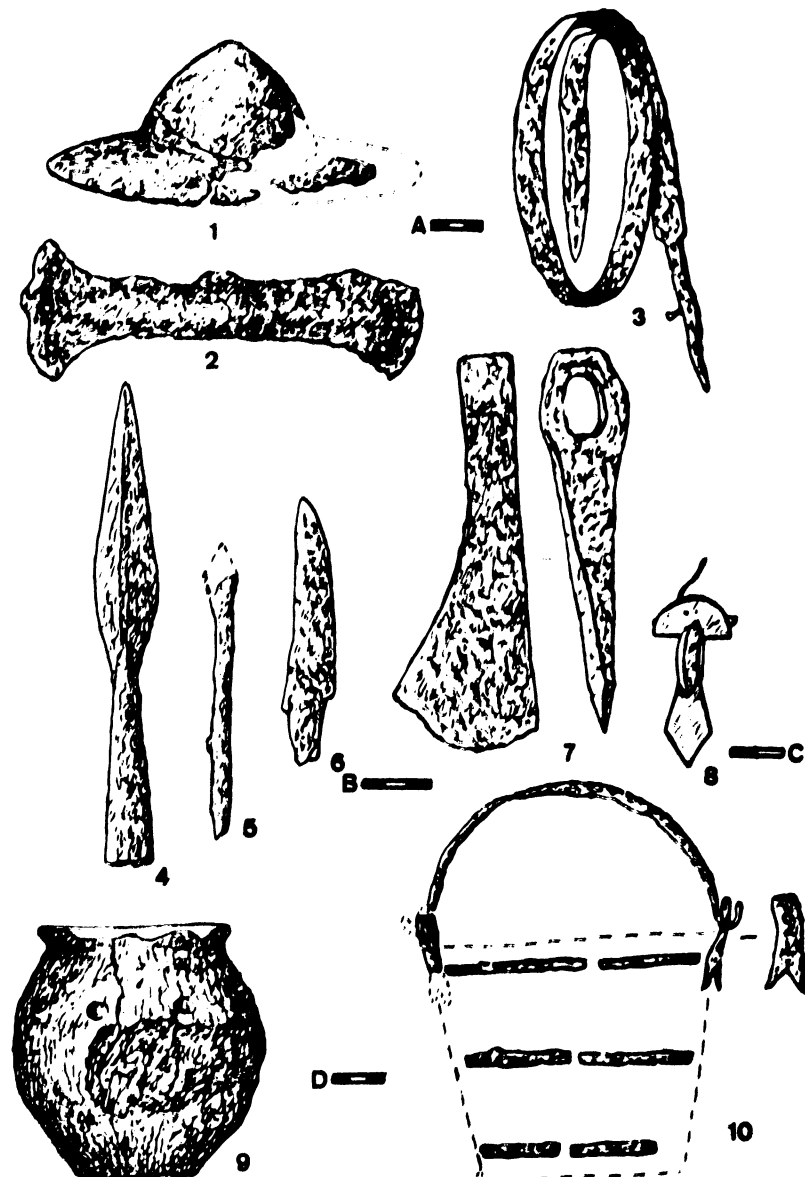


Fig. 4. La tombe 86 de la nécropole de Kompanijcy (d'après Kropotkin, "Denkmäler"). 1-7, 10: fer, 8: argent, 9: céramique.

Echelle: a - 3, b - 1, 2, 4-7, c - 8, d - 9, 10.

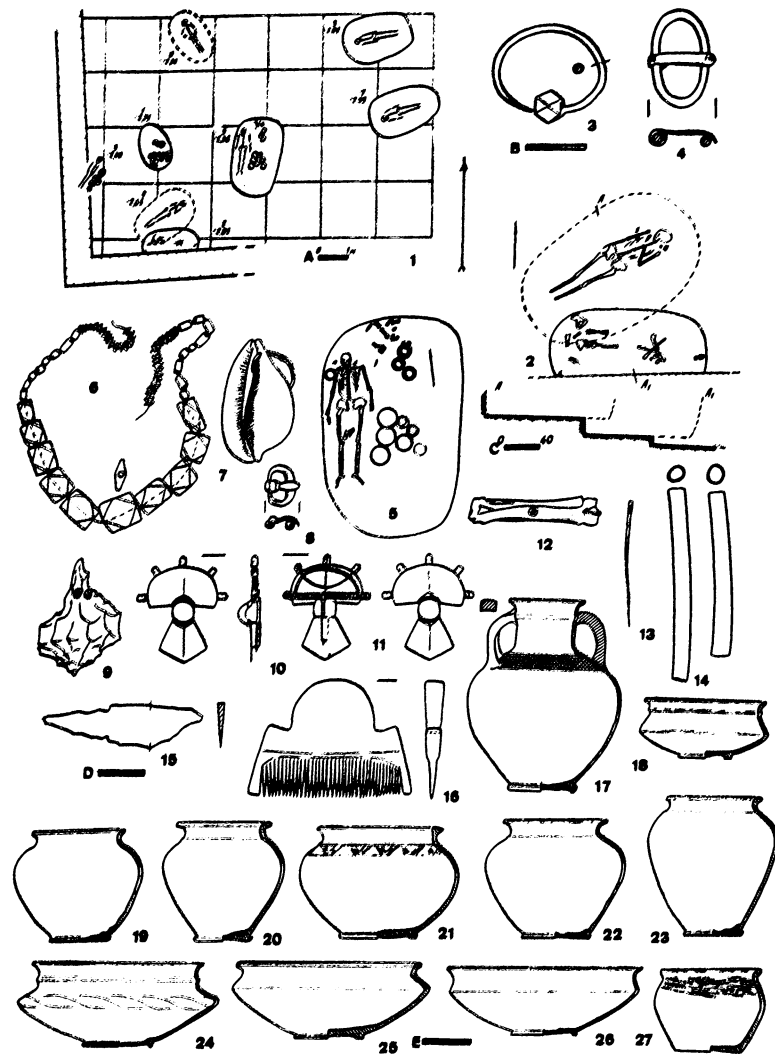


Fig. 5. Les tombes de la phase finale de la culture de Černjahov à Sumy-Sad (d'après Nekrasova, "Ohoronni rozkopki černjahiv'skogo mogil'nika poblizu M. Sumy").

1: plan du secteur étudié, 2-4: tombe 4, 5-27: tombe 5.

3, 4, 13: bronze, 6: cornaline, corail, verre bleue, 7, 9: coquillage, 8, 10, 11: argent, 12, 14, 16: os, 15: fer, 17-27: céramique.

Echelle: 1 - 1, b - 3, 4, c - 2, 5, d - 6-16, e - 17-27.

## POLITICAL RHETORIC AND POLITICAL IDEOLOGY IN LOMBARD ITALY

Dick Harrison

The aim of this study is to elucidate a few important aspects of the use of rhetoric in post-Roman societies. It is, however, not my intention to include a study of one of the most famous forms of literary manifestations of this epoch, that is, of the ethnic traditions inherent in myths of various *gentes*. That is not to say that these myths have nothing to do with rhetoric; on the contrary, they clearly demonstrate political pride and help us understand various traditions. However, their functions clearly varied from one century to another. What was once a focal point in the political ideology of a *gens* could in later centuries be looked upon as a literary manifestation of tradition and continuity as such, while the content of the text had lost its original importance. Therefore, since this development is too complex to be covered in a short study such as this one, I will instead focus upon more explicit rhetorical elements.

In the following text, rhetorical and ideological aspects of the Italo-Lombard monarchy (568-774) will be treated as either forms or elements within these forms. Usually, it is the elements that we consider when discussing subjects like this. However, I feel that it is just as important to emphasise the forms as such, since these undoubtedly conveyed clear messages to early medieval people, messages that should not be ignored within this context.

*Forms:* Legislation  
Charters  
Ceremonies  
Coinage  
Royal insignia  
Buildings

*Elements:* Christian influences  
Roman influences

I will furthermore discuss one aspect in particular, that of the cult of saints, a specific combination of form and element that became very significant, especially in southern Italy.

#### LEGISLATION<sup>1</sup>

We know that the laws penetrated deep into the layers of the population. Our extant charters demonstrate how new laws were accepted and discussed. The people recognised the king's control of the law.<sup>2</sup> The first written Lombard laws appeared in 643, in the Edict of King Rothari. Rothari calls himself *ego in Dei nomine Rothari, vir excellentissimus et septimodecimum rex gentis Langobardorum* (I Rothari, in the name of God, most excellent man and seventeenth king of the Lombard gens). By these words, Rothari places himself vaguely within a christian context (*in Dei nomine*), but precisely and firmly within a Lombard context (*septimodecimum rex . . .*). The Lombard context is further strengthened by the rest of Rothari's prologue. He inserts a long list of all his royal predecessors, since "we thought that this would be useful in the future" (*utilem prospeximus propter futuris temporibus*). The only king who is singled out as particularly important in this list is Alboin, who led the Lombards to Italy in 568/69 (*qui exercitum . . . in Italia adduxit*). This list is followed by a list of Rothari's own ancestors *ex genere Harodus*, eleven generations back in time. In other words, Rothari regarded manifestation of Lombard (not Roman) ideological heritage as being of immense importance. This prologue is in fact one of the clearest manifestations we have of non-Roman political self-consciousness in the so-called successor states to the western Roman Empire. The fact that this kind of king-list strongly resembles previous lists and is clearly dependent upon literary traditions prevalent in Italy when the Lombards arrived there can not conceal the fact that Rothari and his councillors consciously inserted this list instead of, for instance, making an attempt to place Rothari within a system that was explicitly Roman and imperial. Rothari further emphasises this by measuring time not only by his own regnal years and by the

<sup>1</sup> The objects of study in this chapter are chiefly the prologues of the legislating kings, not the legislation as such. I have used MGH Leges 4.

<sup>2</sup> Harrison, *The Early State and the Towns*, p. 186. For a contemporary example, see for instance *Codice Diplomatico Longobardo* 1, ed. L. Schiaparelli, p. 81. Cf. also Brigitte Pohl-Resl in this volume.

*indictio* system (both systems being widely used during these centuries), but also by letting A.D. 568, the year of Alboin's invasion of Italy, become the year 1. King Alboin, and not some Roman emperor, is therefore regarded as the most important ruler in history. As to his own subjects, Rothari maintains a neutral attitude in the prologue, using the words *subiectorum nostrorum*, which does not tell us anything concerning the ethnicity of the subjects.

Rothari's explicit reason for legislation is neither Christian nor Roman or Lombard as such. He simply points out that he is responsible for upholding the law for the good of his subjects. Nevertheless, the decision to put the law into writing ultimately depended upon Roman influence, although possibly by way of other Germanic law-codes.

The next legislating king, Grimoald (in the 660s), calls himself *ego vir excellentissimus Grimouald gentis Langobardorum rex*. His explicit reason for legislating is simply to make the law even better; there is no reference to the past. Grimoald does not use A.D. 568 as a starting-point for measuring time, and he says nothing about his glorious predecessors.

The legislation of Liutprand, from 713 to 735, introduces a Christian ideology in the prologues. This becomes increasingly evident in the 720s, especially in the prologues of 727 and 728 (see section on Christian influences below). In his first prologue (713), Liutprand calls himself *ego in Dei nomine Liutprand excellentissimus christianus Langobardorum rex* (I Liutprand, in the name of God, most excellent and Christian king of the Lombards). This formula is repeated, with various variations, in his following prologues (for instance *in Dei omnipotentis nomine . . . rex gentis filicissimae ac catholicae Deoque dilectae Langobardorum*, [in the name of God Almighty . . . king of the most fortunate and catholic Lombard gens, which is beloved by God]; *in Christi nomine* [in the name of Christ]; *gentis christianae et catholicae Langobardorum rex*, [king of the christian and catholic Lombard gens]; *in nomine domini Iesu Christi . . . christianus atque catholicus rex*, [in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ . . . Christian and catholic king]). It is made explicitly clear that the purpose of the legislation is to improve the Edict according to the will of God. There is, however, also another pattern. Liutprand emphasised that he was working in the tradition of previous Lombard legislators. He praised his predecessors (Rothari and Grimoald) for their work (713).

King Ratchis' prologues (745-46) demonstrate this double function of legislation even more clearly than is done by Liutprand. Ratchis calls himself *Ratchis, precellentissimus et eximius princeps*. His purpose for

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legislating is very Christian (see section on Christian influences below), but he makes a point of praising Rothari, Grimoald and Liutprand. He places himself within the tradition of Rothari and places Rothari within his own catholic world by referring to him as having been inspired by God, not mentioning the fact that Rothari had been of the arian faith: *Rothari rex . . . sibi Deo inspirante leges inseruit*. Most praise, however, is given to Liutprand:

*. . . gloriosissimus et orthodoxus fidei cultor atque huius gentis gubernator et noster per Dei omnipotentis misericordiam nutritor, Liutprand eximius et precelsus hac sapientissimus princeps, persistens in Dei operibus et cotidianis vigiliis, omni pudicitia et sobrietate ornatus, sicut a Deo promeruit per ipsius inspirationem omnia decenter eliciuit et in edicti pagina cum suis Langobardis ac iudicibus confirmavit.*

. . . the most glorious and orthodox adherent of the faith and ruler of this gens and, by the mercy of God Almighty, our educator, Liutprand, this excellent and sublime prince, stubbornly doing the work of God and spending his time in daily watchfulness, fully adorned with chastity and decency, has—as he earned the help of God through His inspiration—ascertained everything with good reason and, together with his Lombards and his judges, decreed it in the Edict.

We should remember that this was written in 746, barely two years since Ratchis himself dethroned the dynasty of Liutprand. As in the case of Rothari, none of Ratchis' ancestors had been king, but they both emphasised royal continuity.

The prologues of Aistulf (from 750 and 755) are also explicitly Christian in character. In 750, the king calls himself *Aistulfus, in ipsius nomine rex gentis Langobardorum, traditum nobis a Domino populum Romanorum* (Aistulf, in the name of Him, i.e. Jesus, king of the Lombard gens, now that the Roman people has been given to us by God). In 755, the following words are used: *ego, in Dei omnipotentis auxilio Ahistulf, praecellentissimus rex catholicae gentis Langobardorum*. The other element is also present: Aistulf emphasises Lombard tradition (*decessorum nostrorum sequentes exemplum*, following the example of our predecessors, 755).

As we have seen, there is a clear tendency for Christian purposes and ideas to appear in the eighth-century prologues (but not in the seventh-century ones). At the same time, the legislators always emphasise legislative and royal tradition as such, as a means of strengthening the laws and/or their own position. This is especially evident in the Edict of Rothari, but the pattern remains clear in the eighth century. There is also a continuity with regard to what the kings called themselves: the word *excellentissimus* appears frequently

(see section on Roman influences below). The kings emphasise that they are kings of the *Lombards*; the problem is what the word *Langobardus* really meant. We know that there was a shift from the sixth to the eighth century from an old tribal meaning to one with a more socially and economically charged significance.<sup>3</sup> Aistulf is the exception: he also regarded himself as king over the Romans (*traditum nobis a Domino populum Romanorum*, see section on Roman influences below).

#### CHARTERS

In the royal charters,<sup>4</sup> the kings constantly refer to themselves by a certain formula: *Flavius vir excellentissimus rex*. Both *Flavius* and *excellentissimus* hint at a consciousness of the Italian past and of Rome (see section on Roman influences below). There is one exception: the joint rulers Desiderius and Adelchis once referred to themselves as *piissimis regibus* (most pious kings), perhaps due to Christian influence.<sup>5</sup> The only queen to be regularly mentioned is Ansa, wife of King Desiderius. She is referred to by the formula *gloriosissima atque precellentissima Ansa regina*.

This conscious use of formulae becomes even more apparent when we compare the royal charters to the ducal charters of Spoleto.<sup>6</sup> The Spoletan dukes in the eighth century called themselves *domnus gloriosissimus et summus dux*, but from the reign of Duke Gisulf (759/60–761/62), royal pressure made the dukes insert the names of the kings in the charters (*regnante domno nostro Desiderio et Adelgis, filio eius, piissimis regibus*, [in the reign of our lord Desiderius and Adelchis, his son, most pious kings]). The ducal *gloriosissimus* was clearly subordinated to the royal *excellentissimus* and *piissimus*. We know that Spoleto finally lost its autonomy in the 750s; thus, we can see political changes directly reflected in the formulae of the charters. By contrast, the Merovingian kings of the Franks simply referred to themselves as *rex Francorum* (king of the Franks).<sup>7</sup>

In their charters, the kings of Lombard Italy referred to their subjects

<sup>3</sup> Harrison, *The Early State and the Towns*, pp. 41–50.

<sup>4</sup> *Codice Diplomatico Longobardo* 3, ed. C. Brühl.

<sup>5</sup> *Codice Diplomatico Longobardo* 3, ed. C. Brühl, nr. 41.

<sup>6</sup> *Codice Diplomatico Longobardo* 4, ed. C. Brühl.

<sup>7</sup> *Diplomata, chartae, epistolae, leges atque instrumenta ad res gallo-francias spectantia*, ed. Pardessus.

as Lombards (e.g. *gensis nostrae Langobardorum*).<sup>8</sup> This gives us the same terminological problem as in the laws.

#### CEREMONIES

We know very little of royal ceremonies at the Lombard court, even if Paul the Deacon gives us some hints, like the proclamation of kings and baptisms. The only specific ceremony that we know a little about (from book VI in Paul's *Historia Langobardorum*) is the giving of the lance, a ritual that accompanied the proclamation of a king and which is revealed to us at the accession of Hildeprand in c. 735. Ceremonies involving lances, arrows and similar weapons are also mentioned in non-royal circumstances, for instance as symbols of freedom at manumissions.<sup>9</sup>

There is thus very little extant evidence of Roman and Christian ceremonial influences (e.g. coronations). A possible exception is the so-called Val di Nievole plaque (now in the Bargello Museum in Florence), showing a king seated on what could be a throne, surrounded by warriors and others in relief. According to the inscription, the king is Agilulf (590–616). The figures and symbols surrounding Agilulf have been interpreted in various ways, sometimes as symbols of both Lombards and Romans acknowledging Agilulf as king.<sup>10</sup> In any case, the plaque is a clear statement that Agilulf is supreme ruler of the country. It could be argued that this representation at least partly reflects Roman influence.

#### COINAGE

The coins of the first century of Lombard rule did not visibly enhance royal power; rather, imperial coinage was imitated. We know, however, that kings were interested in controlling the mints of Italy—hence

<sup>8</sup> *Codice Diplomatico Longobardo* 3, ed. C. Brühl, nrs. 8, 39, 41.

<sup>9</sup> See for instance c. 224 in the *Edict of Rothari* (manumission), Paulus Diaconus, *Historia Langobardorum*, MGH SS rerum Langobardicarum et Italicarum saec. VI–IX, eds. Bethmann and Waitz (= *HL*) 4, 28 (baptism), 31 (proclamation of king); 6, 55 (Hildeprand).

<sup>10</sup> See the discussion (with references) in Harrison, *The Early State and the Towns*, p. 188.

Rothari's law asserting a royal minting monopoly.<sup>11</sup> From the late seventh century the Lombard coins changed dramatically in appearance. The names of the kings were inscribed, and their rule was manifested by symbols, particularly that of St. Michael (see the section below on cult of saints). The importance of coinage as a form of maintaining and demonstrating royal power is clearly shown as Lombard coinage grows increasingly uniform during the eighth century, particularly from the late 750s.<sup>12</sup> During the reign of Aistulf, coinage became an explicit way of linking the Lombard kings to their Roman predecessors (see the section on Roman influences below).

#### ROYAL INSIGNIA

We know very little about royal insignia in the Lombard kingdom. However, we know that crowns for the king and the queen existed during the reign of Agilulf. Unfortunately, we do not know if the crowns were regalia attached to the monarchy as such or simply personal crowns owned by King Agilulf and Queen Theudelinda.<sup>13</sup>

#### BUILDINGS

Although we do not know what the royal palaces looked like, we do know that the Lombard kings, dukes and gastalds quickly associated themselves with the Roman palaces and residences in their towns.<sup>14</sup> Even if this was a natural and above all a comfortable way of settling down to rule the country, it should not be over-looked that by doing so the Lombards automatically inherited several Roman political structures: rule through a network of towns (*civitates*), physical association with previously imperial buildings, etc.

The most prominent new buildings, especially in the eighth century, were of course the churches. Since the Lombard kings lacked the tax-based incomes of the Roman Empire, they could not afford to build

<sup>11</sup> The *Edict of Rothari*, c. 242 (*Si quis sine iussionem regis aurum figuraverit aut moneta confinxerit, manus ei incidatur*).

<sup>12</sup> Harrison, *The Early State and the Towns*, pp. 119–23, with references.

<sup>13</sup> Elze, "Die Agilulfrone des Schatzes von Monza"; Elze, "Per la storia delle corone del tesoro di Monza".

<sup>14</sup> Harrison, *The Early State and the Towns*, pp. 62–6 (with numerous references).

huge basilicas, but several small churches and important monasteries were constructed as visible evidence of Christian influence.<sup>15</sup>

That buildings and residences were important ideological assets in eighth-century political strategy is furthermore demonstrated by King Aistulf. Aistulf is, as is revealed elsewhere in this paper, our best example of a Lombard king using a Roman ideology. This affected his choice of residence. Having defeated the Byzantine exarch, Aistulf moved (at least temporarily—subsequent history makes it impossible to tell if he intended the move to be permanent) from the Lombard capital Pavia to the Roman capital Ravenna, where he issued at least one charter.<sup>16</sup>

#### CHRISTIAN INFLUENCES

Originally, Christianity (or rather, alleged Christianity) was in all probability just another political asset. The Lombard kings switched their allegiance from Catholicism (the 550s) to Arianism (590), back to Catholicism (c. 600), again to Arianism (626) and finally to Catholicism (653).<sup>17</sup> According to some scholars, particularly Gian Piero Bognetti, it is also possible to see political attitudes reflected in the way the Lombard kings behaved towards adherents of the schism of the Three Chapters.<sup>18</sup>

However, in the long run Christianity served to strengthen the position of the king in a more definite way. This is first shown by Agilulf, who definitely used the catholic Church as a backbone of his power, both by controlling episcopal elections and by officially referring to himself as king by the grace of God (*Gratia Dei*, which was inscribed on his crown). His piety, or rather what can be interpreted as piety, but also as the outcome of a tactical choice, is also shown when he let his son and heir Adaloald be baptised.<sup>19</sup>

As we have seen, explicit Christian purposes do not appear in

<sup>15</sup> Harrison, *The Early State and the Towns*, pp. 78–9 (with references).

<sup>16</sup> *Codice Diplomatico Longobardo* 3, ed. C. Brühl, nr. 23 (4 July, 751). See also Agnellus, *Liber pontificalis ecclesiae Ravennatis*, c. 155.

<sup>17</sup> Fanning, "Lombard Arianism reconsidered".

<sup>18</sup> Bognetti, "S. Maria foris portas di Castelseprio e la storia religiosa dei longobardi". Bognetti has been strongly criticised; see Harrison, *The Early State and the Towns*, pp. 204–7.

<sup>19</sup> Harrison, *The Early State and the Towns*, pp. 188–9, 207; see also Elze, "Die Agilulfkrona des Schatzes von Monza" and Elze, "Per la storia delle corone del tesoro di Monza".

seventh-century legislation (although Rothari said that he was king *in Dei nomine*), but they are very evident in the prologues to the laws of the next century. Liutprand, in the prologues of 713 and 735, describes himself as *christianus atque catholicus*. His tendency to stress the Christian purpose of legislation becomes increasingly evident as we move forward in time from one prologue to another. In 713, legislation is said to be the duty of a Christian prince (*christianus hac catholicus princeps*). Liutprand goes on to quote Solomon and the apostle James. In the prologue of 724, the Christian purpose is eloquently explained, and in 727 Liutprand uses the prologue to warn against paganism. In 728, Liutprand addresses God more directly (*Deum invocamus testem . . .*, [We call upon God as witness . . .]). Ratchis, in the prologue of 746, constantly stresses the Christian purpose of legislation, using terms like *per redemptoris nostri providentiam ego divino auxilio Ratchis . . .* (through the providence of our Saviour, I Ratchis, with the help God . . .). The same is true of Aistulf.

If we turn from the prologues to the laws themselves, the same shift to Christian influences is clear in eighth-century legislation. Christianity gave the king the right and the obligation to defend his kingdom in the name of God and to defeat its enemies. The king also assumed a social responsibility for weak groups (women, children, etc.) in the kingdom.<sup>20</sup>

#### ROMAN INFLUENCES

The first clear Roman influence we encounter is that of the name/title *Flavius*, which was used by King Authari (584–90) and all Lombard kings after him.<sup>21</sup> This is mostly interpreted as a conscious way to strengthen the monarchical institution by linking it to the Ostrogothic and Roman past, and it is sometimes seen as an attempt to gather support from the Roman population of Italy.<sup>22</sup> However, attempts have been made to show that *Flavius* was simply a name used as a symbol of sacral power in order to make the kingdom "luckier".<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Harrison, *The Early State and the Towns*, p. 187 (with references).

<sup>21</sup> *HL* 3, 16; the royal charters in *Codice Diplomatico Longobardo* 3, ed. C. Brühl.

<sup>22</sup> Harrison, *The Early State and the Towns*, pp. 188–9, with references to scholars like Conti, Fasoli, Fröhlich, Jarnut, Leicht, Mor, Schneider and Wolfram.

<sup>23</sup> Hauck, "Die geschichtliche Bedeutung der germanischen Auffassung von Königtum und Adel", p. 99, p. 110.

Another interesting Roman feature is the word *excellentissimus*, which appears as an attribute of the king both in charters and legal prologues. This superlative form of *excellens* was a honorary title attached to certain high offices in the late Roman Empire. We have evidence of the title being attached to the *praefectus urbi*, the *praefectus praetorio*, the consuls and the patricians. Belisarius, for instance, was sometimes referred to as *excellentissimus*. The title could even be used in connection with emperors (Justin). Most importantly, Gregory the Great used it regularly when writing to prominent people, such as Queen Brunhild of Austrasia and Burgundy, various members of Frankish and Gothic dynasties, the sister of the East Roman emperor and to the king and queen of the Lombards, Agilulf and Theudelinda. Thus, it was a title that the Lombard leaders were confronted with as soon as they came into contact with the world of Roman, and especially papal, diplomacy.<sup>24</sup> It is impossible to say whether the Lombards consciously used the title as an effort to demonstrate that they were just as important as the Byzantine exarchs of Ravenna. They might have had this, or a similar, motive, but this must remain hypothetical. What we do know is that they used a title that was associated with kings and important political leaders in general, and this may very well have been the only motive they needed. After all, we cannot assume that the Lombard leaders used the title in a more sophisticated way than was done by Gregory the Great.

The most interesting Lombard king, from the point of view of Roman influences, is definitely Aistulf (749–56). I have discussed elsewhere whether Aistulf had imperial ambitions.<sup>25</sup> He used the formula *traditum nobis a Domino populum Romanorum* in the prologue to his laws, a formula that hints at both a belief that God supported the Lombards and that his own monarchy was a successor—not only in practice, but also in theory—of the Roman Empire. If Aistulf had started using this formula *after* having taken Ravenna (in 751), we might have believed that this was a consequence of him having become ruler of the exarchate. However, this was not the case. The formula, as was demonstrated above, appeared already in 750. Thus, it hints at the existence of a consciously formulated political programme. Furthermore, Aistulf was the only Lombard king to mint solidi, gold coins reminiscent of the Empire. He did this in Ravenna, after having

<sup>24</sup> *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* 5, pp. 1215–8.

<sup>25</sup> Harrison, *The Early State and the Towns*, p. 189 (with references).

finally conquered the town from the Byzantines.<sup>26</sup> We know, as has been explained above, that Aistulf took up residence in Ravenna, the last capital of the western Roman Empire (used from 404–76). Aistulf is also the only known Lombard king to have planned Roman-style taxation. He tried to impose tribute consisting of one *solidus per caput* on the population of Rome. This was done in order to demonstrate and ensure Lombard rule over Rome, but the attempt failed.<sup>27</sup>

#### THE CULT OF THE SAINTS<sup>28</sup>

The Lombard kings, as well as the Lombard dukes (from 774 princes) of Benevento, also used a specific element within Christianity to gather ideological support for their rule: the cult of saints. We do not know exactly *how* they did this (ceremony, liturgy, etc.), but we do know that the kings of the first half of Italo-Lombard history often came to be associated with St. John the Baptist, later (at least from the 690s) with St. Michael, who also appear on their coins and who was made patron of several newly built churches.

The cult of St. Michael is even more evident in the duchy of Benevento, where saints' relics and saints' cults became very important during the eighth century. The dukes had their names inscribed in the sanctuary of Monte Sant'Angelo (in the Gargano Massif), the important pilgrimage site of St. Michael. One of the dukes, Arichis II (757/58–87), collected relics of saints from all over southern Italy and even from Asia Minor (St. Helianus), and he had them placed in the new church of St. Sophia (which was closely linked to himself). These saints were officially declared *patroni* and *duces* of the Beneventan *patria*, i.e., patrons of the duchy/principality.

In the ninth century, the symbolic value of these relics becomes

<sup>26</sup> Harrison, *The Early State and the Towns*, p. 219; see also Grierson and Blackburn, *Medieval European Coinage* 1, p. 65. However, a recent (summer of 1991) discovery of seven solidi near Innsbruck seems to indicate that Aistulf was not so unique as has been previously believed. It is at least possible that some of these coins were minted at Trento in the last decades of the sixth century, that is, by a Lombard duke. In any case, that still leaves a gap of more than 150 years until the coinage of Aistulf. See Hahn and Luegmeyer, *Der langobardenzeitliche Münzschatzfund von Aldrans in Tirol*.

<sup>27</sup> Harrison, *The Early State and the Towns*, p. 219 (with references); see also *Liber Pontificalis*, vol. 1, Bibliothèque des écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, sér. 2, 3, 1, ed. L. Duchesne (Paris, 1955), the biography of Stephen 2, 23.

<sup>28</sup> This text is based on Harrison, "The Duke and the Archangel".

very evident as power shifts from princes to bishops. The habit of collecting relics in Benevento continued (St. Januarius, St. Bartholomew), but this time the saints became associated with the bishop and the cathedral—not with the prince and St. Sophia. Also in the ninth century, we see the rise of the cult of the purely episcopal saint Barbatius of Benevento, in whose *Vita* the control of the Beneventan bishops over the sanctuary of St. Michael in the Gargano Massif is emphasised.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS

In a study of political rhetoric and ideology in early medieval Italy, it is natural to assume Roman and christian influences. The separation of these elements into two categories is not necessarily a good one; we do not know if there was a consciousness among the Lombards as to what was christian and what was Roman. In several instances the terms were in all probability synonymous, as in the case of God being protector of the *regnum*. Christianity was a part of Late Roman state ideology. Nevertheless, I have chosen to keep the elements apart from each other on an analytical level, since it is clear that there were at least some differences in some early medieval countries. For instance, the church did not approve of taxation. Likewise, many of the analytical divisions that have been made above must be considered as merely instruments in the hands of twentieth-century historians trying to make sense of the sources. This is especially important to remember when we study the most impressive text of them all, the prologue of Rothari's laws. This text is *not* the first revelation of a certain amount of Christianity, Roman influences and purely Lombard traditions. On the contrary, it is the result of a complex political and literary process incorporating several elements that were commonplace in late antique and early medieval Mediterranean civilisation. For instance, the fact that Rothari referred to himself as the seventeenth king of his people was no new idea—it was clearly an imitation of what earlier kings had done (both Romulus and Athalaric had been considered the seventeenth monarch of their people), as was the whole idea of having a king-list, as well as the adoption of the name/title *Flavius*.<sup>29</sup> The Lombards were not unique. It would be impossible to

<sup>29</sup> Wolfram, "Origo et Religio", p. 21, pp. 31–2, p. 33 (on *Flavius*).

attempt to decide what they deliberately borrowed from others and what can be regarded as indigenous. What I have been trying to trace in this paper is rather the evolution of rhetoric as a political tool within Italo-Lombard history.

Another important memento is the relative importance of political and rhetorical ideology and symbolism. We must remember that these features were always less important than, for instance, control of the army, the royal treasure and the central administration. The features studied here served to manifest royal/ducal/princely power and thus also strengthen it. If seen in the light of the development of a so-called early state, it is furthermore clear that the importance of explicit rhetoric as such was connected with the development of Italo-Lombard state society. As the monarchy grew stronger, it increasingly used rhetorical methods to manifest and to strengthen its structure.

We can trace Roman influences almost from the start, certainly from the reigns of Authari and Agilulf. Many forms used to transmit royal power were borrowed from the Romans: residences, charters and laws written in Latin, coins showing the emperor, etc. However, much of this would have been only natural results of the settlement in Italy—it is not necessary to surmise a conscious policy of *imitatio*. The Lombard rulers used Roman elements that impressed them and that they were confronted with on a diplomatic level (like the attribute *excellentissimus*). Unfortunately, we do not know if words like these were considered rhetorical in the same way as, for instance, the unique inscription on the crown of Agilulf or the eighth-century legislative prologues. *Flavius* and *excellentissimus* were clearly important as forms of address—but we do not know if these words conveyed a specific message within their own context, aside from the obvious fact that the words enhanced the position of the king.

In the late seventh century, Lombard political ideology merged with Christianity, a process that continued in the next century. Churches and monasteries were built, St. Michael appeared on the coins together with the Lombard kings, and the prologues to the new laws explicitly stated christian purposes. As is often the case, it is hard to distinguish piety from political strategy. However, the catholic monarchy of the eighth century was definitely stronger than the seventh-century monarchy. The strongest of all Lombard kings, Aistulf, appears both as a christian and as a Roman ruler. Aistulf moved to Ravenna, minted solidi, planned to tax Rome and stated that God had given the Roman people over to him.

Despite these changes, one of the clearest elements in what I here refer to as political ideology/rhetoric was tradition as such. Kings praised their predecessors and emphasised continuity. This is most obvious in the laws, but the charters also show kings acting in a traditional manner (*Flavius, excellentissimus*). We also know that some ceremonies remained Lombard, that is, not influenced by Roman or Christian ideas. We know that two versions of a particular legal act (manumission) could co-exist, one stressing Christian ideas and one remaining traditional,<sup>30</sup> but the scarcity of sources prevents us from studying similar cases in a royal context.

One interesting feature of continuity is the difference between charters and legislative prologues: the texts of the prologues stress the fact that the king is ruler of the *gens Langobardorum*, while the charters refer to the king as *Flavius* (the word *gens* occurs, but not as regularly as in the prologues). However, I would not put too much emphasis on this. The texts are equipped with two different formulae firmly attached to two different forms. There is a clear continuity with regard to form as such. The persistence of *gens* in the eighth century (and, in fact, in subsequent centuries as well) does not mean that the king addressed a Germanic *gens* in the way this concept has been discussed by historians like Herwig Wolfram, Walter Pohl and others.<sup>31</sup> While the ideology of belonging to a tribe/people (*gens*) remained, the foundations of what was meant by the ethnic term (and which thereby decided who could be called *Langobardus*) underwent a profound change from the sixth to the eighth century.

## ROYAL TREASURES AND REPRESENTATION IN THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES

Matthias Hardt

*den schaz den wuiz nu niemen wan got unde min:  
der sol dich, valandinne, immer wol verhoeln sin.<sup>1</sup>*

Hagen von Tronje's final words to Kriemhild remind us that the author of the *Nibelungenlied*, writing around 1200, neither wished nor was able to avoid a motif that had already occupied a central place in the earliest strata of Germanic heroic poetry and had been handed down through every traditional form of epic and saga for hundreds of years: the motif of the hoard. The subject-matter of the courtly epic may have changed to highlight quite different components (Kriemhild's revenge, for example, or the conflicts between feudal and family ties), but the figures of the epic as well as the plot are taken from earlier strands of heroic poetry. So firmly had these associated the Burgundian kings with the treasure which aroused Attila's lust for gold, bringing about the downfall of the Burgundians in the ancient *Atli Song* of the Poetic Edda,<sup>2</sup> that treasure formed a constant element in the plot structure of future developments in courtly verse.<sup>3</sup> In fact, it served to bind the originally independent poems about Siegfried and Brünhild and the treasure of the dragon-killer, which henceforth had to be the same as that of the Burgundian kings, to the poetry of the decline of the Burgundians.<sup>4</sup> Kriemhild's abrupt demand that Hagen hand over the hoard (with its familiar dramatic consequences) led to the treasure of a king from the migration period becoming a literary motif (notably as the hoard of the Nibelungs) that still enjoys wide currency today and continues to influence the imagination of many.

<sup>1</sup> *Nibelungenlied* v. 2371, 370.

<sup>2</sup> *Atlakvida*, transl. Genzmer, p. 209.

<sup>3</sup> See Kuhn, "Kriemhilds Hort und Rache", pp. 65-79; for a different interpretation, but without doubt about the high age of the motif: Schröder, "Zum Problem der Hortfrage im Nibelungenlied", pp. 157-184.

<sup>4</sup> According to Heusler, the motif of the hoard is the element that ties together the stories around Siegfried/Brünhild and around the downfall of the Burgundians: Heusler, *Nibelungensage und Nibelungenlied*, p. 28 and p. 73; Wolf, "Mythos und Geschichte in der Nibelungensage und im Nibelungenlied", p. 47.

<sup>30</sup> Harrison, "The Invisible Wall of St. John", pp. 188-9.

<sup>31</sup> Harrison, "Dark Age Migrations and Subjective Ethnicity: the Example of the Lombards"; Pohl, "Tradition, Ethnogenese und literarische Gestaltung: eine Zwischenbilanz"; Wolfram, "Origo et Religio".

What is very much less known is the fact that this hoard motif of heroic poetry, which is clearly ancient, derives from those parts of oral tradition which their creators saw as an area in which history was handed down, and that may, therefore, reflect actual circumstances of the migration period and the early Middle Ages (poetic and literary formalisation notwithstanding).<sup>5</sup>

Long ago the attention of historians was drawn to the fact that during the Migration period historical narrators spoke of the existence of treasure in the possession of Germanic rulers. It was mainly the account written by Gregory of Tours about the rise of Clovis<sup>6</sup> (to which we shall return later) that prompted Georg Waitz in 1870 to conclude in his *Constitutional History* that, in this period, treasure counted for "hardly less than the kingdom itself (*fast nicht weniger als das Reich*)".<sup>7</sup> Felix Dahn, too, in his multi-volume *Die Könige der Germanen*,<sup>8</sup> stressed the importance of such treasures. Less extensive works by such twentieth-century historians as René Doehaerd,<sup>9</sup> Henri Pirenne,<sup>10</sup> Dietrich Claude<sup>11</sup> and Reinhard Schneider<sup>12</sup> took up the theme. These writers saw the treasure of barbarian kings as important basis for their rule, though when it came to examining the reasons for that importance they could only make a rudimentary contribution, having few sources at their disposal. Another author who devoted much attention to the treasure of the rulers of the early medieval period was Georges Duby.<sup>13</sup> He drew wide-ranging and perceptive conclusions; unfortunately, he often failed to cite the sources on which his hypotheses rest. Percy Ernst Schramm dealt with the subject mainly in terms of describing the *Herrschaftszeichen* of the German kings and emperors. He was interested in the relics that had once been owned by medieval rulers and saw the royal hoard as representing the stock of a particular king's or emperor's symbols of dominion; this he sought to distinguish from a separate treasury, in which the ruler's money was held. In line with his objective, Schramm saw the importance of

<sup>5</sup> Von See, *Germanische Heldensage*, pp. 61–94.

<sup>6</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 2, 40, pp. 90 f.; 2, 41, p. 92; 2, 42, pp. 92 f.

<sup>7</sup> Waitz, *Deutsche Verfassungsgeschichte* 2, p. 137.

<sup>8</sup> Dahn, *Die Könige der Germanen*, 12 vols.

<sup>9</sup> Doehaerd, "La richesse des Mérovingiens", pp. 30–46.

<sup>10</sup> Pirenne, "Le trésor des rois mérovingiens", pp. 71–78.

<sup>11</sup> Claude, "Beiträge zur Geschichte der frühmittelalterlichen Königsschätze", pp. 5–24.

<sup>12</sup> Schneider, *Königswahl und Königserhebung im Frühmittelalter*, pp. 242–246.

<sup>13</sup> Duby, *Krieger und Bauern*.

royal hoards in the early and high Middle Ages mainly in terms of the symbols of rulership they contained.<sup>14</sup>

The present essay sets out to take a fresh look at the question of the treasures of the kings of the migration period and the early Middle Ages.<sup>15</sup> With a view to extending the inadequate source base and generating possibilities of control and comparison, an interdisciplinary approach will be adopted. To supplement the written sources as such, archaeological finds will be consulted; and, as my opening lines indicated, literary sources also need to be examined for their relevance as regards tackling this question, and to be drawn upon where appropriate.

The purpose of the following remarks is to give some idea of what can be said about the contents, function, and importance of royal treasure up until the end of the Carolingian period. Using a number of exemplary accounts from the sources, I propose to clarify the contexts in which information about treasures may be found, then to give an impression of the contents and composition as well as the storage and transport of such treasure. There follows an attempt to answer the question of where the materials in treasures originated, together with a description of how those treasures were used. In conclusion, we shall be looking at their political and social importance in a more or less archaic society.

First, a word about terminology. It is important (except in connection with certain archaeological finds) to get away from the idea of treasure as something buried or otherwise hidden, a valuable object that has been withdrawn from circulation or from public view and that may or may not be found. This meaning of the German word *Schatz* is relatively recent, having developed only since Middle High German times (c. 1050–1350). In Old High German (c. 770–1050), an accumulation of transportable wealth that could be well guarded and kept in a treasure chamber was as likely to be termed *hort* [hoard] as *schaz*. In German, *hort* tends to highlight the guarding and keeping element, while *schaz* suggests more the idea of collection and accumulation, thus giving greater prominence to the content of the

<sup>14</sup> Schramm and Mütterich, *Denkmale deutscher Könige und Kaiser*, pp. 16–112, esp. p. 23.

<sup>15</sup> This essay is based on studies which were done working for my dissertation stimulated by Hans K. Schulze and Dietrich Claude at Marburg/Lahn. I hope to be able to finish this dissertation in 1998. For the translation of this text I have to thank J.A. Underwood, Hastings.

treasure.<sup>16</sup> Accordingly, in what follows I employ the word *Schatz* (translated into English as "treasure") for want of a term giving more precise expression to the movable but inanimate wealth of early medieval rulers in a context of historical investigation. In fact, the phrase *Königsschatz* ("royal treasure") is now an accepted technical term.

My father is dead, and his realm and all his treasure are mine. Send your people to me, and I shall gladly let you have what you please from among my father's treasures.<sup>17</sup>

These words of the Rhine-Frankish prince Chloderic marked a fresh development in the intrigue (recorded by Gregory of Tours) that Clovis conducted against the family of Sigibert the Lame in Cologne between 507 and 511.<sup>18</sup> Clovis had given Chloderic, Sigibert's son, a guarantee of dominion in the kingdom of Cologne and a promise of his friendship in the event of his father's meeting a sudden and unexpected death. Chloderic took the hint and arranged for Sigibert to be murdered. The son then made his offer to send Clovis something from his father's treasures. Clovis thanked Chloderic, but guaranteed him in his father's possessions without demanding any assignment therefrom. All he asked was that Chloderic should give his envoys a presentation from the murdered father's treasures. Chloderic complied willingly, and while he was bending over a chest in which Sigibert had kept gold coins, one of the envoys struck him dead.<sup>19</sup>

Following this deed, Gregory goes on to report, Clovis visited Cologne himself; in the presence of Sigibert's *populus* he denied having had any part in the murder of Chloderic, and offered the people his protection in place of that of the Rhine-Frankish kings. He was promptly made king by acclamation (in a symbolic act, he was raised

high on a shield), thus acquiring Sigibert's kingdom together with his treasure and bringing both under his control.<sup>20</sup> Immediately after this, Clovis turned his attention to the king of the Salian Franks, Chararic. On some pretext he had him and his son taken prisoner. When they both tried to resist, Clovis ordered them to be killed. In the words of Gregory of Tours: *Quibus mortuis, regnum eorum cum thesauris et populis adquesivit.*<sup>21</sup> Subsequently, Clovis secured the backing of the followers of Ragnachar of Cambrai with the aid of a gift of false gold bracelets. After Clovis had killed him and his brothers with his own hand, he acquired their whole kingdom as well as their treasure: *Quibus mortuis, omnem regnum eorum et thesaurus Chlodovecus accepit.*<sup>22</sup>

By these actions, Clovis was continuing a strategy he had first put into practice following his victory over the Visigoths at the Battle of Vouillé, near Poitiers. In that battle, the Visigoth king Alaric II had met his death. In the winter of 507/508, Clovis had Alaric's treasure removed from the royal city of Toulouse and brought to him.<sup>23</sup> Procopius of Caesarea reports that, at that time, other Visigothic treasures from Carcassonne were to be brought to Francia. The Franks laid siege to the city for that purpose, he tells us, but they were forced to retreat empty-handed when the Ostrogothic king Theoderic the Great came to the aid of the city's defenders. It was he rather than the Franks who seized the treasure stored there and removed it to Ravenna.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 2, 40, p. 91: *At ille ista audientes, plaudentes tam parvis quam vocibus, eum clypeo evectum super se regem constituunt. Regnumque Sigiberthi acceptum cum thesauris, ipsos quoque suae ditioni adscivit.* See Schneider, *Königswahl und Königserhebung im Frühmittelalter*, pp. 70 f.; Steuer, *Die Franken in Köln*, pp. 45 f.

<sup>21</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 2, 41, p. 92.

<sup>22</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 2, 41, p. 92 and 2, 42, pp. 92 ff. See Schneider, *Königswahl und Königserhebung im Frühmittelalter*, p. 72; Neckel, "Ragnacharius von Cambrai", pp. 373-405.

<sup>23</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 2, 37, p. 88: *Chlodovechus vero apud Burdigalensi urbe hiemem agens, cunctos thesauros Alarici a Tholosa auferens, Ecculismam [Angoulême] venit.* The report was taken over and enlarged by Fredegar 3, 24, p. 102: *Thesaurus Alarici a Tholosa auferens, secum Parisius duxit. Vita Remigii auct. Hincmaro* 19, p. 311: *... usque Tolosam perrexit, et thesauros Alarici accipiens.* ... On the participation of Theoderic in this struggle for Visigothic treasures between Alaric II and Clovis there is a very fabulous report by Fredegar 2, 58, pp. 82 ff.; *Gesta Theoderici regis* 15, pp. 207 f.; *Vita Remigii auct. Hincmar* 18, p. 310. About the events after the battle of Vouillé see Wolfram, *Die Goten*, pp. 244-246.

<sup>24</sup> Procopius of Caesarea, *De bello Gothico* 1, 12, pp. 68 ff.; *ibid.*, 1, 13, pp. 71 f.; Procopius reports that Athalaric later gave these treasures back to Amalaric. On Amalaric's escape and survival in the battle of Vouillé see Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 2, 37, p. 88; similarly, about how Clovis sent his son Theuderic I on an expedition

<sup>16</sup> See Benecke, Müller and Zarncke, *Mittelhochdeutsches Wörterbuch* 1, p. 717 (hort); 2/2, pp. 89-91 (schaz); Köbler, *Lateinisch-germanistisches Lexikon*, p. 291, p. 429.

<sup>17</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 2, 40, p. 90: *Pater meus mortuus est, et ego thesaurus cum regnum eius paenes me habeo. Dirige tuos ad me, et ea quae tibi de thesauro illius placent bona voluntate transmitam.*

<sup>18</sup> Gregory of Tours seems to report here on the basis of oral tradition. About the rulership of the Rhine-Franks around Cologne and the connections between the families of Sigibert and Clovis see Werner, *Geschichte Frankreichs* 1, pp. 311 f., 316; Ewig, "Die Civitas Ubiorum, die Francia Rinensis und das Land Ribuarien", pp. 482-487.

<sup>19</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 2, 40, pp. 90 f.: *Quibus venientibus iste patris thesauros pandit. Qui dum diversa respicerent, ait: In hanc arcellolam solitus erat pater meus numismata auri congerere. "Inmitte", inquit illi, "manum tuam usque ad fundum, et cuncta repperas." "Quod cum fecisset et esset valde declinatus, unus elevata manu bipinnem cerebrum eius inlitis, et sic quae in patre egerat indignus incurrit."*



Clovis's son Childebert I continued his father's policy, and in 531 he launched a fresh war against the Visigoths. As Childebert advanced into Spain, the Visigothic king Amalaric had already prepared his escape by sea and had ships waiting in Barcelona. About to board one of them, he remembered a large quantity of precious stones that he had left behind in his treasury. Amalaric returned to the city to fetch them. On his way back to the harbour, he found an army blocking his route. Amalaric met his death seeking refuge in a church.<sup>25</sup> But Childebert I, so Gregory of Tours tells us, returned into the Frankish kingdom laden with great treasures.<sup>26</sup>

A series of similarly detailed accounts might be cited in which such royal treasures (which the sources refer to as *thesaurus*, *thesauri*, *opes* or, in Greek texts, less concretely as *χρήματα*, and in vernacular texts *hort* or *schaz*) form the focus of military conflicts. There is no room to look at any more of them here; let me confine myself to mentioning the treasures of the Vandal king Gelimer,<sup>27</sup> the Ostrogothic king Witigis,<sup>28</sup> Cunimund, the last king of the Gepids,<sup>29</sup> and the Lombard Alboin,<sup>30</sup> which found their way to the capital of the East Roman Empire following Byzantine victories or masterstrokes of Byzantine diplomacy.

The impression created by the examples we have looked at is that royal treasures played a particular role in the wars which the people of the migration period fought against one another or against the hegemony of Byzantium. In a sense, they constituted war aims, and as such they received close attention from contemporary historians.

In Carolingian times, too, little seems to have changed in this re-

to the south: *Qui abiens, urbes illas a finibus Gothorum usque Burgundionum terminum patris sui dicionibus subiugavit.*

<sup>25</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 3, 10, p. 107: . . . cum Amalaricus navem deberet ascendere, ei in mentem venit, multitudinem se praetiosorum lapidum in suo thesauro reliquisse. Cumque ad eosdem petendus in civitatem regrederetur, ab exercitu a porto exclusus est. Videns autem, se non posse evadere, ad ecclesiam christianorum confugire coepit. Sed priusquam limina sancta contingerit, unus emissam manum lanciam eum mortali ictu sauciavit, ibique decidens reddidit spiritum. Gregory of Tours does not express what he means here clearly, so that it seems possible that Amalaric was stopped by his own troops, as Isidore says, *Historia Gothorum* 41, p. 283. See Wolfram, *Die Goten*, p. 247, note 27.

<sup>26</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 3, 10, p. 107: *Tunc Childeberthus cum magnis thesauris sororem adsumptam secum adducere cupiebat. . .*

<sup>27</sup> Procopius of Caesarea, *De bello Vandatico* 2, 4, pp. 437 f.

<sup>28</sup> Procopius of Caesarea, *De bello Gothico* 2, 29, p. 288.

<sup>29</sup> Johannes von Biclario, *Chronica ad a.* 572, p. 81.

<sup>30</sup> Marius von Avenches, *Chronica ad a.* 572, p. 238; Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum* 2, 29, p. 89.

spect. In the eighth-century clashes between Lombards and Franks, the victors repeatedly demanded the surrender of portions of the Lombard royal treasure,<sup>31</sup> until finally, in 774, Charlemagne brought the last Lombard king Desiderius, together with his family and the captured royal treasure, back to the Frankish kingdom, marking the end of an autonomous Lombard kingdom.<sup>32</sup> The same fate befell duke Tassilo of Bavaria, together with his family and treasure, in 788.<sup>33</sup>

As a final example of the importance of treasures in connection with wars, we recall the massive spoils that Charlemagne's armies plundered from the so-called "Ring of the Avars" between 791 and 795.<sup>34</sup> Josef Déer's paper in particular succeeded in showing that the treasure accumulated by the Avar khagans over centuries was virtually the sole war aim pursued by the Franks in campaigns that Charlemagne, with a huge propaganda effort, launched in terms of a war against pagans.<sup>35</sup> According to an account in the Northumbrian Annals, in the autumn of 795 alone a total of fifteen carts, each drawn by four oxen, were dispatched to the Frankish kingdom from the Pannonian plain, laden with gold, silver, and silks.<sup>36</sup>

As well as in wars against neighbouring peoples, accounts of royal treasures repeatedly crop up in connection with succession settlements at home. Again, there is room to cite only a few examples. In 451, the Western Roman general Aetius successfully prevented the Visigothic prince Thorismud from pursuing Attila's already defeated Huns with this powerful argument: He should return to his royal capital as a matter of urgency, Aetius warned, otherwise his brothers would seize possession of the treasure and consequently the throne of their father, Theoderic I, recently killed at the Battle of the Catalaunian Fields. Thorismud immediately left off harrying his enemy (so, at

<sup>31</sup> *Fredegar cont.* 37, pp. 183 f.; *ibid.*, 38, p. 185.

<sup>32</sup> *Annales regni Francorum ad a.* 774, p. 38: *Et revertente domino Carolo rege a Roma, et iterum ad Papiam pervenit, ipsam civitatem coepit et Desiderium regem cum uxore et filia vel cum omni thesauro eius palatii. Ibiq; venientes omnes Langobardi et cunctis civitatibus Italiae, subdiderunt se in dominio domni gloriosi Caroli regis et Francorum.*

<sup>33</sup> *Annales Nazariani ad a.* 788, p. 43: *Post haec ergo transmisit iam praefatus rex legatos suos in Beuveriam post uxorem ac liberos iam praefati ducis; qui studiosi atque effruiciter iussionem regis implentes, adduxerunt haec omnia una cum thesauris ac familia eorum copiosa valde ad iam dictum regem.*

<sup>34</sup> Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni* 13, pp. 15 f.

<sup>35</sup> Déer, "Karl der Große und der Untergang des Awarenreiches", pp. 726-731.

<sup>36</sup> *Ex vetustis Annalibus Nordhumbranis ad a.* 795, p. 155: . . . *sublatis inde 15 plaustris auro argenteoque palliisque olosericis pretiosis repletis, quorum quodque quatuor trahebant boves.* See Pohl, *Die Awaren*, pp. 314 ff.

least, Jordanes<sup>37</sup> and the Chronicle of Fredegar<sup>38</sup> claim) and marched back to Toulouse.<sup>39</sup>

Following the murder of Alboin by Helmechis and Rosamund, the daughter of Cunimund, king of the Gepids, in 572, the murderers sailed to Ravenna in a ship provided by the exarch Longinus. They also took with them Alboin's daughter Albuind and the entire Lombard treasure.<sup>40</sup> In his detailed account Paul the Deacon narrates how the exarch suggested to Rosamund that she kill Helmechis, freeing herself to marry him, Longinus. Allegedly driven by a desire to become queen of Ravenna, Rosamund thereupon handed Helmechis a poisoned cup after his bath. Realising after the first sip that he was doomed, Helmechis forced Rosamund at swordpoint to drain the rest of the cup herself.<sup>41</sup> With Alboin's murderers out of the way, Longinus dispatched princess Albuind along with the Lombard treasure to Constantinople.<sup>42</sup> According to the Spanish chronicler John of

<sup>37</sup> Jordanes, *Getica* 41, 216, p. 113: *ille vero metuens, ne Hunnis funditus interemptis a Gothis Romanum praeretur imperium, praebet hac suasionem consilium, ut ad sedes proprias remearet regnumque, quod pater reliquerat, arripere, ne germani eius opibus adsumptis paternis Vesegotharum regno pervaderent graviterque dehinc cum suis et, quod peius est, miseriterque pugnaret. Quod responsum non ambiguae, ut datum est, sed pro sua potius utilitate susceptum relicti Hunnis redit ad Gallias.*

<sup>38</sup> Fredegar 2, 53, p. 74, claims that Aetius had also had contacts with Attila and that he got rid of both barbarian kings by his advice. To Thorismud, Aetius said, according to Fredegar: *et audissent fratrem suum Theudericum tinsauris Gothorum occupasse, regnumque vellent adreperere, nisi festinus ad resedendum pergerit, periculum ad degradandum haberit.* After that Thorismud marched back: *ad sedis proprias remeavit, protinus abigerunt.* The author of Fredegar's chronicle, more than Jordanes, deals with the possibility that Thorismud could be dethroned by losing his treasure.

<sup>39</sup> About Aetius and his policy at the battle of the Catalaunian Fields see Stein, *Geschichte des spätromischen Reiches* 1, pp. 496–498; Werner, *Geschichte Frankreichs* 1, pp. 293–295; Wolfram, *Die Goten*, pp. 182 f.

<sup>40</sup> Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum* 2, 29, p. 89: *Auferentesque secum Albuindam, regis filiam, et omnem Langobardorum thesaurum, velocius Ravennam pervenerunt. Origo Gentis Langobardorum* 5, p. 5: *... et tulerunt Rosamunda et Hilmichis et Albuindam, filia Alboin regis, et omnes thesauros Langobardorum secum duxerunt in Ravenna.* Paul's report is based on heroic poetry, but the facts he tells are known through earlier authors: Marius of Avenches, *Chronica ad a. 572*, p. 238: *Hoc anno Albuinus rex Langobardorum a suis, id est, Hilmægis cum reliquis consentiente uxore sua Verona interfectus est: et supra scriptus Hilmægis cum antedicta uxore ipsius, quam sibi in matrimonium sociaverat, et omnem thesaurum, tam quod de Pannonia exhibuerat quam quod de Italia congregaverat, cum parte exercitus, Ravennae rei publicae se tradidit.* The story was amplified by Agnellus, *Liber Pontificalis Ecclesiae Ravennatis* 96, pp. 340 f.: *Sed iurgantes fortiter Langobardi contra eam ... cum multitudine Gebedorum et Langobardorum mense Augusti Ravennam venit et honorifice a Longino praefecto suscepta est cum omni ope regia.* See also Schneider, *Königswahl und Königserhebung im Frühmittelalter*, pp. 22 ff.

<sup>41</sup> Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum* 2, 29, p. 89; Agnellus, *Liber Pontificalis Ecclesiae Ravennatis* 96, p. 341.

<sup>42</sup> Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum* 2, 30, p. 89: *His ita premissis, Longinus praefectus Albuindam cum Langobardorum thesauris Constantinopolim ad imperatorem direxit.*

Biclaro, who recorded the event, the Lombards were left kingless and treasureless.<sup>43</sup>

It was also in Constantinople that Gundovald was endowed with vast quantities of treasure. He appeared in Marseille in 582, announcing that he was a son of Chlotar I, and laying claim to the throne of the Merovingian Kingdom.<sup>44</sup> The ultimately unsuccessful pretender lost several treasures to his opponents<sup>45</sup> but was able for his own part to help himself to the possessions of the Frankish princess Rigunthis.<sup>46</sup>

We know that under the will of Dagobert I, king of the Franks, his treasure was divided among his two sons and his widow Nanthildis.<sup>47</sup> Einhard gives a detailed account of the inventory of Charlemagne's treasury made in 811 and of the emperor's stipulations as to what should become of its contents after his death.<sup>48</sup> Those instructions

Agnellus, *Liber Pontificalis Ecclesiae Ravennatis* 96, p. 341: *Tunc Longinus praefectus abstulit omnes Langobardorum thesauros et cunctas opes regias, quas Rosmunda de Langobardorum regno attulerat, una cum Rosmunda et Alboini regis filia ad Iustinianum imperatorem Constantinopolim transmisit.* Agnellus is wrong about the mother of Albuind: her mother was Chlotsuinda, an earlier wife of Alboin from the family of the Merovingian kings; in the same way Agnellus was not correctly informed about the emperor in the time of Alboin and Rosamund: at Constantinople Justin II, not Justinian, ruled at the time.

<sup>43</sup> John of Biclaro, *Chronicon ad a. 573*, p. 82: *Aluinus Longobardorum rex factione coniugis suae a suis nocte interficitur; thesauri vero eius cum ipsa regina in rei publicae Romanae ditionem obveniunt et Longobardi sine rege et thesauro remansere.*

<sup>44</sup> About Gundovald's usurpation see Schneider, *Königswahl und Königserhebung im Frühmittelalter*, pp. 99–109; Ewig, *Die Merowinger und das Frankenreich*, p. 45, pp. 47 f.; Goubert, *Byzance avant l'Islam* 2, 1, pp. 27–68.

<sup>45</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 7, 36, p. 358, reports the supposed words of Gundovald before his end in the year 585: *Guntchramnus vero in memoriam sacramenti ac promissiones suae, thesauros meos abstulit et in sua ditione subegit.* *Ibid.*, 6, 24, p. 292; Gregory of Tours had told: *Gundovaldus vero in insola maris secessit, expectans eventum rei.* *Guntchramnus vero dux cum duce Guntchramni regis res Gundovaldi divisit et sicum Arvernus detulit immensum, ut ferunt, argenti pondus et auri vel reliquiarum rerum.* *Ibid.*, 6, 26, p. 293, about these res more explicitly: *Guntchramnus quoque dux Arvernus cum supradictis thesauris reversus, ad Childeberthum regem abiit.*

<sup>46</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 7, 32, p. 353, about messengers of Gundovald who, tortured by order of king Gunthram, declared: *... aiunt neptem illius, id est regis Chilperici filiam, cum Magnulfo Tholosanorum episcopo exilio depositam; thesauros omnes ab ipso Gundovaldo sublatus.* *... Ibid.*, 7, 35, p. 355: *Audierant enim eo tempore ducis Guntchramni regis, Gundovaldum ultra Garonnam in litore resedere cum ingenti hostium multitudine ipsosque thesauros, quos Rigundae tulerat, secum retinere.*

<sup>47</sup> Fredegar 4, 85, p. 164: *Chunibertus pontifex urbis Coloniae et Pippinus maior domi cum aliquibus primatibus Austri a Sigyberto dericti, villa Compendio usque perveniunt, ibique tinsaurum Dagoberti, iubente Nantilde et Chlodoveo, instantia Aegeae maiorem domus presentatur et aequa lanceae dividitur.*

<sup>48</sup> Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni* 33, p. 37: *Divisionem tamen thesaurorum et pecuniae ac vestium abaeque suppellectilis coram amicis et ministris suis annis tribus, antequam decederet, fecit, contestatus eos, ut post obitum suum a se facta distributio per illorum suffragium rata permaneret.*

were carried out by Louis the Pious,<sup>49</sup> in marked contrast to the orders issued by Louis himself prior to his own death, which Lothar I set aside.<sup>50</sup> In 842, as his brothers approached, Lothar carried off the royal treasure from the palace in Aachen, together with that of the palace church of St. Mary.<sup>51</sup>

A third context in which accounts of the royal treasures of the early medieval period appear is that of the marriage- and alliance-policies of royal houses. Marriage portions and dowries might consist of treasure. Here it is appropriate to mention the Visigothic sisters Brunichildis and Galswinth, who brought huge treasures to the Merovingian Kingdom.<sup>52</sup> Gregory of Tours devoted particular attention to the wedding procession of Rigunthis, a daughter of the Merovingian king Chilperic I, who was to marry the Visigoth Rekkared. To give their daughter a worthy dowry to take with her to the Visigothic kingdom, Chilperic and Fredegundis dug so deep into their treasure that eventually Rigunthis was able to set out for Spain with a total of fifty carts under armed guard.<sup>53</sup> However, bad luck dogged the

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<sup>58</sup> Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni* 33, p. 38: *Haec igitur intentione atque proposito omnem substantiam atque suppellectilem suam, quae in auro et argento gemmisque et ornata regio in illa, ut dictum est, die in camera eius poterat inveniri. . . . Ibid., p. 39: *Ad hanc tertiam totius summas portionem, quae similiter ut ceterae ex auro et argento constat. . . . Thegan, Vita Hludovici Imperatoris* 8, p. 592, about the treasures Louis the Pious found after the death of Charlemagne: . . . iussit ostendere sibi omnes thesauros patris in auro, argento, in gemmis praeciosissimis, et in omni suppellectili.*

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<sup>56</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 7, 39, pp. 362 f.: *Fredegundis autem his diebus Chuppanem in Tholosano direxit, ut scilicet filiam suam exinde quocumque modo possit eruere. . . acceptam Rigundem a loco illo reduxit, non sine grande humilitate adque contumelia.*

<sup>57</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 5, 34, p. 240: *Numquid non erant thesauri referti auro, argento, lapidibus praeciosis, monilibus vel reliquis imperialibus ornamentis?*

<sup>58</sup> Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni* 33, p. 38: *Hac igitur intentione atque proposito omnem substantiam atque suppellectilem suam, quae in auro et argento gemmisque et ornatu regio in illa, ut dictum est, die in camera eius poterat inveniri. . . . Ibid., p. 39: Ad hanc tertiam totius summae portionem, quae similiter ut ceterae ex auro et argento constat. . . . Thegan, *Vita Hludovici Imperatoris* 8, p. 592, about the treasures Louis the Pious found after the death of Charlemagne: . . . iussit ostendere sibi omnes thesauros patris in auro, argento, in gemmis praeciosissimis, et in omni suppellectili.*

<sup>59</sup> *Vita Hludovici Imperatoris* 63, p. 647: . . . *et rem familiarem, quae constabat in ornamentis regalibus, scilicet coronis et armis, vasis, libris vestibusque sacerdotalibus, per singula describi iuberet.*

Gold, silver, jewellery, precious stones, and clothing are the stereotypes of early medieval historiography and hagiography whenever the contents of royal treasures are being described. With the aid of a thorough analysis of the relevant references, close examination of heroic poetry, and, not least, comparison with burial and hoard finds that can be associated with royalty, such meagre information can be made to yield a little more. As regards the evaluation of the archaeological evidence, of course, it is important to remember that individual finds are meaningful only within their respective chronological and regional contexts. Moreover, assigning them to persons we know about from the written tradition is often highly problematic. However, close comparison with the available accounts of objects from royal treasures does make it possible to use archaeological finds to put some concrete detail on those accounts.

The references in the sources to gold and silver may in fact relate to minted coins, ingots, or jewellery of various kinds. As regards coins, we need to bear in mind all the different denominations in circulation in the period under investigation, including coins that were hoarded for many years. The grave of the Frankish king Childeric, who died in 482 and was buried in Tournai, contained not only a large quantity of gold *solidi* but also around two hundred silver coins, some dating from the imperial period, one even from the days of the Roman Republic.<sup>60</sup> Thirty-seven Merovingian tremisses were placed alongside three unstruck circular blanks and two small gold ingots in the grave of an East Anglian king who was buried in his ship under a huge mound at Sutton Hoo around 625.<sup>61</sup> It was in very much larger gold ingots (weighing up to five hundred grams) that Roman subsidies and annuities continued to reach their barbarian recipients up until the fifth century.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Recently Werner, "Chiliderichs Pferde", p. 161; id., "Neue Analyse des Chiliderich-Grabes von Tournai", p. 44. About the coins of Childeric's burial at Tournai see also Böhner, "Chiliderich von Tournai", pp. 453 f., and Werner, *Münzdatierte austrasische Grabfunde*, p. 6, note 4, all with more literature.

<sup>61</sup> Recently Martin, "Redwalds Börse", p. 207; see the 40,0032 g. tremisses of the Sutton Hoo burial: Kent, "The coins and the date of burial", pp. 578-678, the catalogue of the coins *ibid.*, pp. 607-644; Werner, "Das Schiffgrab von Sutton Hoo", pp. 201-203, with more literature.

<sup>62</sup> B. and M. Overbeck, "Zur Datierung und Interpretation der spätantiken Goldbarren aus Siebenbürgen"; Iluk, "The export of gold from the Roman Empire to barbarian countries from the 4th to the 6th centuries", p. 85; Horedt, "Crasna", pp. 100 f., with more literature.

Midway between ingots and jewellery in character were the necklaces and bracelets mentioned (not so often in historiography but that much more frequently in heroic poetry) as forming part of treasures.<sup>63</sup> Such pieces, also weighing up to more than seven hundred grams, occur in various forms in burial and hoard finds from the late Roman Empire until well beyond the period we are looking at. Archaeological research has often talked of these as symbols of dominion.<sup>64</sup> In my view, however, the fact that they were given by kings in a variety of ways suggests that they can be interpreted only in the sense of coveted prestige objects. Take the examples of the bracelet (unfortunately now lost) of the Frankish king Childeric<sup>65</sup> and those from the burial finds of Pouan,<sup>66</sup> Wolfsheim,<sup>67</sup> Blučina,<sup>68</sup> Fürst,<sup>69</sup> and Malaja Perešćepina,<sup>70</sup> also the other pieces in gold or silver listed by Joachim Werner, Ola Kyhlberg and Ursula Koch,<sup>71</sup> some of them dating from the late imperial period. Other interesting pieces in this connection are the two rings (gold-plated over a silver and bronze core) from the Illerup bog deposit,<sup>72</sup> which are reminiscent of the false gold bracelets that Clovis gave the retainers of Ragnachar of Cambrai.<sup>73</sup> Another bog sacrifice find is the Jutlandic hoard from

<sup>63</sup> For example *Beowulf* 5, 921: *beahhorda*.

<sup>64</sup> Werner, "Der goldene Arming des Frankenkönigs Childeric und die germanischen Handgelenksringe der jüngeren Kaiserzeit", p. 39.

<sup>65</sup> Werner, "Der goldene Arming des Frankenkönigs Childeric und die germanischen Handgelenksringe der jüngeren Kaiserzeit", pp. 1-7; cf. above, n. 60.

<sup>66</sup> Bienaimé, *Le trésor de Pouan au Musée de Troyes*, pp. 9-11.

<sup>67</sup> *Germanen, Hunnen und Awaren*, pp. 183 ff. with plate 13; Werner, "Der goldene Arming des Frankenkönigs Childeric und die germanischen Handgelenksringe der jüngeren Kaiserzeit", p. 4 with note 10.

<sup>68</sup> Werner, "Der goldene Arming des Frankenkönigs Childeric und die germanischen Handgelenksringe der jüngeren Kaiserzeit", pp. 2 f. with note 8; *Germanen, Hunnen, Awaren*, pp. 374 f. with plate 57.

<sup>69</sup> Werner, "Die frühgeschichtlichen Grabfunde vom Spielberg bei Erlbach, Ldkr. Nördlingen und Fürst, Ldkr. Laufen an der Salzach", pp. 170-173; *Germanen, Hunnen, Awaren*, p. 183 with plate 12 on p. 176.

<sup>70</sup> Werner, *Der Grabfund von Malaja Perešćepina und Kwarat*, p. 20 with plate 11, nr. 37.

<sup>71</sup> Werner, "Der goldene Arming des Frankenkönigs Childeric und die germanischen Handgelenksringe der jüngeren Kaiserzeit", index 1 on p. 6; index 3 on p. 15; Kyhlberg, "Late Roman and Byzantine solidi", pp. 118-121; the pieces of silver listed by Koch, "Die Grabfunde der Merowingerzeit aus dem Donautal um Regensburg", pp. 249-251; in general on the *Kolben* armlets Arrhenius, "Connections between Scandinavia and the East Roman Empire", pp. 129-134.

<sup>72</sup> Kyhlberg, "Late Roman and Byzantine solidi", p. 119, nr. 25. For his hint about this very interesting piece I would like to thank Claus von Carnap-Bornheim, Marburg/Lahn. See Carnap-Bornheim and Ilkjaer, *Illerup Ädal 5, Die Prachtausstattungen*, Textband, p. 360.

<sup>73</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 2, 42, p. 92: *Unde factum est, ut, datis auris suis armellis*

Fraer, near Aalborg in Denmark, which includes five sixth-century gold necklaces with a total weight of 2.115 kilograms.<sup>74</sup>

The term *ornamenta* should be understood to cover not only such necklaces and bracelets but also the whole spectrum of decorative objects known from the particularly richly furnished graves and hoard finds of the period under investigation. Brooches, often decorated with precious stones (usually almandines), served to hold clothing together, as did the opulent belt sets that should also be included in this context. Examples that might be cited are the brooches from the hoard find of Szilágy-Somlyó in the Carpathian Basin.<sup>75</sup> The buckles and the saddle fittings in the form of eagles, richly inlaid with almandines, from the burial find in Apahida<sup>76</sup> near Cluj in Romania likewise represent royal *ornamenta*, as do the belt-plate, buckle and counter-plate from the tomb of a member of the Merovingian royal household, the so-called "Tomb of Arnegundis" in Saint-Denis,<sup>77</sup> and the unique belt buckle from the Sutton Hoo burial find already referred to. The latter is a reliquary buckle that can be opened on the inside; cast in pure gold, it weighs 414.62 grams. The display side is decorated all over in style II interlacing animal ornament.<sup>78</sup>

There is much evidence of tableware in royal treasures.<sup>79</sup> Sets made of silver (occasionally of gold) were used as currency from late Antiquity on the basis of their precious-metal weight as indicated and

*vel baltheis, Chlodovechus, sed totum adsimilatum auro—erat enim aerium deauratum sub dolo factum—haec dedit laudibus eius, ut super eum invitaretur. . .*

<sup>74</sup> Geißlinger, *Horte als Geschichtsquellen dargestellt an den völkerverwanderungs- und merowingertypischen Funden des südwestlichen Ostseeraums*, p. 147, nr. I, 77.

<sup>75</sup> See on this hoard Hampel, *Die Altertümer des frühen Mittelalters in Ungarn* 2, pp. 26–38; vol. 3, plates 20–31; Fettich, *Der zweite Schatz von Szilágy-Somlyó*, with detailed descriptions on pp. 9–44 and a complete illustration of the hoard on plate 1. See the index of Kiss, "Die Goldfunde des Karpatenbeckens vom 5.–10. Jahrhundert", p. 129, giving the total weight of 2559, 07 grams and the weights of the single pieces.

<sup>76</sup> See Hampel, *Altertümer des frühen Mittelalters in Ungarn* 2, pp. 39–43; vol. 3, plates 35 and 36; Fettich, "La trouvaille d'Apahida", pp. 145–147 with plate XXI, 2 (buckle); see Horedt and Protase, "Das zweite Fürstengrab von Apahida (Siebenbürgen)", pp. 177–189 with plates 32–56.

<sup>77</sup> On this belt-plate and buckle see France-Lanord and Fleury, "Das Grab der Arnegundis in Saint-Denis", pp. 355–358 with plate 29; Périn, "A propos de la datation et de l'interprétation de la tombe No. 49 de la basilique de St. Denis", pp. 17–19; Werner, "Frankish Royal Tombs of Cologne and Saint Denis", pp. 208–215 with plate XXXIV.

<sup>78</sup> See Bruce-Mitford, *The Sutton Hoo Ship-Burial* 2, pp. 536–564 with plate 20; vol. 1, plate E. Criticising Bruce-Mitford's publication of this buckle: Werner, "Das Schiffgrab von Sutton Hoo", pp. 198–201; p. 206.

<sup>79</sup> For example Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 7, 4, p. 328; or Fredegar 2, 53, pp. 74 f.; *ibid.*, 4, 73, pp. 157 ff.

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<sup>80</sup> Mundell Mango, "Silver plate among the Romans and among the barbarians", pp. 77 ff.; Painter, "Roman Silver Hoards: Ownership and Status", pp. 102 f.; Cruikshank Dodd, "Byzantine silver stamps", VII.

<sup>81</sup> Zahn, "Die Silberteller von Hassleben und Augst", pp. 59–96, plates 26–29.

<sup>82</sup> *Der spätromische Silberschatz von Kaiseraugst*, eds. Cahn and Kaufmann-Heinimann.

<sup>83</sup> Mundell Mango, "Der Seuso-Schatzfund", pp. 70–88; *The Seuso Treasure* 1.

<sup>84</sup> Odobesco, *Le Trésor de Pietroasa* 1, pp. 89–218; vol. 2, pp. 5–58, pp. 90–108; Dunareanu-Vulpe, *Der Schatz von Pietroasa*, pp. 16–32; Roth, *Die Kunst der Völkerwanderungszeit*, p. 137, nr. 47.

<sup>85</sup> Dannheimer, "Goldschmiedearbeiten aus dem Besitz der Königin Theodelinde", pp. 342–345 with plate on 346; *Die Langobarden. Von der Unterelbe nach Italien*, nr. 111, pp. 326 f.

<sup>86</sup> Bruce-Mitford and Youngs, "The Silver", pp. 1–201. See also Werner, "Nachlese zum Schiffgrab von Sutton Hoo", pp. 467–478.

<sup>87</sup> László and Rácz, *Der Goldschatz von Nagyszentmiklós*.

<sup>88</sup> Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni* 33, p. 40: *Inter ceteros thesauros atque pecuniam tres mensas argenteas et auream unam praecipuae magnitudinis et ponderis esse constat. . . una ex his, quae forma quadrangula descriptionem urbis Constantinopolitanae continet. . . et altera, quae forma rotunda Romanae urbis effigie figurata est. . .* See on these dishes with pictures of towns Schramm, "Karl der Große: Denkart und Grundauffassungen", pp. 316 f. with note 36. Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni* 33, p. 40: *Tertiam, quae ceteris et operis pulchritudine et ponderis gravitate multum excellit, quae tribus orbibus conexa totius mundi descriptionem subtili ac minuta figuratiōne complectitur, et auream illam, quae quarta esse dicta est, in tertiae illius et inter heredes suos. . .*

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<sup>86</sup> Bruce-Mitford and Youngs, "The Silver", pp. 1–201. See also Werner, "Nachlese zum Schiffgrab von Sutton Hoo", pp. 467–478.

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tables broken up and the pieces distributed among his followers in 842.<sup>89</sup> The sections of a large silver dish from the treasure found at Groß-Bodungen in Thuringia show that such practices had been customary as early as the fifth century.<sup>90</sup>

Also decorative in character were the weapons, many of them richly adorned with precious metals and gems, that are occasionally cited as separate items in royal treasures. Here I might mention the garnet inlaid gold-hilted swords from the tomb of the Frankish king Childeric in Tournai,<sup>91</sup> together with similar finds from Pouan<sup>92</sup> in France and Blučina<sup>93</sup> in Moravia.

Finally, a few brief comments would seem to be called for regarding the true symbols of dominion that were beginning to emerge, as well as the clothing, books, documents, and relics that, according to the sources, royal treasures might contain.

The question of the development of crowns as insignia of kingship is one of the most thoroughly discussed problems of early medieval constitutional history, and this is not the place either to recapitulate or to continue that debate.<sup>94</sup> What is certain is that the crowns that the Lombards and the Visigoths undoubtedly possessed in the seventh century represented truly royal jewellery and were kept in their respective royal treasures. In this connection, one thinks inevitably of the crown of Theodelinda in Monza, which is probably the oldest surviving example of an early medieval queen's crown.<sup>95</sup> The treasure of Guarrazar, near Toledo, contains a whole series of seventh-century crowns that had been given to the cathedral of the Visigothic royal capital as ceremonial crowns, and probably hidden from the Arabs

*dividendae partis augmento esse constituit.* See Estey, "Charlemagne's silver celestial table", pp. 112–117 and Schramm, "Karl der Große: Denkart und Grundauffassungen", pp. 317–319.

<sup>89</sup> *Annales Bertiniani ad a. 842*, p. 27: . . . *disco etiam mirae magnitudinis ac pulchritudinis argenteo, in quo et orbis totius descriptio et astrorum consideratio et varius planetarum discursus, divisus ab invicem spatius, signis eminentioribus sculpta radiabant, particulatim praeciso suisque distributo. . . .*

<sup>90</sup> Grünhagen, *Der Schatzfund von Groß-Bodungen*, plates 2 and 3.

<sup>91</sup> "Childéric-Clovis", *Rois des Francs 482–1983*, p. 59.

<sup>92</sup> Bienaimé, *Le trésor de Pouan au Musée de Troyes*, pp. 7 f.

<sup>93</sup> *Germanen, Hunnen, Awaren*, pp. 374 f. with plate 56 on p. 362.

<sup>94</sup> See Schneider, *Königswahl und Königserhebung im Frühmittelalter*, pp. 191–212, Brühl, "Fränkischer Krönungsbrauch und das Problem der Festkrönungen", pp. 265–320; Jäschke, "Frühmittelalterliche Festkrönungen?", pp. 556–588.

<sup>95</sup> Dannheimer, "Goldschmiedearbeiten aus dem Besitz der Königin Theodelinde", p. 345; *Die Langobarden*, nr. 114, pp. 332 f.

in the eighth century.<sup>96</sup> From the Carolingian period, there is the so-called "Iron Crown" of the Lombards in the Monza cathedral treasury. This is also a queen's crown, which as Reinhard Elze plausibly suggested came from the circle of Louis the Pious, reaching Monza through the intermediary of Berengar, son of margrave Eberhard of Friuli, and eventually acquiring the character of a relic.<sup>97</sup>

When, from time to time, there is mention of clothing in connection with treasures, the reference is usually to silks and gold-brocaded fabrics of the kind that were found in a rich woman's tomb at Untersiebenbrunn in the province of Lower Austria.<sup>98</sup> These might include articles of clothing with particular associations of some kind; in this context one might cite the late-Roman officer's cloak, held together with a gold cross-bow brooch, in which the Frankish king Childeric was buried.<sup>99</sup>

Occasionally, where no separation had been made between court and court chapel, liturgical implements and books also belonged to a royal treasure.<sup>100</sup> One thinks, for example, of the Gospel of Theodelinda in Monza.<sup>101</sup> Relics (of which there are few mentions) also belong in this category. The premises in which treasures were kept might also serve as an archive for particularly valuable documents. This explains why old tax rolls,<sup>102</sup> wills,<sup>103</sup> deeds, correspondence,<sup>104</sup> or, as in the case of the Visigoths, an example of a newly drawn-up code of laws<sup>105</sup> have been mentioned in connection with royal treasures.

<sup>96</sup> Palol and Ripoll, *Die Goten*, pp. 260–272, plates 208, pp. 214–216; Roth, *Die Kunst der Völkerwanderungszeit*, pp. 150 f., nrs. 64 f., plates 64 f.

<sup>97</sup> Elze, "Die Eiserne Krone in Monza", pp. 450–479; Roth, *Kunst und Handwerk im frühen Mittelalter*, plate 14.

<sup>98</sup> Wolfram, *Gold von der Donau*, p. 33.

<sup>99</sup> See above note 60.

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<sup>101</sup> Dannheimer, "Goldschmiedearbeiten aus dem Besitz der Königin Theodelinde", pp. 343 f.

<sup>102</sup> For example, Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 9, 30, p. 449.

<sup>103</sup> *Gesta Dagoberti* 39, p. 417: . . . *ut iam diximus, devotio animae admonuit pro aeterna retributione testamentum condere, . . . in thesauro nostro reponi iubemus.*

<sup>104</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 10, 19, p. 512: *Scripta enim ista in regestum Chilperici regis in unum scriniorum pariter sunt reperta ac tunc ad eum pervenerunt, quando, interempto Chilperico, thesauri eius de Calensi Parisiaca urbis villa ablati ad eundem dilati sunt.*

<sup>105</sup> *Commoitorium Alarici regis, Leges Visigothorum*, ed. Zeumer, p. 466: *Et ideo secundum subscriptum librum, qui in thesauris nostris habetur. . . .*



Where did they come from, these objects and materials in royal treasures, particularly the gold, silver, and precious stones that are repeatedly given such prominence? It is a question we should approach very much from the premise that, in the *Völkerwanderungszeit* and the early Middle Ages, there were few opportunities for Western rulers to meet their precious-metal requirements through mining on their own lands.<sup>106</sup>

So far as royal sources of income are concerned, we should think in the first place of the plunder amassed during the period of migration and subsequently as a result of extensive looting campaigns on Roman territory and later in the territories of neighbouring peoples. We need recall only the demands made by Alaric in 408, when he received five thousand pounds of gold and thirty thousand pounds of silver in return for lifting the siege of Rome;<sup>107</sup> when he overran the city two years later, the spoils he took were immeasurable.<sup>108</sup> Procopius of Caesarea says of the royal treasure of the Vandals which Belisarius was able to bring to Byzantium and put on show there that it "included golden thrones and litters . . . many gem-encrusted jewels and gold drinking vessels as well as many talents of silver, every kind of tableware, and the entire treasure of imperial receptacles".<sup>109</sup> No doubt these items stemmed from the time when the Vandal king Gaiseric sacked Rome in 455. Just as Belisarius plundered the treasure of the Vandal king, the kings of the period tried (successfully, as we have seen) to steal one another's treasures in war: Clovis and Alaric II, Visigoths and Suebi,<sup>110</sup> Charlemagne and Desiderius, and once again, Charlemagne and the treasure from the *ring* of the Avars.<sup>111</sup> At another

<sup>106</sup> Sprandel, "Bergbau und Verhüttung im frühmittelalterlichen Europa", pp. 583-601; Zotz, "Schriftquellen zum Bergbau im frühen Mittelalter", pp. 183-193.

<sup>107</sup> Zosimos, *Historia Nova* 5, 40, 41, 3 ff.; 42, 1, pp. 268-272; see Wolfram, *Die Goten*, p. 162 with note 49.

<sup>108</sup> Procopius of Caesarea, *De bello Gothico* 1, 12, 42, pp. 68 f., tells us that Alaric's Visigoths, for example, plundered from Rome parts of the treasure that had been in the temple of Solomon at Jerusalem until to the year 70 A.D. and was then brought to Rome. Maybe parts of these spoils were in the Visigothic treasure in the beginning of the eighth century, when the Visigothic kingdom was conquered by the Arabs. See Claude, "Beiträge zur Geschichte der frühmittelalterlichen Königsschätze", pp. 8 f.; Wolfram, *Die Goten*, p. 165 with note 63.

<sup>109</sup> Procopius of Caesarea, *De bello Vandalico* 2, 9, pp. 456 f.

<sup>110</sup> Johannes of Biclaro, *Chronica ad a. 585*, p. 93: . . . *Liuvigildus rex Gallaecias vastat, Audecanem regem comprehensum regno privat, Suevorum gentem, thesaurum et patriam in suam rediit potestatem et Gothorum provinciam facit.*

<sup>111</sup> See notes 35 and 36.

level, however, plundering was also a promising occupation: for example, robbing ecclesiastical treasures, as the Arian booty of the Frankish king from the Visigothic war of 531 illustrates.<sup>112</sup>

Closely related to plunder is the tribute that was transferred between *gentes*. Such payments were a way of avoiding plunder campaigns, with their heavy toll of death and destruction, and of keeping the peace by making generous donations to powerful and aggressive neighbours.<sup>113</sup> An example is the lump-sum payment of 36,000 *solidi* that the Lombards paid into the treasury of the Frankish king Chlotar II in the early seventh century to replace and terminate the annual tribute of 12,000 *solidi* paid hitherto.<sup>114</sup> Byzantium, too, which had paid large amounts in annual payments to the Huns, for example, or later to the Avars, would occasionally dispatch huge sums to barbarian kings in order to secure their services in the cause of Byzantine diplomacy.<sup>115</sup> Around 583, for example, Childebert II received 50,000 *solidi* (approx. 227.5 kg. of gold) from Maurikios to persuade him to attack the Lombards in Italy.<sup>116</sup> In 812, the dukedom of Benevento in southern Italy had to agree to make a lump-sum payment of 25,000 *solidi* and pay further annual amounts of 7,000 gold pieces to Emperor Charlemagne.<sup>117</sup>

We shall be taking a closer look below at the exchange of gifts (referred to in the sources as *dona* and *munera*) that was a familiar feature of diplomatic relations between Byzantium and the *regna* and of mutual relations among the *gentes*. The *dona* and *munera* arriving at

<sup>112</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 3, 10, p. 107: *Childeberthus vero inter reliquos thesauros ministeria ecclesiarum praetiosissima detulit. Nam sexaginta calices, quindecim patenas, viginti evangeliorum capsas detulit, omnia ex auro puro ac gemmis praetiosis ornata.*

<sup>113</sup> See Duby, *Krieger und Bauern*, p. 65.

<sup>114</sup> Fredegar 4, 45, p. 144: *Anno 34. regni Chlothariae legatus tres nobilit ex gente Langobardorum Aghyulfus, Pompegius et Gauto ab Agone regi ad Chlothario destinantur, petentes, ut illa duodece milia soledorum, quas annis singulis Francorum aeriis dissobebant, debuissent cassare; exhibentes ingeniose secrecius trea milia soledos, quos Warnacharius millae, Gundelandus millae et Chucus millae acciperunt; Chlothario vero 36 milia soledorum insemul exhibebant. Quod consilia supra scriptis, qui occultis exseniati fuerant, Chlotharius ipsa tributa ad parte Langobardorum cassavit et amicitiam perpetuam cum Langobardis sacramentis et pactis firmavit.*

<sup>115</sup> See Kiss, "Die Goldfunde des Karpatenbeckens", p. 111; Iluk, "The Export of Gold", pp. 90-94.

<sup>116</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 6, 42, p. 314: *Ab imperatore autem Mauricio ante hos annos quinquaginta milia soledorum acceperat, ut Langobardus de Italia extruderit.*

<sup>117</sup> *Annales regni Francorum ad a. 812*, p. 137: *Pax cum Abulaz rege Sarracenorum facta; item cum duce Beneventanorum Grimoaldo, et tributi nomine XXV milia solidorum auri a Beneventanis soluta; ibid., ad a. 814*, p. 141: *cum Grimoaldo Beneventanorum duce pactum fecit atque firmavit, eo modo, quo et pater, scilicet ut Beneventani tributum annis singulis VII milia solidos darent.*

the court of a particular ruler found their way into the royal treasure, contributing to that ruler's income.

It is difficult to assess how much flowed into royal treasures from within the territories of the king concerned. This is a subject that the sources rarely deal with in precise terms. We know that the Merovingian kings made several attempts to revive the Roman system of taxation or bring it up to date,<sup>118</sup> but these met with resistance in the towns.<sup>119</sup> It is often unclear whether what was involved here was the land and poll tax collected in kind back in Roman times or a levy in *specie*. A reference in the *Life of St. Eligius* does indicate that some taxes were collected in gold and entered the treasure of the Frankish king in the form of ingots.<sup>120</sup> However, with the volume of foreign trade in the Merovingian Empire (for example) still a matter of dispute, it is as impossible to assess potential levels of income from tolls as it is to gauge how much income might have been made from the sale of products from royal estates.<sup>121</sup>

Property that the king confiscated from his enemies could be of substantial value.<sup>122</sup> Further sources of income, the size of which is in dispute, were the fines imposed on real or supposed lawbreakers.<sup>123</sup> And we must not forget the contributions made by all those who were prepared to pay for royal decisions. Here we are dealing with a grey area between gifts and bribes, as exemplified by the countless attempts to exert influence on the allocation of bishoprics in Merovingian times.<sup>124</sup>

<sup>118</sup> For example, Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 5, 34, pp. 239 f.; *ibid.*, 6, 28, p. 295.

<sup>119</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 5, 28, pp. 233 f.

<sup>120</sup> *Vita Eligii* 1, 15, p. 681: *Erat enim tempus, quo census publicus ex eodem pago regis thesauro exigebatur inferendus. Sed cum omni censo in unum collecto regi pararetur ferendum hac vellet domesticus simul et monetarius adhuc aurum ipsum formacis coctionem purgare, ut iuxta ritum purissimus ac rutilus aulae regis praesentaretur metallus. . . .*

<sup>121</sup> On tolls see Ganshof, "A propos du tonlieu sous les Mérovingiens", pp. 293–315; see also Claude, *Der Handel im westlichen Mittelmeer*, p. 75; on income from estates of Queen Fredegundis we hear in Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 6, 45, p. 318: *Ne potius, viri, quicquam hic de thesauris anteriorum regum habere; omnia enim quae cernitis de mea proprietate oblata sunt . . . et ego nonnulla de proprio congregavi labore et de domibus concessis tam de fructibus quam tributis plurima reparavi.*

<sup>122</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 7, 40, p. 363, on goods confiscated from the *patricius* Mummolus; *ibid.*, 9, 9, p. 423, on confiscated treasures of Duke Rauching. See Claude, "Beiträge zur Geschichte der frühmittelalterlichen Königsschätze", pp. 9 ff.

<sup>123</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 4, 43, p. 178, on Vigilius, who was condemned to give 16,000 solidi to king Sigibert I. See for other examples Claude, "Beiträge zur Geschichte der frühmittelalterlichen Königsschätze", p. 9.

<sup>124</sup> Claude, "Beiträge zur Geschichte der frühmittelalterlichen Königsschätze", pp. 9 f.

Less important income was that which accrued from grave robbery, the royal prerogative regarding treasure trove and the mining of precious metals. A precept of Theoderic the Great has survived, decreeing that burial sites must be searched for precious metals.<sup>125</sup> Certain capitularies assign any treasure buried underground to the king.<sup>126</sup> There are scattered references to the discovery of such buried hoards and the wealth accruing therefrom.<sup>127</sup> It is not known how far royalty was involved in the gold washing that went on in the upper Rhine and the Salzburg region.<sup>128</sup> Spectrum analyses of weapons and gold-foil crosses have shown that gold obtained in this way was little worked.<sup>129</sup> Recent archaeological research makes it clear that silver-mining in the Harz Mountains certainly dates from an earlier age than had previously been thought, and could in fact have been a significant element in royal supplies of precious metals in the Carolingian period.<sup>130</sup> However, it is still difficult to assess the importance of profits from minting in Merovingian and Carolingian times.<sup>131</sup>

We have looked at how the contents of royal treasures were constituted and where they came from. We now turn our attention to the different ways in which royal treasures were kept. On the one hand, we know of treasure chambers, chiefly in towns, which already housed *thesauri* in Roman times.<sup>132</sup> This suggests possibilities of continuity that elude precise analysis. The royal treasure of the Ostrogoths was kept in Ravenna<sup>133</sup> and Pavia;<sup>134</sup> these were the same sites the Lombard kings used to store their wealth.<sup>135</sup> The Visigothic kings

<sup>125</sup> Cassiodor, *Variae* 4, 34, p. 129.

<sup>126</sup> *Capitula Italica* 5, MGH Capitularia 1, nr. 105, p. 216.

<sup>127</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 7, 40, p. 363, tells us that the *patricius* Mummolus had got parts of his wealth from an old hoard he had found: *Ferunt autem ducenta quinquaginta talenta argenti fuisse, auri vero amplius quam triginta. Sed haec, ut ferunt, de reperto antiquo thesauro abstulit.*

<sup>128</sup> About gold-washing in Alpine regions see for example *Breves Notitiae* 3, *Salzburger Urkundenbuch* 1, p. 20.

<sup>129</sup> Hartmann and Wolf, "Vergleichende Spektralanalysen an einigen frühmittelalterlichen Goldfunden und Goldblattkreuzen", pp. 23–30.

<sup>130</sup> Klappauf, "Zur Bedeutung des Harzes und seiner Rohstoffe in der Reichsgeschichte", pp. 218–220.

<sup>131</sup> On minting in the early Middle Ages see Dopsch, *Wirtschaftliche und soziale Grundlagen der europäischen Kulturentwicklung aus der Zeit von Caesar bis auf Karl den Großen* 2, pp. 476–539.

<sup>132</sup> See Delmaire, "Les largesses impériales et l'émission d'argenterie du IV<sup>e</sup> au VI<sup>e</sup> siècle", p. 115; *id.*, *Largesse sacrée et res privata*, pp. 269–274.

<sup>133</sup> Procopius of Caesarea, *De bello Gothico* 1, 12, p. 69; *ibid.*, 2, 29, p. 288.

<sup>134</sup> Procopius of Caesarea, *De bello Gothico* 4, 33, p. 662.

<sup>135</sup> *Continuations of Fredegar* 38, p. 185; *Annales regni Francorum ad a. 774*, p. 38.

had kept their treasure under lock and key in their first royal capital, Toulouse,<sup>136</sup> and also in Carcassonne.<sup>137</sup> In the case of the Franks Cologne<sup>138</sup> is repeatedly mentioned as a depository, as is Paris.<sup>139</sup> It appears, however, that the king always took part of his treasure with him on his travels and that palaces and royal courts must also have contained suitable rooms to house it.<sup>140</sup> Gold and jewellery were kept in boxes and chests<sup>141</sup> but were also, on occasion, transported on pack animals in sacks or bundles.<sup>142</sup> Treasurers and special commissioners were responsible for administering royal treasures,<sup>143</sup> and there are indications that inventories were drawn up in writing, though none has survived.<sup>144</sup> Great importance was attached to the craftsmen associated with royal treasures, usually goldsmiths and others whose job it was to work precious stones. They had always to be capable of manufacturing special pieces in line with the most modern ideas. These may often have been stylistically original and have made influential contributions in the field of the decorative arts. The *Völundarkvida*,<sup>145</sup> in conjunction with the *Vita Sancti Severini*<sup>146</sup> and the *Life of St. Eligius*,<sup>147</sup> alone confirms the activities of such craftsmen, which can otherwise be deduced only from observations in the fields of archaeology and art history and from theoretical considerations.

The craftsman employed in connection with royal treasure brings us to the question of the functions such treasures performed in the context of the practice of royal rule in the early medieval period.

<sup>136</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 2, 37, p. 88.

<sup>137</sup> Procopius of Caesarea, *De bello Gothico* 1, 12, p. 68.

<sup>138</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 2, 40, pp. 90 ff.; Fredegar 4, 38, p. 139; *Liber Historiae Francorum* 38, p. 308; *ibid.*, 52, p. 326; see Steuer, *Die Franken in Köln*, pp. 45–55.

<sup>139</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 5, 1, p. 194.

<sup>140</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 4, 22, pp. 154 f.; *ibid.*, 7, 4, p. 328.

<sup>141</sup> *Liber Historiae Francorum* 38, p. 308, about Theudebert II's treasure in the palace of Cologne: *Cumque apertas arcas thesaurorum, ornamenta requireret...*

<sup>142</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 7, 35, p. 355: *Audierant enim eo tempore ducis Guntchramni regis, Gundovaldum ultra Garonnam in litore resedere cum ingenti hostium multitudine ipsosque thesauros, quos Rigundae tulerat, secum retinere... Reliqui litus egressi, requirentes Gundovaldum, invenerunt camellos cum ingenti pondere auri adque argenti sive equites, quos fessus per vias reliquerat.*

<sup>143</sup> Hincmar of Reims, *De ordine palatii* 22.

<sup>144</sup> For example *Vita Hludowici Imperatoris* 63, p. 647: *... et rem familiarem... per singula describi iuberet.*

<sup>145</sup> *Völundarkvida*, transl. Genzmer, pp. 186–194.

<sup>146</sup> Eugippius, *Vita Severini* 8, 3, ed. Noll, pp. 68–71.

<sup>147</sup> *Vita Eligii* 1, 5, p. 672. On Eligius of Noyon and his craftsmanship see Vierck, *Werke des Eligius*; Arrhenius, "Merovingian garnet jewellery", pp. 96–98; Claude, "Die Handwerker der Merowingerzeit", pp. 238–243.

Here too, of course, our first thought must be for the stocks of precious metals out of which tribute was paid. At times of crisis, a well-stocked treasury made it possible to ward off disaster or keep potentially plundering neighbours at bay, provided that total military defeat was not already a fact, and that the enemy was not thinking in terms of direct conquest, which would of course also have involved the loss of one's treasure. This was the situation in which Sigibert I found himself in 566, following the defeat of the Frankish army by invading Avars, led by their khagan Baian in person against the eastern part of the Merovingian kingdom. Although Sigibert I was already a prisoner, deserted by his army, Gregory of Tours reports how the king was eventually able to overcome the opponent he had been unable to defeat in battle by his *ars donandi*, the capacity for giving.<sup>148</sup> The khagan, Gregory tells us, was prepared to enter a *foedus*, and Sigibert was even showered with gifts in return.<sup>149</sup> Gregory's next words (to the effect that this redounded to the king's glory rather than to his shame) are open to different interpretations.<sup>150</sup> Contrary to that placed upon them by Jürgen Hannig,<sup>151</sup> they should in fact be seen as excusing Sigibert's defeat. Nevertheless, the episode as it has been handed down does show how extremely necessary it was for early medieval rulers always to be in a position to make gifts. The exchange of such *dona* and *munera* was thus very much a part of relations between *gentes* in the period under investigation; it was one of the "rules of the game" in the *Völkerwanderungszeit* and the early Middle Ages. There were few embassies that did not arrive bearing gifts and return laden with others. If we had the space, we could look, for example, in greater detail at the gold medallions that Chilperic I received from Byzantium<sup>152</sup> or at the elephant Abulabbaz, given to Charlemagne by Harun ar-Rashid in 802, which is said to have enjoyed its years

<sup>148</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 4, 29, pp. 161 f.: *Chuni vero iterum in Gallias venire conabantur. Adversum quos Sygiberthus cum exercitu dirigit, habens secum magnam multitudinem virorum fortium. Cumque confingere deberent, isti magicis artibus instructi, diversas eis fantasmias ostendunt et eos valde superant. Fugiente autem exercitu Sigyberthi, ipsi inclusus a Chunis retenebatur, nisi postea, ut erat elegans et versutus, quos non potuit superare virtute proelii, superavit arte donandi.*

<sup>149</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 4, 29, p. 162: *Nam, datis muneribus, foedus cum rege inivit, ut omnibus diebus vitae suae nulla inter se proelia commoverint; ... Sed et rex Chunorum multa munera regi Sigybertho dedit.*

<sup>150</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 4, 29, p. 162: *... idque ei magis ad laudem quam ad aliquid pertinere opproprium iusta ratione pensatur.*

<sup>151</sup> Hannig, "Ars donandi", pp. 149 ff.

<sup>152</sup> For example, the reports Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 6, 2, pp. 266 f., gives about a Frankish embassy returning from Byzantium.

in the palace gardens in Aachen, before passing on in 810 during a campaign against the Danes.<sup>153</sup>

But it was not only dealings with neighbours near and far that were marked by the giving and receiving of gifts; the practice was also necessary and customary in the ruler's immediate environment. Tacitus, in his *Germania*, describes vassal relationships in which one of the things that characterised the bond between master and man was the distribution of gifts by the liege lord to his retainers.<sup>154</sup> Opulent endowments from the king to his army and followers run like a red thread through the history of the early Middle Ages, from the false gold bracelets that Clovis bestowed on the followers of his rival Ragnachar of Cambrai,<sup>155</sup> through the portions of the looted treasure of the Avars that Charlemagne handed out to his victorious troops,<sup>156</sup> to the table from the emperor's inheritance that his grandson Lothar I had broken up and distributed among his remaining supporters.<sup>157</sup>

Rich gifts were also a feature of the king's relationship with supernatural forces. Following his victory over the Visigoths in 507, Clovis donated part of the spoils in a solemn offertory to the church of St. Martin in Tours.<sup>158</sup> In 762, Pippin did the same for the Monastery of Our Saviour at Prüm,<sup>159</sup> and Charlemagne dispatched much of the treasure of the Avars to St. Peter's, Rome, and to cathedrals throughout his Empire.<sup>160</sup>

<sup>153</sup> *Annales regni Francorum ad a. 802*, p. 117: *Ipsius anni mense Iulio, XIII. Kal. Aug., venit Isaac cum elefanto et ceteris muneribus, quae a rege Persarum missa sunt, et Aquisgranum omnia imperatori detulit; nomen elefanti erat Abul Abaz; ibid., ad a. 810*, p. 131: *Imperator vero Aquisgranum adhuc agens et contra Godofridum regem expeditionem medians nuntium accepit, classem ducentarum navium de Nordmannia Frisiam appulisse. . . . Qui nuntius adeo imperatorem concitavit, . . . ipse sine mora palatio exiens primo quidem classi occurrere, deinde transmissio Rheno flumine in loco, qui Lippelham vocatur, copias, quae nondum convenerant, statuit operiri; ubi dum aliquot dies moraretur, elefans ille, quem ei Aaron rex Sarracenorum miserat, subita morte periit.*

<sup>154</sup> Tacitus, *Germania* 14, 1, p. 94: *. . . exigunt enim principis sui liberalitate illum bellatorem equum, illam cruentam victtricemque frameam; nam epulae et quamquam incompti, largi tamen apparatus pro stipendio cedunt.*

<sup>155</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 2, 42, p. 92. See note 73.

<sup>156</sup> *Annales regni Francorum ad a. 796*, p. 98.

<sup>157</sup> *Annales Bertiniani ad a. 842*, p. 27. See note 51.

<sup>158</sup> See Hauck, "Von einer spätantiken Randkultur zum karolingischen Europa", p. 46.

<sup>159</sup> Hauck, "Von einer spätantiken Randkultur zum karolingischen Europa", p. 92.

<sup>160</sup> *Annales regni Francorum ad a. 796*, p. 98: *Sed et Heiricus dux Foroiulensis . . . hringum gentis Avarorum . . . spoliavit, . . . thesaurum priscorum regum multa seculorum prolixitate collectum domino regi Carolo ad Aquis palatium misit. Quo accepto peracta Deo largitori omnium bonorum gratiarum actione idem vir prudentissimus atque largissimus et Dei dispensator magnam inde partem Romam ad limina apostolorum misit per Angilbertum dilectum abbatem suum; porro reliquam partem optimatibus, clericis sive laicis, ceterisque fidelibus suis largitus est.* See Einhard, *Vita*

Apart from enabling him to be generous, a well-stocked treasury made it possible for the king to run a household appropriate to his honour and rank. Lavish tableware provided the setting for the feasts and banquets that played such a crucial role in keeping the peace, forming alliances, and generating social cohesion, as described so impressively by Gerd Althoff.<sup>161</sup> It was the treasury that supplied the gold and silver that the mounted Clovis was able to scatter among those present after Emperor Anastasius had appointed him honorary consul in Tours.<sup>162</sup> And it was presumably the treasure of the Avars that, having first paid for the imperial coronation of Charlemagne on Christmas Day 800, opened up the possibility of challenging what had hitherto been the sole emperorship in Byzantium. The contents of that treasure and the craftsmen of Charlemagne's treasury together created the symbols of dominion that were to come to rival the insignia of the *basileus*.

Our analysis of the functions associated with the royal treasure—supplying the wherewithal for gifts and donations, for regal display and maintaining the royal household, for banquets and splendid weddings, etc.—brings us into the area of the structures of exchange in archaic societies as described by Marcel Mauss in his 1924 *Essai sur le don*: "Between chieftains and vassals and their servants, the hierarchy is established by means of gifts. Giving means providing evidence of superiority, showing that one is more and ranks higher, that one is *magister*; receiving, without reciprocating or giving more back in return, means subordinating oneself, occupying the position of retainer and servant, losing rank, becoming a *minister*."<sup>163</sup> The royal treasury of the early Middle Ages was the instrument by which royal rank was determined. In the light of the circumstances described by Mauss, it does not surprise us to learn that, in early medieval Europe, not only kings but other important figures such as dukes, generals, and bishops possessed and made use of such treasures.<sup>164</sup> In this sense,

*Karoli Magni*, 33, pp. 38 f., about gifts from Charlemagne's treasury to the cathedrals of the Empire.

<sup>161</sup> Althoff, "Der friedens-, bündnis- und gemeinschaftsstiftende Charakter des Mahles im früheren Mittelalter".

<sup>162</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 2, 38, p. 89: *Tunc ascenso equite, aurum argentumque in itinere illo, quod inter portam atrii et ecclesiam civitatis est, praesentibus populis manu propria spargens. . . .* See Hauck, "Von einer spätantiken Randkultur zum karolingischen Europa", pp. 30–33.

<sup>163</sup> Mauss, *Die Gabe*, pp. 170 f.

<sup>164</sup> See Claude, "Beiträge zur Geschichte der frühmittelalterlichen Königsschätze", pp. 10 f., 18.

the royal treasure was not an institution associated only with royal or even imperial rank, although being king was a guarantee of vast revenues, and treasures did of course include items that bore the character of insignia. In the context of archaic society, the royal treasure represented the pinnacle of an economic system to which broad sections of the barbarian conquerors in what had once been the Roman Empire were still committed. The almost unlimited means of the crumbling supremacy of Rome enabled the leaders of the *gentes* to bring that system to a final flowering. It was the drying-up of Rome's gold and the gradual adoption of Roman legal ideas that first ushered in the process that led to the feudalisation of the kingdoms of the Middle Ages and the consequent dominance of a royal gift that could not be stored in chests and sacks (except, of course, in the form of deeds)—namely land.

## IMPERIAL REPRESENTATION OR BARBARIC IMITATION? THE IMPERIAL BROOCHES (*KAISERFIBELN*)

Michael Schmauder

### INTRODUCTION

The focus of the following observations are four brooches which have been preserved to this day and have been known to researchers for a long time as the *Kaiserfibeln*. The name given to these brooches is based on their similarity to *fibulae* of the late Roman and early Byzantine period as portrayed in historical records and shown in illustrations (Figg. 1 and 2).<sup>1</sup>

Apart from the large ornamental fields decorated with precious stones, one of the characteristic features of the *Kaiserfibeln* is the pendants mounted on the base of the brooch. With regard to the emergence of pendant jewellery in his study on Frederick II's sovereign vestments Josef Deér commented in 1952: "The decisive innovation which dominated royal costume for centuries to come is also linked in this instance to the name of Constantine the Great. On both the armoured busts in the eastern and western side passages of the arch of Constantine (315) and on the gold solidus of the same year the new type of *Kaiserfibel* appears; its main feature are the two, three or more, strings of pearls, precious stones and golden pendants hanging from the actual brooch. Although there are numerous examples which provide evidence of their exceptional hanging arrangement

<sup>1</sup> The term *Kaiserfibel* was already used by Noll for *Zwiebelknopf* brooches bearing the imperial inscription: Noll, "Eine goldene *Kaiserfibel* aus Niederemmel vom Jahre 316"; Noll, "Zur goldenen *Kaiserfibel* aus Arezzo (ehemals Florenz). Ein Nachtrag zu Bonner Jahrbücher 174 (1974) 232"; Alföldi, "Die Niederemmeler *Kaiserfibel*: zum Datum des ersten Krieges zwischen Konstantin und Licinius"; nevertheless the term *Kaiserfibel* is used here since the items discussed are to be regarded as immediately related to the official imperial costume. Regarding official imperial costume: Belaeu, "Die Fibel in Byzanz"; Delbrueck, *Die Consulardiptychen und verwandte Denkmäler*, pp. 32-40; Deichmann, "Der spätantike Kaiserornat"; Delbrueck, *Spätantike Kaiserporträts*, pp. 53-66; Deér, *Der Kaiserornat Friedrichs II*, pp. 47-54; Wessel, "Fibel"; Alföldi, *Die monarchische Repräsentation im römischen Kaiserreiche*; Kötzsche, "Die Gabe der Herzogin Mathilde", pp. 168-174; Bierbrauer, "Fibel" 741-47; Bastien, *Le buste monétaire des empereurs romains* 2, pp. 406-415.

being used by the immediate successors of Constantine the Great right up until the end of the ninth century, the conspicuous lattice construction on the above-mentioned Constantine coin is in fact especially typical of the design. It remained unchanged as the main feature of the *Kaiserfibel* right into the eighth century."<sup>2</sup>

To begin with the remaining examples will be considered archaeologically according to chronology and their place of origin, in the course of which technical peculiarities will be of particular significance. The results achieved form the basic pre-requisite for the cultural-historical evaluation of the brooches, for which purpose historical records in particular will be utilized, alongside the analysis of other types of objects.<sup>3</sup>

*Kaiserfibeln* were amongst the objects found at Szilágysomlyó II (today Şimleul Silvaniei [Romania])<sup>4</sup> (Figg. 3, 1) and Petrossa (today Pietroasa [Romania])<sup>5</sup> (Figg. 3, 2), the grave complex of Ostropataka (today Ostrovany [Slovakia])<sup>6</sup> (Figg. 3, 3), and as a single object was found

<sup>2</sup> Deér, *Der Kaiserornat Friedrichs II*, p. 49. Deér's definition of the *Kaiserfibel* may initially appear too general, but it must be pointed out that a more precise delimitation of the brooch category, for instance based on its form, is not possible. The following examples represent the scope of variations of the brooch—Missorium of Theodosius Arce, "El Missorium de Teodosio I: Precisiones y observaciones"; Medaillon of Justinian I: "Byzance", pp. 167–169, nr. 113; Eugenius' gold medal (393–394 A.D.): Kent, Overbeck and Stylow, *Die Römische Münze*, p. 174, nr. 728, pl. 157; Honorius' solidus (395–423 A.D.): *ibid.*, p. 177, nr. 748, V, pl. 161; Clementius' Consular diptych (513 A.D.): Volbach, *Eisenarbeiten der Spätantike und des frühen Mittelalters*, p. 35, nr. 15, pl. 7; Consular diptych in Halberstadt (beginning of fifth century A.D.): *ibid.*, p. 42, nr. 35, pl. 19.

<sup>3</sup> I would like to thank Peter Bergmann and Gereon Siebigs for the translation and critical evaluation of the sources and Heinrich Härke for advice on English terminology.

<sup>4</sup> Fettich, *A szilágysomlyói második kincs—Der zweite Schatz von Szilagy Somlyó*, pp. 21–23 and pp. 59–62, pl. 8, 8; 9, 1a; 10, 1; Kiss, "Zeitpunkt der Verbergung der Schatzfunde I und II von Szilágysomlyó"; Harhoiu, "Chronologische Fragen der Völkerwanderungszeit in Rumänien", pp. 189–199; Kiss, "Die Schatzfunde I und II von Szilágysomlyó als Quellen der gepidischen Geschichte"; Garam and Kiss, *Népvándorlás kori aranykincsek a Magyar Nemzeti Múzeumban*, pp. 30–37, cat. no. 15–25.

<sup>5</sup> Odobescu, *Le Trésor de Pétroussa*, pp. 85–89; Dunareanu-Vulpe, *Der Schatz von Pietroasa; Harhoiu, The Treasure from Pietroasa*; Tomescu, *Der Schatzfund von Pietroasa*, pp. 230–235, nr. 98. In particular with regard to the brooches: Fettich, "Zu den Fibeln von Petrossa und Békésszentandrás"; Brown, "The brooches in the Pietroasa treasure".

<sup>6</sup> Hampel, *Der Goldfund von Nagy-Szent-Miklós*, p. 153, fig. 67; Riegl, *Spätromische Kunstindustrie*, p. 344, tab. 2; Beninger, "Der Germanenfund von Czeke-Cejkov", p. 224; Beninger, *Die germanischen Bodenfunde in der Slowakei*, pp. 148–153; Fettich, *A szilágysomlyói második kincs—Der zweite Schatz von Szilagy Somlyó*, p. 61, note 3; Raddatz, "Eine Fibel aus Zugmantel", p. 56, note 27; Noll, *Vom Altertum zum Mittelalter*, p. 66, cat. F 3, fig. 44; Werner, "Der goldene Armring des Frankenkönigs Childerich und die germanischen Handgelenkringe der jüngeren Kaiserzeit", p. 18.

at Rebrin (Figg. 3, 4)—generally known under the name of the town it was brought to, Nagymihály (today Michalovce [Slovakia]).<sup>7</sup>

## 1. THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE: CHRONOLOGY AND ORIGIN

### A. Ostrovany grave 1 (Figg. 4 and 5)<sup>8</sup>

In its basic form the brooch from grave 1 at Ostrovany is similar to the disc brooches of the imperial *Dienstkostüm* of the late imperial and late Roman period.

J. Werner most recently pointed out the outstanding significance of the object found in the grave at Ostrovany and wrote:

*Dieser bei weitem reichste und bedeutendste germanische Grabfund aus der jüngeren Kaiserzeit . . . steht im Range des Childerichgrabes und verdient trotz seines fragmentarischen Zustandes eine moderne Bearbeitung.*

This object, by far the most splendid and important find in a Germanic grave of the late imperial era is just as important as Childerich's grave and, despite its fragmentary condition, merits a modern study.<sup>9</sup>

Contrary to the opinion of R. Noll, who ventured to date the object to the late fourth century,<sup>10</sup> and in agreement with K. Raddatz,<sup>11</sup> Werner maintained that the object found in the grave originated from the third century. Recently E. Kreković examined the question of dating the whole complex.<sup>12</sup> In his opinion, which he does not, however, justify in detail, grave 1 at Ostrovany is to be dated to the end of the third century A.D.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Riegl, *Spätromische Kunstindustrie*, p. 345, pl. 4; Beninger, *Die germanischen Bodenfunde in der Slowakei*, pp. 56–57; Fettich, *A szilágysomlyói második kincs—Der zweite Schatz von Szilagy Somlyó*, pp. 58–59, note 1; Noll, *Vom Altertum zum Mittelalter*, p. 48, cat. no. C 3, fig. 35.

<sup>8</sup> Overall length: 14,7 cm.; brooch: 6,7 cm.; width: 5,6 cm.; onyx length: 4,75 cm.; onyx width: 40 cm.; height: 2,3 cm.; weight: 83,7 g. (after Noll, *Vom Altertum zum Mittelalter*), 71,8 g. (after Werner, "Der goldene Armring des Frankenkönigs Childerich und die germanischen Handgelenkringe der jüngeren Kaiserzeit", p. 18); inv. nr.: Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien VII B 306.

<sup>9</sup> Werner, "Der goldene Armring des Frankenkönigs Childerich und die germanischen Handgelenkringe der jüngeren Kaiserzeit", p. 18.

<sup>10</sup> Noll, *Vom Altertum zum Mittelalter*, p. 66, cat. F 3, fig. 4.

<sup>11</sup> Raddatz, "Eine Fibel aus Zugmantel", pp. 53–58, here p. 56, note 7.

<sup>12</sup> Kreković, "Zur Datierung der Fürstengräber der römischer Kaiserzeit in der Slowakei", p. 57.

<sup>13</sup> Further dating proposals: Riegl, *Spätromische Kunstindustrie*, p. 344 (first half of the third century A.D.); Fettich, *A szilágysomlyói második kincs—Der zweite Schatz von*

In the past the brooch was generally assumed to be of Roman provenance.<sup>14</sup> Noll regards the origins of the brooch as not definitely resolved.<sup>15</sup> However, the dolphin-shaped connecting pieces between the stone mounting of the upper side and the frame of the underside cannot be interpreted as Germanic artwork (Fig. 6). Apart from this, the *opus interrasile* ornamentation on the onyx frame<sup>16</sup> and the gold plating of the reverse side with pressed central umbos and floral palmed decoration can be regarded as a typical late Roman-early Byzantine ornamental technique; it can also be found in the breast-plates of Olbia<sup>17</sup> and Cluj-Someşeni<sup>18</sup> (Figg. 7 and 8).

### B. The brooch from Szilágysomlyó II (Figg. 9 and 10)<sup>19</sup>

The characteristic elements of the brooch from Szilágysomlyó II are the curved base, the large central field with the large slightly arched, central onyx and the rounded terminals of the head of the brooch.

Despite all efforts undertaken in the field of archaeological research over the last few years, a more detailed dating of the brooch cannot be made due to the lack of comparable objects. Nevertheless, the beginning of the collection of the treasure, the period between 360 and 370 A.D., can be taken as a terminus post quem for its fabrication, even though one cannot rule out an earlier origin—as far back as to the second quarter of the fourth century. However, the object very possibly belongs to the beginning of the fifth century, since within the hoard, which is believed to have been concealed in the middle

*Szilágy Somlyó*, p. 61 (around 300 A.D.). This question can probably only be settled by the complete new assessment of the find which Werner has called for.

<sup>14</sup> Roman: Riegl, *Spätromische Kunstindustrie*, p. 344; Fettich, *A szilágysomlyói második kincs—Der zweite Schatz von Szilágy Somlyó*, p. 61; see also: Wessel, "Fibel", pp. 544–545.

<sup>15</sup> Noll, *Vom Altertum zum Mittelalter*, p. 66; Bastien, *Le buste monétaire des empereurs romains* 2, p. 409; *Schätze des Österreichischen Kaiserhauses*, pp. 140–141, fig. 179.

<sup>16</sup> Riegl, *Spätromische Kunstindustrie*, pp. 266–291; Buckton, "The beauty of holiness: *opus interrasile* from a late antique workshop".

<sup>17</sup> Rupp, *Die Herkunft der Zelleinlage und die Almandinscheibensfibeln im Rheinland*, pp. 49–54 and p. 63; Ross, *Catalogue of the Byzantine and Early Medieval Antiquities in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection* 2, no. 166, 117–119, pl. 81 D; Bierbrauer, *Die ostgotischen Grab- und Schatzfunde in Italien*, p. 168 with note 248.

<sup>18</sup> Horedt and Protase, "Ein völkerwanderungszeitlicher Schatzfund aus Cluj-Someşeni (Siebenbürgen)", p. 92, note 18.

<sup>19</sup> Unfortunately the brooch was not available for inspection despite several inquiries and visits to the Hungarian National Museum. Length: 17,1 cm.; width: 11,4 cm.; onyx: 8,6 × 6,9 cm.; frame of the onyx: 9,6 × 8,1 cm.; weight: 455,8 g.; inv. nr.: Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum 122, 1895, 1.

of the fifth century (the youngest objects can be dated in this period), it is one of the least worn examples. This could, however, be due to the unusual design of the object.

With the aid of the onyx brooch from the second find at Szilágysomlyó it is easy to understand the contradictory classification concerning the origin of the preserved *Kaiserfibeln*.

N. Fettich, who presented the archaeological find in a monograph with detailed technical observations in 1932:

... glatte Goldplättchen unter den farbigen Einlagen, geriefelter Golddraht rund um die Zellen, Verzierung der hohen Zellwände, Vorkommen des kannelierten Goldbandes an der Onyxfibel und am Gürtelschmuck des 1. Schatzes ...

... flat gold discs under the coloured inserts, grooved gold wire around the cells, decoration of the high cell walls of the fluted gold band on the onyx brooch and on the belt fittings of the first treasure find ...<sup>20</sup>

—which relate the brooch with the other certainly non-Roman pieces of the treasure, comes to the conclusion that it must be a barbaric imitation of the late Roman *Kaisfibel*.<sup>21</sup>

B. Arrhenius in her work on Merovingian garnet jewellery argued that the brooch originated in the Pannonian region and believed that the emperor himself had commissioned the object.<sup>22</sup> In her investigations of the crossbow and round bow brooches of the fifth and sixth centuries A.D., from the areas west of the Rhine and south of the Danube, M. Schulze-Dörrlamm commented on the brooches from Szilágysomlyó and Pietroasa:

Daß es sich dabei tatsächlich um Fibeln handelt, die von römischen Goldschmieden hergestellt worden sind, beweisen u.a. die Scharnierkonstruktion und die teilweise verdeckten, leicht facettierten Zwiebelknöpfe, die auch an den zwei kleinen Vogelfibeln aus Pietroasa zu finden sind.

Proof that they really were brooches made by Roman goldsmiths is to be found, among other things, in the hinge construction and the partly hidden lightly faceted rounded terminals which are also to be found on the two bird brooches from Pietroasa.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Fettich, *A szilágysomlyói második kincs—Der zweite Schatz von Szilágy Somlyó*, p. 59. A. Riegl and N. Belaev had already proposed that it originated from the late Roman era (Riegl, *Spätromische Kunstindustrie*, p. 344; Belaev, "Die Fibel in Byzanz", p. 107).

<sup>21</sup> Now see as a parallel to the decoration of the cell mountings: Feugère, "Apollon et Daphne sur une bouchle de ceinturon tardo-romaine en argent doré", figs. 3–5 and coloured plate.

<sup>22</sup> Arrhenius, *Merovingian Garnet Jewellery*, p. 197. See also: Arrhenius, "Almandin und Almandinverzierung", p. 176.

<sup>23</sup> Schulze-Dörrlamm, "Romanisch oder Germanisch? Untersuchungen zu den

In 1986 in his essay on East Germanic elite graves from the period of the Roman Empire and the early Middle Ages V. Bierbrauer examined the question of the origin of the onyx brooch and the object he called the "round" brooch from the find at Pietroasa and maintained:

*So sehr beide Rund-Fibeln auf der Schauseite, also in Form, in der Verwendung kostbarer Steine und mit ihren Pendilien auch den Kaiserfibeln entsprechen, so klar belegt die Rückseite, daß die beiden Fibeln im Barbarikum von barbarischen Goldschmieden gefertigt wurden: Dies beweist der Befestigungsapparat, der zwar ebenfalls wie an römischen Fibeln Zwiebelknöpfe aufweist bzw. imitiert; sie sind aber aufgelötet und nicht verschraubt, womit das komplizierte An- und Ablegen entfiel.*

Despite the fact that the form of the front side of both "round" brooches—with precious stones and pendants—are very similar to the *Kaiserfibeln*, the reverse sides clearly prove that both brooches are made in the *barbaricum* by barbarian goldsmiths: this is proved by the fastening mechanism which, although it has rounded terminals reminiscent of Roman brooches or imitating them, is soldered and not screwed on—thus avoiding complicated putting on and taking off.<sup>24</sup>

Above all because of the unique design of the object and the use of numerous elements found on Roman brooches, I. Bóna came to the following conclusion:

*Der Form nach geht die Fibel auf die spätromischen, im 4. Jahrhundert üblichen Zwiebelknopffibeln zurück. Die eigentümlich rohrförmigen Fassungen der Karneol- und Bergkristalleinlagen sind von antiken Goldgeflecht überzogen. Auch der Nadelhalter ist eine charakteristisch römische Arbeit. Der 8,6 × 6,9 cm. große, ovale Onyx in der Mitte ist ein so kunstvoll geschliffener Edelstein, wie ihn zur damaligen Zeit keine einzige barbarische Werkstatt hätte herstellen können. . . . Aller Wahrscheinlichkeit nach ist sie ein Erzeugnis der kaiserlichen Goldschmiedewerkstatt in Konstantinopel.*

The form would suggest that the design of the brooch is based on the type of crossbow brooch typical of the late Roman era in the fourth century. The actual cylindrical frame of the carnelian and rock crystal inlays are covered with antique gold latticework. The pin clasp is also characteristic Roman work. The 8.6 × 6.9 cm. large, oval onyx in the middle is such a skillfully ground precious stone, that no barbarian workshop at that time could have produced it. . . . In all probability it is a product of the imperial goldsmith workshop in Constantinople.<sup>25</sup>

Armbrust- und Bügelknopffibeln des 5. Jahrhunderts n. Chr. aus den Gebieten westlich des Rheins und südlich der Donau", p. 678.

<sup>24</sup> Bierbrauer, "Ostgermanische Oberschichtgräber der römischen Kaiserzeit und des frühen Mittelalters", pp. 78–79.

<sup>25</sup> Bóna, *Das Hunnenreich*, p. 267.

M. Martin recently described this brooch as an *Oströmische Mantelfibel* (Eastern Roman coat-brooch), without, however, defining this term more precisely.<sup>26</sup>

The above-mentioned observations on the brooch from Szilágy-somlyó II show that the definition of the origin of the brooch is still disputed. Only technological aspects based on the fastening mechanism of the brooches can help to explain this since the validity of an evaluation like Bóna's—that such a "skillfully round precious stone" could not have been produced by any barbarian workshop—is largely beyond us due to the small number of such objects which have been preserved and to our incomplete idea of the potential of barbarian workshops or workshops under barbarian control, in particular in the Pontic region.

With regard to the fastening mechanism (which is shown below to be decisive for determining the plan of origin) the views of Schulze-Dörrlamm and Bierbrauer differ even more. While the fastening mechanism, in particular, together with rounded terminals makes Schulze-Dörrlamm conclude that the object is of Roman origin, Bierbrauer regards the simple design of the fastening mechanism without the screwthread, which is usual for crossbow brooches of type 6 and the following type 7, as a sign that they were made in *barbaricum*. Certain points of both views have to be corrected. Bierbrauer's assumption that the onyx brooch from the second treasure from Szilágy-somlyó and the "small" "round" brooch (as well as the "middle" = "Ibis" pair of brooches) cannot be Roman because of the lack of screwthreads, is based on Keller's attempts to date crossbow brooches of types 5 and 6.<sup>27</sup> However, in 1988 M.P. Pröttel showed that the production period of type 5 of the crossbow brooch has to be considerably extended—right up to the early fifth century A.D. This means that because of the above-mentioned chronological assessment of the object—i.e. presumably at the beginning of the fifth century—the fastening mechanism of the brooch from Szilágy Somlyó does not necessarily have to have a screwthread, since this first appears or can appear on crossbow brooches of type 6 and is only an exclusive feature of brooches of type 7.<sup>28</sup> To this extent one must agree with

<sup>26</sup> Martin, "Zur frühmittelalterlichen Gürteltracht der Frau in der Burgundia, Francia und Aquitania", p. 65, note 77.

<sup>27</sup> Keller, *Die spätromischen Grabfunde in Südbayern*.

<sup>28</sup> Pröttel, "Zur Chronologie der Zwiebelknopffibeln", pp. 364–369.



Schulze-Dörlamm's assessment of the brooch from Szilágyaomlyó II—i.e. that it is a late Roman-early Byzantine work which features the fastening mechanism typical of crossbow brooches. Particularly with regard to the brooch from Pietroasa the astonishing difference between the fastening mechanisms of the two brooches becomes obvious.

C. *Pietroasa* (Figg. 11 and 12)<sup>29</sup>

Among the objects found at Pietroasa there are two—the "small" brooch and the so-called eagle brooch—which have to be examined more closely within the framework of the problem dealt with here.

According to Harhoiu, the dating of the "small" brooch should be made on the basis of the rounded terminals which are hollow and faceted and typical of the crossbow brooches of type 6.<sup>30</sup> M.P. Pröttel's findings also suggest that the crossbow brooches should be dated to the period around 400 A.D., or the beginning of the fifth century—as suggested by E. Keller.<sup>31</sup> The dating of the "small" brooch and also the Eagle brooch from Pietroasa, however, are based mainly on comparison with the decoration of other pieces found in the whole of the find, which make a date in the second quarter of the fifth century probable.

As regards the origin of the brooch from Pietroasa the latest research also shows a marked contrast between the opinions of Bierbrauer and Schulze-Dörlamm. Unlike the case of the brooch from Szilágyaomlyó, however Schulze-Dörlamm's observation that the hinged construction of the brooch indicates that it is a Roman artifact proves to be incorrect.<sup>32</sup> In contrast to the Roman type of construction, where the needle axis is always situated in the lateral append-

<sup>29</sup> Length: 12,0 cm.; width: 7,6 cm.; weight: 204,0 g.; inv. nr.: Muzeul National de Istorie a României, Bucuresti 11434.

<sup>30</sup> Keller, *Die spätromischen Grabfunde in Südbayern*, p. 52: *Facettierte Knöpfe, die an Zwißelknopffibeln vom Typ 5 zu den Ausnahmen gehören (fünf von 44 Exemplaren, vgl. Liste 10, 217 f.), sind die Regel (14 von 17 Exemplaren, vgl. Liste 11, 219).*

<sup>31</sup> Harhoiu, "Chronologische Fragen der Völkerwanderungszeit in Rumänien", pp. 169–208.

<sup>32</sup> Schulze-Dörlamm, "Romanisch oder Germanisch? Untersuchungen zu den Armbrust- und Bügelknopffibeln des 5. Jahrhunderts n. Chr. aus den Gebieten westlich des Rheins und südlich der Donau", p. 679. D. Brown evaluates the fastening mechanism of the brooches in a similar way: "The oval body of the bird is like the large oval jewels in the centre of the imperial brooches, the chains of the pendants interlink in exactly the same way as those on the missorium of Theodosius, and the pin, though sprung in Germanic fashion, is mounted on a fitting just like that on a Roman brooch" (Brown, "The brooches in the Pietroasa treasure", p. 115).

age, which is joined to the rounded terminals—as already maintained by Bierbrauer<sup>33</sup>—the entire locking mechanism of the brooch from Pietroasa is soldered onto the lateral appendage (Fig. 13). Hence, this is an optical but not a technical imitation of the Roman fastening system. One cannot conclude whether this was because of ignorance, due to the lack of technical skill or due to the fact that reproduction of lateral appendages so characteristic of the Roman rounded terminals was regarded as more important than its technical aspects.<sup>34</sup> This latter explanation seems most likely. Certainly, however, these technical details indicate that the brooch from Pietroasa comes from a barbarian workshop.<sup>35</sup>

At this juncture it should be pointed out that there was probably a matching brooch and that it should therefore be regarded as part of a woman's traditional costume<sup>36</sup> as in the case of the so-called "Ibis Pair of Brooches". Nevertheless, this detail does not basically alter the fact that the brooch should be regarded as a copy of a brooch from traditional imperial costume.<sup>37</sup>

D. *Rebrin* (Figg. 14 and 15)<sup>38</sup>

The find from Rebrin must also be classified as a *Kaiserfibel*. R. Noll, who recently attempted a dating, estimated that it dates to the second

<sup>33</sup> V. Bierbrauer pointed this out in a seminar in 1988 on the Migration Period in south-east Europe.

<sup>34</sup> On the use of technical solutions customary in the mediterranean region in the barbaricum see: Arrhenius, "Die Schraube als Statussymbol. Zum Technologietransfer zwischen Römer und Germanen"; Stoll, "Der Transfer von Technologie in der römische Antike. Einige zusätzliche Bemerkungen zu einem Buch von Sigrid Duck".

<sup>35</sup> The following archaeologists assume that the brooch is a barbarian work of art: Odobescu, *Le Trésor de Pétroussa*, p. 87; Dunarenu-Vulpe, *Der Schatz von Pietroasa*, p. 37; Harhoiu, *The Treasure from Pietroasa*, p. 18.

<sup>36</sup> Odobescu, *Le Trésor de Pétroussa*, pp. 18–9: *Une fibule ou coquille plus petite (que les fibules VIII et IX antérieurement décrites), grosse comme une moitié de coquille d'oeuf de poule, ronde comme un boulet, en forme d'oiseau sans bec, mais ayant un cou plus droit et plus mince que celui des deux précédents, recouverte aussi de pierres menues comme la graine de lin. Cette pièce était désignée par les paysans comme la paraille de la petite fibule X. If one would assume a brooch pair chains would be most common like in the case of the Ibis-brooch pair. With regard to this see: Bierbrauer, "Zwei romanische Bügelfibeltypen des 6. und 7. Jahrhunderts im mittleren Alpenraum. Ein Beitrag zur Kontinuitäts- und Siedlungsgeschichte", p. 50.*

<sup>37</sup> Empresses with *Kaiserfibeln*, e.g.: Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten der Spätantike und des frühen Mittelalters*, p. 50, no. 52, pl. 27; Kent, Overbeck and Stylow, *Die römische Münze*, p. 175, no. 734 V, pl. 159; p. 173, no. 720 V, pl. XXVI; p. 178, no. 734 V, pl. XXVI.

<sup>38</sup> Overall length: 19,5 cm.; length of the brooch: 8,0 cm.; width: 7,0 cm.; weight: 160,1 g.; inv. nr.: Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien VIIb 307.

half of the fourth century.<sup>39</sup> However, different ornamental elements of the brooch suggest that it belongs to the decades of the middle of the fifth century.<sup>40</sup> Firstly one could cite the long right-angled garnets, known as "staff cells", whose cross-sections form a half-circle, which enclose the ornamental surfaces. However, such forms of stone inlays are primarily found in works from the second and third quarters of the fifth century but can be proved to have already existed in the second half of the fourth century. Individual examples also appear again in a slightly altered form around 600 A.D. and in the early seventh century.<sup>41</sup> Apart from the "staff cell" garnets with smooth surfaces, ones with lateral grooves can be found, which both in their function and their chronological position form a uniform group with the first category. In addition the juxtaposition of garnet inserts in the bridgework and enclosed stones in cabochon technique provide an important clue for dating purposes. Works in cabochon technique are characteristic of the time around the first half and the middle of the fifth century.<sup>42</sup> Amongst the numerous comparisons, the middle pair of brooches from Pietroasa, with the arrangement of stones on their base and on the upper border of the headpiece, represents an obvious parallel to the brooch from Rebrin. The axe-shaped plane garnet inlay of the almost triangular ornamental field are reminiscent of a belt buckle from grave 2 in Bona in Algeria, for which Bierbrauer postulates a dating in the Ostrogothic period.<sup>43</sup> Due to the dating of the different ornamental elements it appears most likely that the brooch from Rebrin can be placed in the fifth century and presumably in the decades around the middle of that century.

Previous research suggested that the brooch from Rebrin was of

<sup>39</sup> Noll, *Vom Altertum zum Mittelalter*, p. 48, cat. C 3, pl. 35. Further early datings: Fettich, *A szilágysomlyói második kincs—Der zweite Schatz von Szilágysomlyó*, p. 59 (third quarter of the fourth century A.D.); Wessel, "Fibel", p. 545 (second half of the fourth century A.D.). See also: *Schätze des Österreichischen Kaiserhauses*, pp. 133–134, cat. no. 203, fig. 170.

<sup>40</sup> M.W. Conway proposes a date in the fifth century A.D. (Conway, "The abbey of Saint-Denis and its ancient treasure", p. 123, pl. 7, 2). See also: Vierck, "Werke des Eligius", p. 349. Belaev proposes a date in the fifth or even possibly the sixth century: Belaev, "Die Fibel in Byzanz", p. 108 (German summary).

<sup>41</sup> On the late occurrence see: Vierck, "Werke des Eligius", p. 350.

<sup>42</sup> See also the brooch from Fano: Bierbrauer, *Die ostgotischen Grab- und Schatzfunde in Italien*, p. 15 and pp. 340–341, pl. 59, 1–2a; Bierbrauer, "Historische Überlieferung und archäologischer Befund. Ostgermanische Einwanderer unter Odoaker und Theoderich nach Italien", pp. 272–5, pl. 10, 1–3.

<sup>43</sup> Bierbrauer, *Die ostgotischen Grab- und Schatzfunde in Italien*, p. 157, note 217, pl. 81, 2.

barbarian origin.<sup>44</sup> However, the only detailed considerations regarding this piece are by Fettich in his work on the second find from Szilágysomlyó II.<sup>45</sup> In principle Fettich's dating of the piece in the third quarter of the fourth century A.D. is to be rejected, and hence also his presumption that it originated in a workshop at the same time as the older find from Szilágysomlyó. Fettich's objections to the possibility of a late Roman-early Byzantine work prove to be just as unspecific here as in the case of the onyx brooch from Szilágysomlyó II. In particular his discussion of the fastening mechanism of the brooch is not accurate. It is correct that a pin is used for fastening the needle, as elsewhere—as can be observed on the pair of lion brooches from Szilágysomlyó II. However, in contrast to the latter, the brooch from Rebrin also has a sort of safety clasp which is pushed via the needle from the narrow end into the needle holder. The clasp and not the needle is secured by the pin (Fig. 16). The complicated construction of the fastening system is reminiscent of types 6 and 7 of the crossbow brooch. Fastening mechanisms, with a pin through the clasp holding the needle, are commonly found on provincial Roman brooches.<sup>46</sup> Apart from this, it must be pointed out that the needle holder, which is constructed as a simple hollow lateral appendage, is not an imitation of a late Roman crossbow brooch lateral appendage but is, rather, an ornamentation of an axle end commonly found on Roman jewellery, which is for instance found frequently on hinged bracelets.<sup>47</sup> Not least the plastic and plant-like arrangement of the leaf ornamentation on the brooch base and underside of the head make it extremely implausible that it originated in a Germanic workshop in south-eastern Europe.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Germanic copy: Fettich, *A szilágysomlyói második kincs—Der zweite Schatz von Szilágysomlyó*, p. 59; Noll, *Vom Altertum zum Mittelalter*, p. 48; Wessel, "Fibel", p. 545. Byzantine: Vierck, "Werke des Eligius", p. 349 with note 179.

<sup>45</sup> Fettich, *A szilágysomlyói második kincs—Der zweite Schatz von Szilágysomlyó*, p. 59 note 1.

<sup>46</sup> See for example: Belaev, "Die Fibel in Byzanz", p. 84 note 240, fig. 21; Saria, "Fibeln mit Sperrvorrichtungen"; Patek, "Biztosítószervezzettel készített fibulák pannóniából (Fibules Pannoniennes muni d'un appareil de sureté)"; Behrens, "Zur Typologie und Technik der provinzialrömischen Fibeln", pp. 233–234; Hattatt, *Iron Age and Roman Brooches*, pp. 195–196, figg. 79–80.

<sup>47</sup> Greifenhagen, *Schmuckarbeiten in Edelmetall*, pp. 325–326, no. 2787, pl. 63 and p. 329, no. 2812, pl. 64; Lepage, "Les bracelets de luxe romains et byzantins du II au VI siècle. Étude de la forme et de structure".

<sup>48</sup> See, for instance, the similar arrangements of leaf ornamentations on the underside of the bowls of silver spoons (Hauser, *Spätantike und frühbyzantinische Silberlöffel*, cat. no. 119, pl. 18d and no. 110, pl. 29c) or leaf ornamentations within the stone

## 2. CULTURAL-HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The archaeological investigations of the surviving *Kaisersfibeln* have shown that the artifacts from Pietroasa demonstrably originated outside the late Roman-early Byzantine Empire, whereas it may be assumed with equal certainty that the brooch from Ostrovany grave 1 was produced in a late Roman workshop. In the case of the treasure from Szilágysomlyó II and that from Rebrin important objections to the possibility of a late Roman origin can be dispelled, which consequently makes it probable that both pieces originate from within the boundaries of the Empire.

The following is intended to establish an overall cultural-historical relationship on the basis of the results obtained from the archaeological material. Here special significance is attached to the historical sources. The focus of this cultural-historical evaluation is the question of the conferment of such brooches on barbarian rulers, and the possibility of an imitation of the use of *Kaisersfibeln* in barbarian regions.

The bestowal of so-called *Kaisersfibeln* on barbarian rulers is confirmed in reports by Agathias and Procopius. Agathias gives a detailed account of the bestowal of royal investiture on Zathis, King of the Lazi, by Justin I in the year 522 A.D. He writes:

Meanwhile Tzathes had arrived from Constantinople accompanied by the general Soterichus. He had received his ancestral title together with the royal insignia from the hand of the emperor in accordance with time-honoured tradition. The insignia consist of a gold-crown set with precious stones, a robe of cloth of gold extending to the feet, scarlet shoes and a turban similarly embroidered with gold and precious stones. It is not lawful, however, for the kings of the Lazi to wear a purple cloak, only a white one being permitted. Nevertheless it is not an altogether ordinary garment since it is distinguished by having a brilliant stripe of gold fabric woven across the middle of it. Another feature of the royal insignia is the clasp, resplendent with jewelled pendants and other kinds of ornament, with which the cloak is fastened.<sup>49</sup>

There is a very similar description by Procopius of the brooches which were bestowed upon the five satraps of Armenia by Justinian I:

... Such was the disposition he made for Greater Armenia, which extends inside the Euphrates River as far as the city of Amida; five

sculpture: Effenberger and Severin, *Das Museum für Spätantike und Byzantinische Kunst in Berlin*, pp. 78-79, no. 8.

<sup>49</sup> Agathias, *Hist.* 3, 15, 2, ed. Frendo, pp. 84-5.

Armenian satraps held power, and these offices were always hereditary and held for life. However, they received the symbols of office only from the Roman emperor. It is worth while describing these insignia, for they will never again be seen by man. There is a cloak made of wool, not such as is produced by sheep, but gathered from the sea. The creature on which this wool grows is called *Pinnos*. The section of the purple cloth, where normally the cloth is inserted, is overlaid with gold. The cloak was fastened by a golden brooch, in the middle of which was a precious stone from which hung three sapphires held by loose golden chains. There was a tunic of silk adorned in every part with decorations of gold which they are wont to call *plumia*. The boots were of the red colour which the Roman emperor and the Persian king are permitted to wear.<sup>50</sup>

A comparison of the artifacts described above with preserved examples, with brooches named in other reports and those displayed in illustrations, show that both Zathis, king of the Lazi, and the five satraps of Armenia were actually presented with brooches which correspond with the known *Kaisersfibeln*. The appearance of such brooches in the areas north of the borders of the Roman Empire should therefore not really be regarded as surprising.<sup>51</sup> Since other possibilities of receiving this brooch—purchase or theft can be ruled out—are not conceivable, the artifacts from Ostrovany grave 1, Szilágysomlyó II and Rebrin represent the bestowal upon barbarian rulers of insignia, which were certainly very similar to the imperial costume, if not in all elements and design.

The small brooch and the eagle brooch from Pietroasa have to be evaluated in a very different way. Since they were certainly manufactured in a barbarian workshop, the brooches can only be regarded as imitations of the *Kaisersfibeln*. The considerable presumptuousness which is expressed in the imitation of a *Kaisersfibel* appears implausible at first glance and demands examination in the written record.

The example of Theoderic the Great and his rule in the Ostrogothic kingdom of Italy provides a basis for examining this phenomenon.

<sup>50</sup> Procopius, *De aedificiis* 3, 1, 17-23, eds. Page *et al.*, pp. 183 and 185.

<sup>51</sup> With regard to this see N. Belaeu (Belaeu, "Die Fibel in Byzanz", p. 109). Since the Roman Republic the bestowal of insignia on barbarian rulers was a standard element of Roman foreign policy. See for example: Heuß, *Die völkerrechtlichen Grundlagen der römischen Außenpolitik in republikanischer Zeit*, pp. 29-30; Sicking, "Das byzantinische Krönungsrecht bis zum 10. Jahrhundert", pp. 514-557 with note 32. See also: Braund, *Rome and the Friendly King. The Character of the Client Kingship*; Braund, "Ideology, subsidies and trade: The king on the northern frontier revisited"; Lordkipanidze and Brakmann, "Iberia", p. 34.

Theoderic's medallion from Morro d'Alba shall serve as an archaeological starting point (fig. 17).<sup>52</sup> The entire composition of the portrait is modelled on images on imperial coins and—with the depiction of Theoderic in armour with *paludamentum*, the Victoria on the globe and the gesture of allocution—it copies elements of imperial iconography. A description by Agnellus of a mosaic next to the palace door in Ravenna suggests that Theoderic had himself portrayed in imperial-style robes on other monuments. Agnellus describes how a picture of Theoderic mounted on a horse shows him wearing armour and armed with a shield and spear, accompanied by the personification of Roma and Ravenna.<sup>53</sup> Within the framework of these considerations the account by Anonymus Valesianus is also interesting. He reports that the "ornamenta palatii" were sent to Theoderic by Anastasius in the year 497 A.D.<sup>54</sup> Archaeologists today agree that this term must have meant a royal, not an imperial robe. Nevertheless Theoderic wore both the diadem and the purple, which must at least be regarded as exceptional. Hence, D. Claude comes to the conclusion:

*Er (gemeint ist das Ornat Theoderichs) scheint der kaiserlichen Gewandung geähnelt zu haben.*

It [i.e. Theoderic's robe] appears to have resembled the imperial robe.<sup>55</sup>

H. Wolfram takes the same attitude to Theoderic's public representation when he writes:

The emperor's prerogatives, such as the assumption of the title *imperator*, the wearing of imperial robes, the appointment of consuls, *patricii*, and senators, and the right of legislating, remained in a formal sense untouched, even though Theoderic the Great must have looked almost like a real emperor.<sup>56</sup>

K. Hauck's remarks regarding the honour bestowed on Clovis by Anastasius in the year 508 A.D. point in the same direction when he writes:

*Anastasius übersandte dem siegreichen fränkischen Heerkönig dieselben königlichen Würdezeichen, die er Theoderich d. Gr. übermittelte.*

<sup>52</sup> Bierbrauer, *Die ostgotischen Grab- und Schatzfunde in Italien*, p. 125 and pp. 292-3, pl. 26, 2-2a; Alföldi, "Medaglione d'oro di Teoderico", pl. 1; Palol and Ripoll, *Die Goten*, pl. 12; Alföldi, "Das Goldmultiplum Theoderichs des Großen. Neue Überlegungen".

<sup>53</sup> Agnellus, *Liber Pontificalis*, c. 94, MGH SS rer. Langob., ed. Holder-Egger, pp. 337-8.

<sup>54</sup> *Excerpta Valesiana* 2, 64, ed. Veh, p. 1226.

<sup>55</sup> Claude, "Zur Königserhebung Theoderichs des Großen", p. 5.

<sup>56</sup> Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, p. 289.

Anastasius sent the victorious Frankish king the same royal insignia which he bestowed upon Theoderic the Great.<sup>57</sup>

Wolfram showed that similar tendencies can be proved with regard to public law when he states:

In virtue of the contractually guaranteed right of *praeregnare*, the Gothic king had become *indeed a real emperor, a princeps Romanus* who called the Roman *imperatores* his predecessors.<sup>58</sup>

Wolfram also observes:

*Die italienischen Föderaten, die Goten, erheben keinen Kaiser, sondern einen kaisergleichen König.*

The Italian federates, the Goths, do not raise an emperor but, rather, a king on a par with an emperor.<sup>59</sup>

With all the respect shown by Theoderic to the Eastern Roman emperor on an institutional level, and the reservation of certain imperial privileges, there can be no doubt that in certain points the distinction between emperor and king almost disappeared beyond recognition. This is illustrated by the fact that—contrary to imperial legislation—during the celebrations to mark his *tricennalia*, Theoderic donated not just silver but also gold, which was actually reserved for the emperor only.<sup>60</sup>

The tendency towards *imitatio imperii* within the territory of the Empire which can be observed in Theoderic's actions must now also be presumed to have existed with regard to the owner of the treasure from Pietroasa. However, the fact that outside the Empire there was less scope for exerting influence meant that more obvious forms of imitation were possible there than in the case of Theoderic, who was restricted by numerous legal and customary restraints.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Hauck, "Von einer spätantiken Randkultur zum karolingischen Europa", p. 30. Regarding the events in Tours, cf. however: McCormick, "Clovis at Tours, Byzantine public ritual and the origins of medieval ruler symbolism".

<sup>58</sup> Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, p. 288.

<sup>59</sup> Wolfram, "Gotisches Königstum und römisches Kaisertum von Theodosius bis Justinian I.", p. 27; Prokop, *BG* 5 (1), 1, 26, ed. Veh (1966), pp. 12-3: "He rejected the insignia and title of a Roman emperor. All his life he let himself be called *rex*—which is what barbarians called their leader. However, he ruled his subjects with full imperial power."

<sup>60</sup> Ensslin, *Theoderich der Große*, p. 114; Wallace-Hadrill, *The Long-Haired Kings and Other Studies in Frankish History*, p. 176.

<sup>61</sup> Claude, "Zur Begründung familiärer Beziehungen zwischen dem Kaiser und barbarischen Herrschern".

In addition, the other items of the treasure from Pietroasa (Fig. 18)—above all the so-called Eagle Brooch—which must also be regarded as an imitation of the *Kaiserfibel*,<sup>62</sup> the collar and the so-called “Ibis” pair of brooches, and the large set of tableware and drinking vessels—all made of gold and decorated with precious stones—confirm the impression of an attempt to imitate late Roman forms of representation of the imperial court.<sup>63</sup>

FIGURES 1-18

<sup>62</sup> Although one cannot recognise any technical construction typical of brooches from the late Roman-early Byzantine era, the eagle brooch cannot be regarded as part of a woman's traditional costume since it is a single item in its own right. Rather, despite the fact that the East Germanic traditional costume did not feature any brooches, against the background of the *imitatio Imperii* it must be assumed that it belonged to a man.

<sup>63</sup> Brown came to a similar conclusion (Brown, “The brooches in the Pietroasa treasure”, pp. 115–116): “Emperors wear jewelled brooches with pendants, officials wear plain crossbow brooches. It appears then that the owner of the Pietroasa brooch was imitating not merely Roman fashion, but imperial fashion, as though he considered himself on a par with the emperor. . . . The Pietroasa treasure includes other items of personal jewellery, torcs, jewelled collars and bracelets. All are richly ornamented, and some may have been worn together with the brooches; but it is the brooches themselves which give the best indication of the significance of the hoard. They are the personal jewellery of a man and of one or two women who saw themselves as equivalent to the Roman imperial family. It is hard to see this as anything less than the regalia of a Gothic King.” However, the assumption of a public image directly modelled on the imperial representation says nothing about the legal relationship between the owner of the Pietroasa treasure and the Empire. Presumably he was one of the many self-proclaimed *kings* of the Carpathian Basin with whom the Byzantine Empire had concluded a *foedus*. (With regard to the relationship between the emperor and the barbarian rulers see: Chrysos, “The title *BASILEUS* in early Byzantine international relations”; Chrysos, “Der Kaiser und die Könige”; Claude, “Zur Begründung familiärer Beziehungen zwischen dem Kaiser und barbarischen Herrschern”, p. 41, note 6).



Fig. 1. Mosaic of Justinian I. (S. Vitale, Ravenna) around 527-565. (von Matt, *Ravenna* (Köln, 1971), pl. 88.



Fig. 2. Portrait of Theodosius I. (Missorium of Theodosius, Madrid) dated 388. A. C. S. P. *L'età d'oro di Giustiniano. L'Impero Teodosio all'Islam* (Milano, 1966), II, 378.



Fig. 3. Distribution of so-called *Kaiserfibeln* in south-east Europe. 1. Ostrovany, 2. Pietroasa, 3. Szilágysomlyó I and 4. Rebrin (after RGK-map).



Fig. 4. Front side of the brooch from Ostrovany. Author's photograph (length with pendants: 14,7 cm).



Fig. 5. Reverse of the brooch from Ostrovany. Author's photograph (length with pendants: 14,7 cm).



Fig. 6. Detail of the brooch from Ostrovany. Author's photograph.

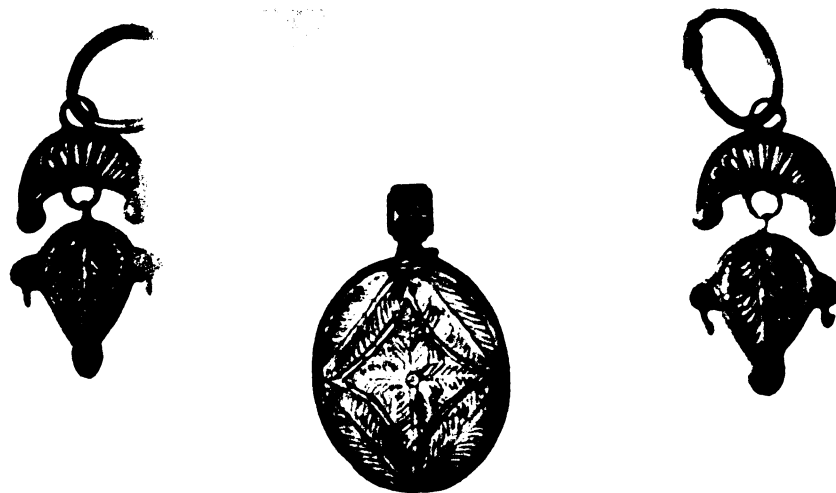


Fig. 7. Earrings and pendant of the Olbia treasure. M. C. Ross, *Catalogue of the Byzantine and Early Medieval Antiquities in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection 2: Jewelry, Enamels and Art of the Migration Period* (Washington, D.C., 1965), pp. 117-119, no. 166. Author's photograph (length with pendants: 14.7 cm), A, pl. 80 (pectoral) and no. 166, F, pl. 82 (earrings).



Fig. 8. Reverse of the pectorale from Cluj-Someșeni. Author's photograph.



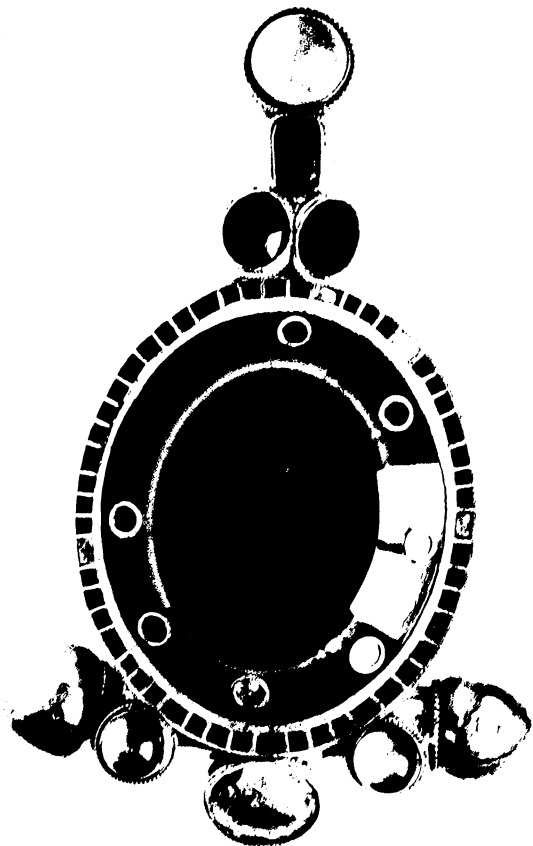


Fig. 9. Front side of the brooch from Szilágysomlyó I. National Museum Budapest (length 17,1 cm; I would like to thank A. Kiss for his efforts .).

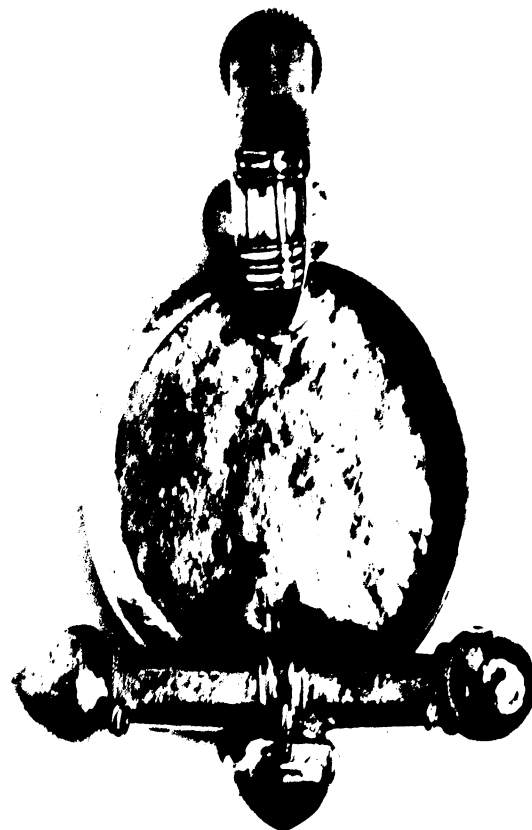


Fig. 10. Reverse side of the brooch from Szilágysomlyó I. National Museum Budapest (length 17,1).

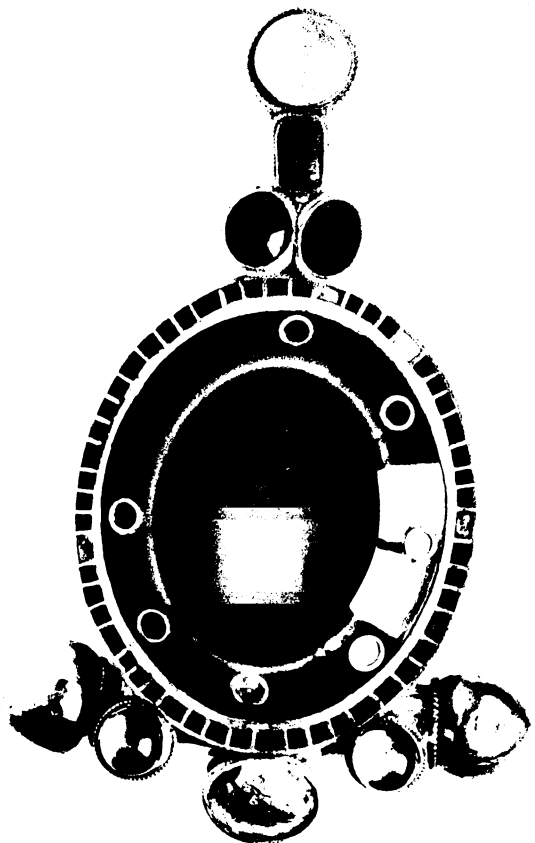


Fig. 9. Front side of the brooch from Szilágysomlyó I. National Museum Budapest (length 17,1 cm; I would like to thank A. Kiss for his efforts .).

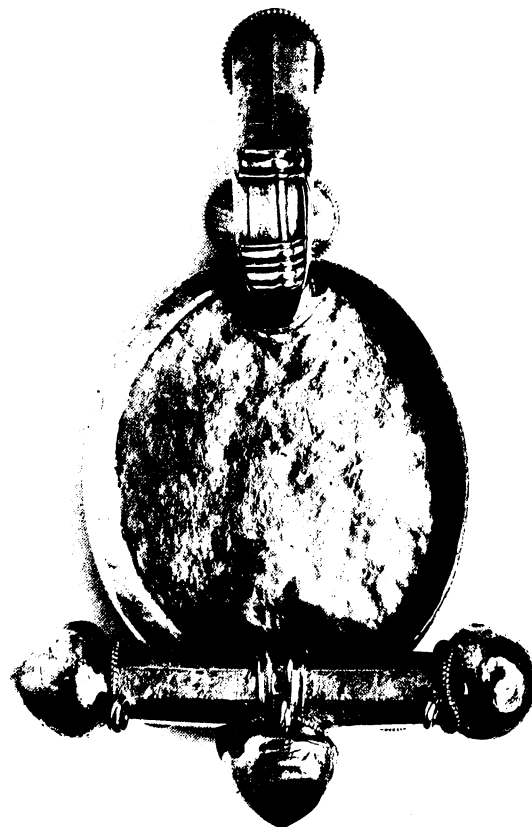


Fig. 10. Reverse side of the brooch from Szilágysomlyó I. National Museum Budapest (length 17,1).

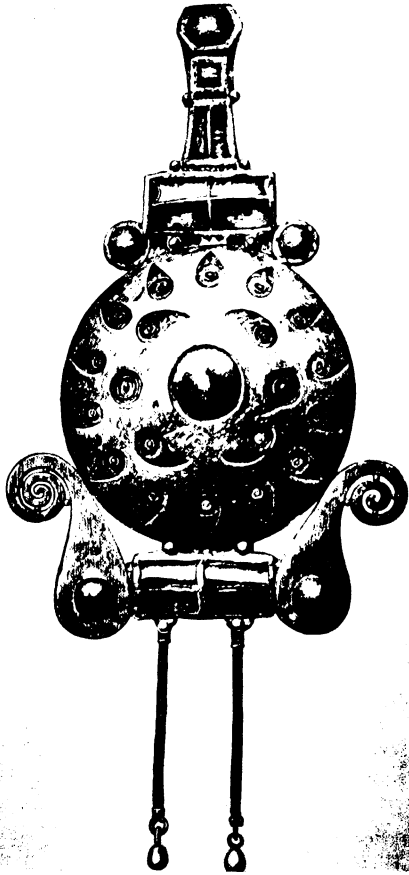


Fig. 11. Front side of the small brooch from Pietroasa. A. Odobescu, *Le Trésor de Petrossa. Historique - Description. Etude sur l'orfèverie antique* (Paris, 1896), ill. 99.

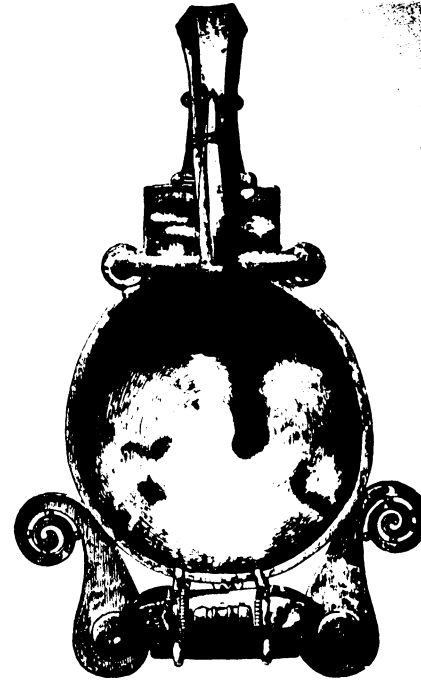


Fig. 12. Reverse side of the small brooch from Pietroasa. A. Odobescu, *Le Trésor de Petrossa. Historique - Description. Etude sur l'orfèverie antique* (Paris, 1896), ill.101.

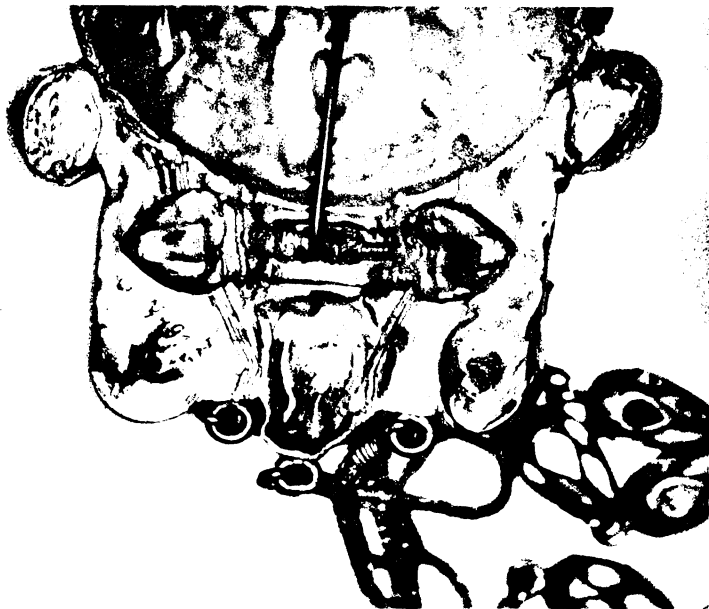


Fig. 13. Detail of the fastening system of the middle brooch from Pietroasa. Author's photograph (length without pendants: 12 cm).

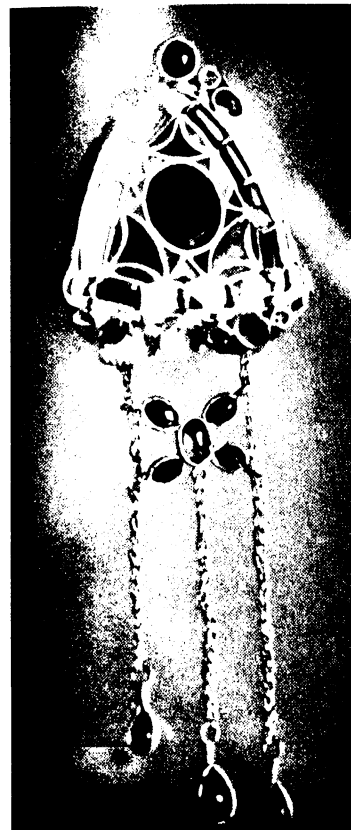


Fig. 14. Front side of the brooch from Rebrin. Author's photograph (length without pendants: 12 cm).



Fig. 15. Reverse side of the brooch from Rebrin. Author's photograph (length with pendants: 19 cm).

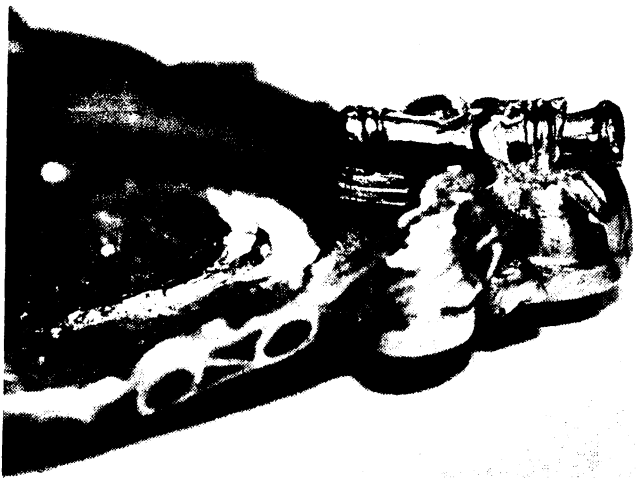


Fig. 16. Detail of the fastening system of the brooch from Rebrin. Author's photograph (length with pendants: 19 cm).



Fig. 17. Medallion of Theoderic the Great from Morro d'Alba. P. de Palol and G. Ripoll, *Die Goten. Geschichte und Kunst in Westeuropa* (Stuttgart and Zurich, 1988).

## CONCLUSION: STRATEGIES OF DISTINCTION

Ian Wood

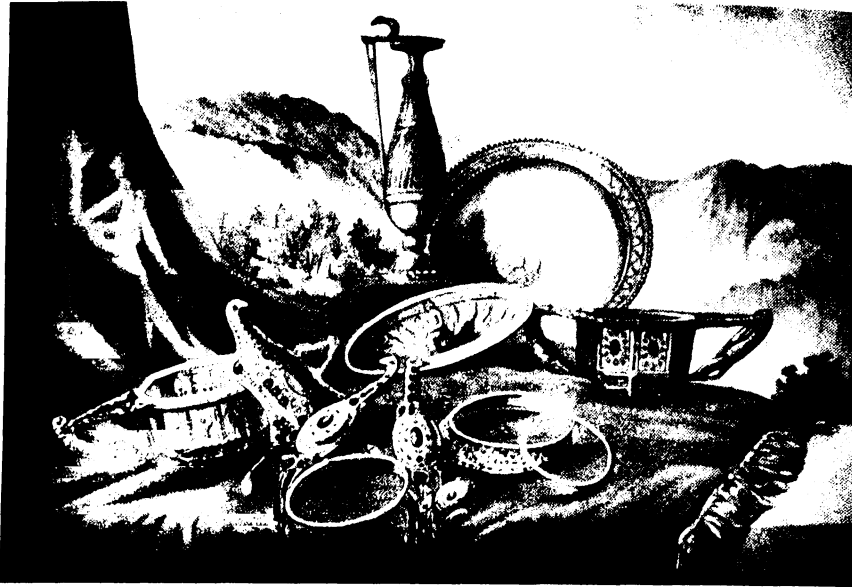


Fig. 18. The Pietroasa treasure, A. Odobescu, *Le Trésor de Petrossa. Historique – Description. Etude sur l'orfèverie antique* (Paris, 1889-1900).

Romans and Barbarians can be seen only too easily as binary opposites: such a view may be found in some modern scholarship, and it was certainly an opposition that some, indeed many, chauvinist Romans would have accepted. The modern historian should, however, never forget that the meaning of the terms *Romanus* and *barbarus* at any given moment was and is open to question: barbarians could be good or bad depending on the rhetorical requirements of individual emperors and their panegyrists: historical moralisers like Tacitus, or Salvian three and a half centuries later, could even use the *Germani* to criticise Rome. Like all binary opposites the distinction between Romans and Barbarians has a function, or rather a series of functions depending on the intention of the author, ancient or modern, who employs it. When the distinction and the contexts in which it is used are placed under the microscope inevitably something very much more complicated than the initial polarity appears.

For a start the meaning of the polarity, and the extent to which it has any significance, changes over time. Distinctions between Romans and non-Romans were altered by Caracalla's grant of citizenship to all inhabitants of the Empire: the barbarian invasions of the third century onwards brought further changes, as did the settlement of barbarians and the creation of the sub-Roman kingdoms.<sup>1</sup> These changing contexts were factors in the steady development of the meaning of the words *Romanus*, *barbarus*, and whatever more specific ethnic appellation might be used, during the period of the Roman Empire. To study such terms in detailed contexts is to look at the precise interface between specific groups. At times, particularly of crisis (for instance during the overthrow of Stilicho), that interface was highly charged: at other times it was of little or no significance. The establishment of a precise context and meaning for words or objects which might signify distinction is, therefore, of paramount importance.

<sup>1</sup> See above, Wolf Liebeschuetz, "Citizen status and law in the Roman Empire and the Visigothic kingdom".

One clear example of the need to look precisely at the moment in which a word is employed comes with the law of 373 legislating against marriage between *provinciales* and *barbarae*. As both Wolf Liebeschuetz and Hagith Sivan comment in their contributions to this volume, the initial legislation has a specific context in imperial concern about conspiracy, apparently relating to the rebellion of Firmus in Africa. The restatement of the law in the Breviary of Alaric, where the phrase *nullus Romanorum* takes the place of *nulli provincialium*, may also have had a precise, but different context, with the *barbarae* in this context perhaps referring to Frankish, rather than Visigothic women (although it should be noted that Burgundians were included within the term *barbari* when it was used in the Burgundian *Liber Constitutionum*).<sup>2</sup> Whatever was in the mind of Valentinian and Valens in 373 was clearly not in the mind of Alaric in 506: nor did the compilers who included the law within the *Codex Theodosianus* in 438, or the lawyer who added the *interpretatio* of the law, necessarily have the same understanding as the original legislators of what was intended by the dichotomy of *provinciales* and *barbarae*. Words take on and lose connotations in different contexts.

In time the word *Romanus* ceased to be so obviously the opposite of *barbarus*, but became instead a more limited term, referring either to the people of Rome, to the Byzantines or to particular groups in Aquitaine or the British Isles (where the word was used in a religious sense to distinguish between those following continental and Irish liturgical practices). In the first of these meanings the label thus became more strictly comparable with more specifically ethnic terms like *Gothus*, *Francus*, *Langobardus* or *Burgundio*. These latter terms, however, were every bit as fluid as *Romanus* and *barbarus* had been. This is clearly the case both when they are used in literary texts and also when they appear in legal documents, although to be sure such labels are liable to carry a particular weight and meaning in charters and laws.<sup>3</sup> To be a member of an "ethnically"-named group in the fourth century was, necessarily, different from being a member of a group of the same name two or three centuries later. At the most basic level there is the question of changing biological composition through

<sup>2</sup> *Liber Constitutionum* (= *Lex Burgundionum*), *prima constitutio* 11; 2, 1; 8, 1; 10, 1; 17, 5; 22; 44, 1; 47, 1; 55; 60; 79, 1.

<sup>3</sup> For a study of the use of the terms *Romanus* and *Langobardus* in the context of laws and charters see above, Brigitte Pohl-Reis, "Legal practice and ethnic identity in Lombard Italy".

recruitment and intermarriage among all the "ethnic" groups of late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages<sup>4</sup>—despite the labelling almost every group was polyethnic.<sup>5</sup> Additional factors, however, were also involved in the changing use of ethnic differentiation—labelling itself had different functions at different moments. Being a Burgundian at the time of the settlement of the people in Sapaudia was not the same as being a Burgundian within the Burgundian kingdom, and distinct again from being a Burgundian within the Frankish kingdom of Burgundy: in each case the function of Burgundianness was different: the Burgundians in Sapaudia were a newly-settled tribal group; their successors constituted the majority of the Germanic members of a kingdom which took their name, while the later Burgundians were defined by their relationship to a geographical subsection of the *regnum Francorum*.<sup>6</sup> These developments inevitably had political, legal and social implications, all of which affected the connotations of the term *Burgundio*. So too the meaning of being a Goth, a Lombard<sup>7</sup> or a Frank changed over time. While "ethnic" words may apparently reflect biological groupings in some contexts (as in the case of the Rugi who managed to retain a sense of identity within Ostrogothic Italy),<sup>8</sup> in other cases they reflect political affiliations, and in yet other contexts they may have had class implications.

Objects and actions can be as important as words in indicating how a group represents itself, and they are equally fluid in the meanings they bear. Some objects may at some moments be ethnic signifiers, although the *francisca*, which is given ethnic significance by Isidore of Seville, cannot be shown to have any clear correlation with Frankishness, and the connection is unlikely to take us beyond Isidore's etymological approach to the world.<sup>9</sup> More generally those objects (notably certain types of brooches, buckles or belt-fittings) which are most

<sup>4</sup> For the Visigoths see above, Dietrich Claude, "Remarks about relations between Visigoths and Hispano-Romans in the seventh century", and Gisella Ripoll López, "The arrival of the Visigoths in Hispania: Population problems and the process of acculturation".

<sup>5</sup> On the relationship of polyethnicity and ethnic discourse see Walter Pohl's introduction to this volume.

<sup>6</sup> I.N. Wood, "Ethnicity and the Ethnogenesis of the Burgundians"; P. Amory, "Meaning and Purpose of Ethnic Terminology in Burgundian Laws"; P. Amory, "Names, Ethnic Identity and Community in Fifth- and Sixth-Century Burgundy".

<sup>7</sup> See above, Dick Harrison, "Political rhetoric and political ideology in Lombard Italy".

<sup>8</sup> See above, Peter Heather, "Disappearing and reappearing tribes".

<sup>9</sup> See above, Walter Pohl, "Telling the difference: Signs of ethnic identity".

often seen by archaeologists as signifying "ethnicity" are, unfortunately, not described as such in contemporary sources—and there is, therefore, considerable danger in putting "ethnic" labels on any object. Nevertheless, in certain contexts groups of finds do appear to be ethnically diagnostic.<sup>10</sup> This is not to say that one individual object, which in a given cluster of finds might be ethnically significant, has any "ethnic" meaning at all when taken out of such a cluster, or out of a particular chronological or geographical context. A type of object might denote status in one generation, ethnicity in the next and fashion at some other place or point in time. Meanwhile, specific prestige objects, which can in no way be given a significant ethnic label on the grounds of type or style, might for historical reasons be closely associated with the self-representation of a *gens* or its rulers:<sup>11</sup> the seventh-century Visigoths, for instance, were particularly attached to a (presumably Roman) *missorium* which Aetius had given to Thorismud.<sup>12</sup> Equally, an object might indicate *imitatio* of the Roman Empire in one place (implying a willingness to be subordinate to Rome), while at precisely the same time, but in a different place, a similar object might indicate *aemulatio*, or a desire to ape or even challenge the Empire.<sup>13</sup> Only the most careful study of the contexts in question might hope to distinguish between the two.

The fluidity and complexity in the meaning of our evidence imposes upon archaeologist and historian the need for the greatest precision possible when considering strategies of distinction. Blanket polarities like Romans and Barbarians, or indeed ethnic labels in general, are not in themselves particularly meaningful, since their actual significance comes from a precise context. The scholar, therefore, needs to interpret an ethnic label within a kaleidoscope of changing discourses, while, at the same time, he or she should also identify the particular discourse which is of immediate relevance. In short, in looking at strategies of distinction the researcher has both to understand the development of

<sup>10</sup> See above, Falko Daim, "Archaeology, ethnicity and the structures of identification: the example of the Avars, Carantanians and Moravians in the eighth century"; Gisella Ripoll López, "The arrival of the Visigoths in Hispania: Population problems and the process of acculturation"; Michel Kazanski, "Le royaume de Vinitharius: le récit de Jordanes et les données archéologiques".

<sup>11</sup> See above, Matthias Hardt, "Royal treasures and representation in the Early Middle Ages".

<sup>12</sup> Fredegar, II 53, IV 73.

<sup>13</sup> See above, Michael Schmauder, "Imperial representation or barbaric imitation? The imperial brooches (*Kaiserfibeln*)".

a number of ethnic discourses and also to reconstruct the strategy of a single moment—of a single author, legislator, craftsman or owner. To borrow from and distort Peter Brown's discussion of Christianity in the early medieval West,<sup>14</sup> it is necessary to reconstruct microcosms. Individual microcosms can then be compared synchronically and diachronically with other microcosms, thus building up a more inclusive picture.

Of course this is a counsel of perfection, and strictly speaking it is an impossible counsel for the student of the early Middle Ages to follow. It is rare that one can reconstruct even a single microcosm with certainty: to reconstruct a representative sample of microcosms is beyond what our evidence allows. The gaps mean that any generalisation is likely to be misleading. Nevertheless, in many areas of study—including the whole question of the settlement of the barbarians,<sup>15</sup> together with their assimilation with the Roman population and the changing face of ethnic affiliation—study of the early Middle Ages ought to have proceeded beyond a broad-brush approach. However limited the evidence, it is necessary to accept that this was a world of individuals making conscious and unconscious choices in order to survive and prosper—and scholars should work from that premise.

Such normalisation, however, carries with it its own dangers: the early Middle Ages were distinctly "Other". Mapping conscious and unconscious choices can lead only too easily to an over-familiar reconstruction of the past. Here the imaginative horizons of our authors and craftsmen ought to be a check against excessive familiarity. The Goths were certainly not the same as the *Getae*, but they could be envisaged as such. Burgundians and Franks, like the Romans, could be thought of as Trojans.<sup>16</sup> Other groups could be seen in Biblical terms: thus the Turks were said to have been of the *stirps* of Gog and Magog.<sup>17</sup> As statements of fact such observations are, of course, nonsense. Yet these and similar representations provide an imaginative context within which events need to be understood, for as Peter Heather comments above, perceptions of identity can affect behaviour.

<sup>14</sup> P. Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom* (Oxford, 1996).

<sup>15</sup> On this issue see now the first volume in this series, Walter Pohl, ed., *Kingdoms of the Empire—The Integration of Barbarians in Late Antiquity* (Leiden, 1997).

<sup>16</sup> I.N. Wood, "Defining the Franks".

<sup>17</sup> Aethicus Ister, *Cosmographia*, IV, ed. O. Prinz, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Quellen zur Geistesgeschichte des Mittelalters* 14 (Munich, 1993).



The notion that the Goths were *Getae* gave the Romans a framework within which to respond to them: so too the supposed kinship of Romans and Burgundians says something about the relationship of those two peoples at a certain moment in time. Indeed this last relationship, like the identification of the Franks with the Trojans, belongs to a particular discourse—involving Roman ethnography and politics: such identifications are often raised in very precise political circumstances. Apparently mythological elements of ethnic description should, therefore, not be excluded from discussions of “ethnicity” as being unhistorical, but should rather be considered alongside other aspects of “ethnicity”, all of which should be subjected to the same rigorous investigation.

It is possible that the religious identification of an individual *gens* was more likely than mythology to impinge on a kingdom’s policies—and on a larger proportion of an “ethnic” group (for who outside the élite thought of the Burgundians as Romans or the Franks as Trojans?). How influential such an association was among the pagan Germanic tribes is, nevertheless, open to question, even though the cults of Woden and Sæxnot clearly had some significance in Lombard and Anglo-Saxon traditions. Equally, a generalised correlation of Arianism with the self-identification of the Burgundians,<sup>18</sup> and possibly of the Visigoths, scarcely survives detailed scrutiny: such connections belong either to individual writers, like Gregory of Tours, or perhaps more generally to particular political circumstances, like those present in Gaul in the 460s and in Francia and Spain in the 570s and 580s. The best case for religion having an extended impact on a kingdom’s self-image may be found in the identification of the Franks with the Chosen People of God in the time of Charlemagne. Here too, however, the association was made by a specific group of people, closely connected to the royal court, and the extent to which it was accepted or had any impact needs to be scrutinised.

Religious rhetoric, like other strategies of distinction, operates in specific circumstances. By unravelling the various discourses used in the period of the Transformation of the Roman World it is possible to begin to grasp the complexity of the political and “ethnic” changes of the period, and to substitute a properly nuanced reading of the evidence for a presentation of barbarian migration and the creation

of kingdoms which has, in the past, often treated all sources as an aspect of a single narrative. An awareness of the limitations of such a narrative, and a recognition of the variety of strategies of distinction available at the end of Antiquity and the start of the Middle Ages, such as has been attempted in this volume, is at least an attempt to do some justice to the complexity of the theme.

<sup>18</sup> Wood, “Ethnicity and the ethnogenesis of the Burgundians”.

## ABBREVIATIONS

BG	Procopius, <i>De bello Gothico</i>
BV	Procopius, <i>De bello Vandalico</i>
CCSL	<i>Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina</i>
CDL	<i>Codice Diplomatico Longobardo</i>
CIL	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i> (1862 ff.)
CJ	<i>Corpus iuris civilis</i> 2, <i>Codex Iustinianus</i> , ed. P. Krueger (1915)
Conc. Tol.	<i>Concilium Toletanum</i>
CSEL	<i>Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum</i>
CTh	<i>Theodosiani libri 16 cum Constitutionibus Sirmondianis</i>
HF	Gregorius Turonensis, <i>Decem Libri Historiarum</i>
HL	Paulus Diaconus, <i>Historia Langobardorum</i>
ILCV	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres</i>
ILS	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae</i>
L. Burg.	<i>Leges Burgundionum</i>
LV	<i>Leges Visigothorum</i>
Lib. Pontif.	<i>Liber Pontificalis</i>
MGH	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica</i>
MGH AA	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Auctores Antiquissimi</i>
MGH LL	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Leges</i>
MGH SS	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores</i>
NJ	<i>Corpus Juris Civilis</i> 3, <i>Novellae</i>
P. Ital.	<i>Die nichtliterarischen lateinischen Papyri Italiens aus der Zeit 445-700</i>
PL	<i>Patrologia Latina</i>
PLRE	J.R. Martindale, <i>Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire</i>
RE	<i>Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i>
RGA	<i>Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde</i>

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 Zeno, emperor, 103, 197  
 Zosimus, 97

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