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Ennodius' Panegyric to Theoderic the Great:

A Translation and Commentary

Thesis submitted by Barbara S. Haase  
for the requirements of the degree Master of Arts

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Ottawa, Ontario

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UNIVERSITÉ D'OTTAWA  
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## 1. Magnus Felix Ennodius and his Works

"tempore quo Italiam optatissimus Theoderici regis resuscitavit ingressus, cum omnia ab inimicis eius inexplicabili clade vastarentur et, quod superesset gladiis, fames necaret, cum excelsa montium castrorumque arces penuria perumperet et in culminibus locatos armis savior egestas obsideret, ego annorum ferme sedecim amittae, quae me aluerat, ea tempestate solacio privatus sum." (Euch. de vita sua, 20-21; 5-11, p. 303)

As Ennodius himself reveals, he was about sixteen years old when Theoderic and Odoacer began to fight over Italy. He would, therefore, have been born in 473 or 474, most likely in Gaul, perhaps Arles, into a distinguished Gallic family (Vogel, p.III). He lost his parents early in life and was raised by an aunt who died when he was sixteen (see above quotation). The years immediately succeeding her death were hard. Later he became engaged to a girl of a wealthy family for some time and led a life of luxury, as he himself confesses (Euch. de vita sua, 23-26; 20-30, p. 303). The engagement, however, was broken off, perhaps due to the loss of his bride's mother's fortune (Hasenstab, p. 16). Subsequently, his betrothed took the veil and Ennodius entered the church. Instrumental in this step was his distinguished friend and relative Faustus junior, of whom Ennodius says, "qua me tempestate procella inmanium peccatorum, ire ad famosum officium compulisti" (Epist. 1, 7.2; 30-32, p. 16; see hereto also Vogel, p. VII).

Ennodius began his clerical career by 494/495. He became deacon in Milan by 503 and Bishop of Pavia by 511/513, a position he was to hold until his early death in 521.<sup>1</sup>

The works of Ennodius, most of them written between the years 502 and 513 (Laufenberg, p. 7) include about 300 letters, 28 clerical and secular speeches, poems and various miscellaneous works, amongst which the historically most useful and interesting is the Panegyricus dictus Theoderico.<sup>2</sup> Ennodius' biography of Bishop Epiphanius of Pavia, the Vita

Epiphani contains much useful information about the battles in Italy, particularly Theoderic's occupation of Pavia and the Burgundian intervention in the wars (Vogel, pp. 84-109). Information about Ennodius' own life comes mainly from the so-called Eucharisticum de vita sua, a confession he wrote after a time of great illness (Vogel, pp. 300-304).

Ennodius was well versed in classical literature; his abundant references to and imitations of such writers as Vergil, Cicero, Horace, Juvenal, Lucan, Ovid, Terence and Sallust, just to name a few, make that clear.<sup>3</sup> As his letters show, he was in contact with such important personalities as Faustus junior, to whom he was related by marriage, and who held the important positions of e.g. quaestor (505/506) and praetorian prefect of Italy (508-512)<sup>4</sup>, Boethius, consul, philosopher and scholar, who enjoyed Theoderic's favour until he was accused of treason and executed (524), and the capable Liberius, praetorian prefect of Italy (493-500) and later praetorian prefect of Gaul (510-534), who had not only served under Odoacer, but was kept on by Theoderic, in whose service he distinguished himself, especially with the land settlements of the Goths in Italy.

1. For a full account of Ennodius' life, see Vogel, (pp. II-XXVIII).
2. Schubert (p.68) has the following observation to make concerning the historical value of Ennodius' complete works: "Seine umfangreiche literarische Hinterlassenschaft bietet im Verhältnis zu der Masse des Stoffes, der hohen Stellung des Autors und den vielversprechenden Ueberschriften erstaunlich wenig Ausbeute für den Historiker. Ennodius war kein Geschichtsschreiber...die historisch wertvollste, die uns Ennodius hinterlassen [hat ist] die Lobrede auf König Theoderich."
3. See Vogel, (pp. 331-333).
4. PLRE II, p. 454; on the difficulty of pinpointing Faustus' career before his appointment to the quaestorship, see Vogel, (Chron. U. pp. 63-67).

## 2. Date and occasion of the Panegyricus dictus Theoderico

Historians in general have agreed that the time of the composition of the speech must have been about 507,<sup>1</sup> for the following reasons: Ennodius makes the incorporation of the Alamanni the last external accomplishment of the King (XV) and does not mention the Gallic battles of 508 and 509, where Theoderic fought the Burgundians successfully and thereby added southern Provence to his kingdom. Had the speech been written at the time of hostilities between the Burgundians and the Ostrogoths, surely Ennodius would not have referred to Gundobad as follows: "taceo ubi tibi iniuncta est pax diuturna, Burgundio, quando sic foederibus obsecutus es, ut deputerur quod vivis feriatu, constantiae, non pavori" (X, 54; 32-33, p.209) (see hereto also Hasenstab, p. 50). Furthermore, the tension that existed between Anastasius and Theoderic after the incorporation of Sirmium and the battle at Horreum Margi is clearly present in the speech, an indication that the eulogy could certainly not have been written later than 508, since in that year Theoderic and Anastasius were on good terms again (see also commentaries VI, n. 2 and XII).

Historians at the turn of the century and those of the early twentieth century have debated a great deal over the occasion for which the panegyric was written. The work itself offers no certain clues. It has been argued that Ennodius' phrases "suscepi officium laudatoris" (X, 52; 27, p. 209), "nunc ecclesia dirigit laudatorem" (XVI, 77; 29, p.212), "obsecutus officio" (XXI, 93; 23, p. 214) lend the speech an official tone which suggest it may have been a commissioned work for a specific occasion.<sup>2</sup> This is not convincing. These phrases could just as well be rhetorical figures of speech emphasizing the writer's self-imposed duty. In the case of "nunc ecclesia dirigit laudatorem", Ennodius probably referred indirectly to Theoderic's religious

its overriding themes are the prosperity of the kingdom and the freedom enjoyed by its inhabitants. Ennodius then concludes in his typical contrasting style, "vide divitias saeculi tui: tunc vix fora habuere perfectos, nunc ecclesia dirigit laudatorem." Both secular as well as ecclesiastical fields experience a "Golden Age"; that is the meaning of these sentences and does not suggest that Ennodius was officially authorized by the church (Pope or Bishop, as Laufenberg thinks, p. 19) to compose his speech.

The prooemium is the most natural place where the encomiast may introduce the occasion for his work.<sup>3</sup> While Ennodius includes such common topoi as the difficulty of repaying the praised for the great benefit he bestowed on the people (I, 1; 6-7, p.203) and the eulogist's fear of being thwarted by his king's accomplishments (I,4, 22; p. 203; II, 10; 25-26, p.204, where the topos of the praised's "celeritas" is also included) he gives no hint of an occasion for which he could have written his speech.

Vogel (pp. XVI-XVII) had first agreed with Fertig that Ennodius wrote the panegyric at the request of or with the consent of Pope Symmachus, as an official thank-you to the King. Theoderic was approached in 499 to settle a major ecclesiastical dispute. In the previous year two Popes had been elected at Rome: Laurentius, who took a conciliatory stance towards Constantinople's church policies, and Symmachus, who was determined not to give his consent to Zeno's Henotikon; and since the schism rent the senate in two opposing factions and caused riots in the streets, Theoderic decided to intervene and sided with Symmachus, who had the support of the north Italian clergy. This schism, however, was not completely settled until March 11, 497; that is the date when Theoderic ratified the senate's decision to confer all church funds to Symmachus (Vogel, Chron. U. p. 68). Vogel's and Fertig's reasons for their

suppositions were as follows: it was thought that a letter of Ennodius (Epist. 9, 30, pp. 318-319) was written to Pope Symmachus by 507 and referred to Theoderic's settlement of the schism; since thematic parallels between this letter and the panegyric were recognized, it was concluded, especially by Fertig, that Epistle 9 was actually, "ein Vorspiel zu dem künftigen Panegyricus, das als Ersatz für das Ausbleiben des Ganzen hätte gelten können." (p.1) In a later essay, (Chron. U., p.54), Vogel, however, acknowledged the more recent conclusions of Hasenstab (p.22), namely that Epistle 9, 30 was not written to Pope Symmachus at all, but to a Gallic Bishop, perhaps Caesarius of Arles, at a much later date than 506 or 507, years after Theoderic's victories in Gaul. Any supposed link between panegyric and letter was thereby eliminated. Vogel then distanced himself from recognizing any papal authorization in the panegyric and concluded: "so dürfte vielleicht...der Panegyrikus des Ennodius seine Entstehung der Freude über den Sieg der Symmachianer und über die Erhebung des Faustus zum Praefecten zu verdanken haben" (Chron. U. p. 73).

Hasenstab (p.46) has rightly stated that there are no references in the panegyric relating to Theoderic's settlement of the schism. In fact, the reader may be surprised that the Symmachus-supporter Ennodius should make no mention of Theoderic's decision to side with his favourite. But Ennodius' omission is easily explained: it is quite possible that he composed the speech before Theoderic finally settled the schism (March 11, 507); but even if he wrote his panegyric after this date, tensions between Laurentius' and Symmachus' supporters were probably still high, so that it would have been politically more expedient not to touch this ecclesiastical "hot potato."

Hasenstab's argument, however, that the panegyric was written for the occasion of the incorporation of the Alamanni (XV, p.212), is weak and unconvincing. He argues as follows: the incorporation of the Alamanni is the last chronologically mentioned "Grossthat" and therefore has special significance, particularly since the encomiast returns to this achievement with the exclamation "rex meus sit iure Alamannicus" (XVII, 81; 5, p. 213). Furthermore, the sudden, eruptive direct speech, "adquisistis [Alamanni] quae noverit ligonibus tellus adquiescere" (XV, 73; 8-9, p. 212), which is not sufficiently explained as a mere rhetorical figure of speech, suggests that Ennodius actually addressed an Alamannic delegation present at the delivery of the speech. Yet, the paragraph devoted to the incorporation of the Alamanni, compared to the others that deal with Theoderic's achievements, is one of the shortest. Moreover, the introductory "Quid, quod" rather seems to signal an after-thought than to underline the very occasion for the speech.

Without any substantial facts it is fruitless to create further hypotheses concerning the supposed occasion for which Ennodius could have written his encomium, just as it is historically inconsequential to debate (as was much debated amongst earlier scholars) whether Ennodius actually read his speech in Theoderic's presence or not.

1. This date is also accepted by recent historians, see McCormick, (p.276).
2. Laufenberg, (p.19); Hasenstab (p.48).
3. See, for example, Latini Panegyrici V, VI, VII, VIII, XI, X; see hereto Mesk, passim.

3. The Construction of the Panegyricus dictus Theoderico

Sections:

I-II	Prooemium
III-V	<u>Accomplishments in the east</u>
III	Restoration of Zeno
IV	Consulship of Theoderic
V	Battle against the Bulgar leader
VI-VII	<u>March to Italy</u>
VI	Reasons for Theoderic's march west
VII	Battle against the Gepids
VIII-X	<u>Battles in Italy</u>
VIII	Battles at the river Sontius and at Verona
IX	Address to Rome
X	Tufa's surrender, and subsequent betrayal of Theoderic; Fridiricus' treachery
XI-XX	<u>Theoderic's achievements as established sovereign of the west</u>
XI	Restoration of Rome; Theoderic's <u>largitio</u> , <u>iustitia</u> , <u>virtus</u> and <u>cautela</u> .
XII	Incorporation of Sirmium, battle at Horreum Margi
XIII	Obedience of the Vandals
XIV	Theoderic's <u>mansuetudo</u> and <u>humanitas</u>
XV	Acceptance of Alamannic refugees Theoderic's <u>humanitas</u>
XVI	The blessings of the age Theoderic's <u>mansuetudo</u> and <u>pietas</u>
XVII	Comparison to Alexander the Great
XVIII	Theoderic's achievements, like the heavens, cannot be described adequately
XIX	Comparison of gladiatorial and circus shows with the war games of the Gothic warriors
XX	Subordination of Goths to Roman law and Theoderic's decrees
XXI	Epilogue

Ennodius only loosely follows the rules for constructing a panegyric such as Menander sets out in his βασιλικὸς λόγος (368-377, pp. 76-94). While his prooemium includes the topos of the difficulty of adequately praising the ruler, Ennodius does not set out the main points of his speech as Menander suggests (369, p. 78). The preliminary topoi ἔθνος, πατρίς, πρόγονοι, πατέρες are omitted (369-371, pp. 78-82). Ennodius begins with Theoderic's education and achievements as a young man (371, p. 82), where he exemplifies the king's early maturity and sense of justice (III, IV). According to Menander (372, p. 84), war and peace time achievements should be neatly separated and arranged according to virtues; the chronological flow of the speech is therefore of no importance. Quite clearly, Ennodius does not adhere to this rule. The topos σύνταξις (377, p. 92) is included by Ennodius in XVII, and the epilogue, as prescribed by Menander (377, p. 94), ends with a prayer for an heir.

If one examines the structure of the speech it is obvious that Ennodius' main concern was its chronological flow: first Theoderic's accomplishments in the east (III-V, pp. 207-210), his march to Italy (VI-VII, pp. 206-207), battles for supremacy over Italy (VIII-X, pp. 207-210) and his achievements (war and peace) as established sovereign of the west (XI-XX, pp. 210-214). The recognition of that chronological construction is important because it is the key for understanding the main theme of the speech: Ennodius' primary concern was the legitimization of Theoderic's reign, as the following thematic approach will show.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Laufenberg has also identified this as the key theme of the panegyric. See hereto his brief chapter "Die legitimistische Tendenz des Panegyricus " (pp. 10-16).

#### 4. A Thematic Approach to Ennodius' Panegyricus dictus Theoderico

The first chronological part of the speech (III, IV, V) deals with Theoderic's achievement in the east. Theoderic, hereditary King, reared and educated at court in Constantinople, after the deposition of Basiliscus, could have claimed the emperorship for himself without loss of reputation had he chosen to do so (III, 13-14; 5-6, p. 205). Implicitly, Ennodius sets Theoderic's kingship and Zeno's emperorship on a par. Theoderic not only refrained from acquiring the emperorship for himself, he also did not set up a puppet Emperor - for this is what the following sentence implies: "nemo credidit non te posse ad quem voluisses transferre quod reddideras" (IV, 15; 10-11, p. 205), thus exemplifying his civilitas, i.e. his upholding of Roman laws and traditions. And so the eulogist can joyfully exclaim, "quis hanc civilitatem credat inter familiares tibi vivere plena executione virtutes?" (IV, 16; 13-14, p.205). The battle with the Bulgar leader is well chosen to contrast the "Roman" Theoderic to the barbarian Bulgar (V). Ennodius' message is clear: Theoderic is upholder of Roman law and protector of Roman civilization.

The legitimization for Theoderic's intervention into western affairs is the major theme of the second chronological part (VI-VII, pp. 206-207). Theoderic is chosen by God to deliver Rome from the "tyrant" Odoacer and restore her to her former glory. The tyrant, as convention prescribes, and necessity dictates, is drawn in the darkest colours: because of him fields lie waste and the treasury is empty; bribery is rampant. Peace has only brought devastation rather than prosperity. The natural order of things has been overturned. The unworthy rule while people and country suffer (VI, 23-24; 7-17, p.206). Theoderic's war with Odoacer is a

necessary war, for Italy must be delivered (for a thorough thematic discussion of section VI, see my commentary). In section VII, Ennodius, again, reminds his readers of the mission Theoderic has to fulfil: "te orbis domina ad status sui reparationem Roma poscebat" (VII, 30; 3-9, p.207). In this chronological part, Ennodius' goal is obvious: to give a specific justification of Theoderic's intervention into western affairs and depict him as the champion of Rome. Theoderic's relationship to God is also introduced in this part. As Theoderic is the champion of Rome, so God is the champion of his King, a theme that is developed in the next part of the speech.

The third chronological part (VIII-X) comprises Theoderic's battles against the "tyrant" and his followers (though not all: see my commentary X). In this third part Ennodius distinctly depicts Theoderic as the avenger (Theoderic is avenger both of his murdered relatives and of Rome), whose battles for supremacy in Italy are supported by God, the Roman people and even nature herself. The enemy has assembled a large, though motley troop; Theoderic's forces, on the other hand, though still weak from preceding sickness and starvation, are united by one common goal, "sufficit tamen unum velle pro viribus et indiscretum consilium de inimicis loco roboris attulit ultionem" (VIII, 37; 34-36, p. 207). While God ensures that Theoderic is alone responsible for the victory at Verona, "dedisti inertibus fiduciam dum moraris et hoc credo provisione caelicolum ne deberetur multitudini quod vicisti" (VIII, 45; 28-29, p. 208), the river Atesis becomes a useful ally of the king, "itaque ne ensibus non sufficeres pro te et lympha militavit" (VIII, 46; 34-35, p. 208).<sup>1</sup> Tufa's treachery and Odoacer's reversal of fortune

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<sup>1</sup> For a similar thought see Pan. Lat. II, 34, 4; XIII, 18, where Theodosius and Constantine respectively enjoy the help of a river. See also Maguinness, "Some Methods of the Latin Panegyrist." (p. 53).

necessitate a purging action by Theoderic to which God and the Roman people have given their assent (X, 51-52; p. 209). The traitors are cut down, perhaps in some sort of action resembling "Sicilian Vespers" (see my commentary X), to which Ennodius exclaims, "quis haec praeter supernam voluntatem praestitit, ut unius icru temporis effunderetur Romani nominis clades longa temporum in probitate collecta?" (X, 52; 25-26, p. 209). Then in one final crescendo, traitor rises apocalyptically against traitor, as Fridiricus, former ally and subsequent foe of Theoderic, fights against his fellow traitor Tufa. Again, God's hand is clearly revealed in this act, "adsit divinitas et beneficia sua in aevum producat, qua disponente votiva inter reos evenere litigia nam Fridiricus, postquam tibi de adversariis tuis peregit triumphum, de se praebuit" (X, 55; 2-4, p. 210).

The fourth and last chronological part (XI-XX) extols the deeds of Theoderic as established sovereign of the west. Through his achievements Rome has regained her former greatness. A new "Golden Age" has been ushered in by the King (XVI). Rome is not only literally but also physically rejuvenated, "illa ipsa mater civitatum Roma juveniscit marcida senectutis membra resecano" (XI, 56; 7-8, p. 210). Her borders are once again restored, since Theoderic has reincorporated the Roman city of Sirmium (XII). But Theoderic is not only the protector of his subjects, he is also a faithful guardian of his allies; his obligation to the federate Mundo brings him in direct opposition to eastern interests (XII). The King even turns former enemies into guardians of Roman borders (XV). Once again, the Romans can live a life of leisure, while the Gothic warriors, under the watchful eye of their King, sharpen their skills in tireless preparations for war (XIX). While above all reign the Roman laws and Theoderic's decrees, the emblems of Roman civilization.

What emerges from Ennodius' portrait of Theoderic is a Roman Emperor in all but name. Raised and educated in the bosom of civilization, i.e. Greece, an Ennodian synonym for Constantinople, he is no foreign usurper but has already served Roman interests by restoring the rightful Emperor to the throne. Without once mentioning that Theoderic came to Italy with the blessings of the eastern Emperor Zeno (see my commentary VI), Ennodius has cleverly legitimized Theoderic's intervention into western affairs and subsequent rule over Italy by depicting him as a divinely sanctioned sovereign.

As this brief thematic outline has attempted to show, Ennodius includes in each chronological part of his speech distinct themes which, in turn, anticipate the ones in the following part. The eulogist's goal is the legitimization of Theoderic's rule. The means by which he accomplishes this are *topoi*, common in panegyrics to Emperors, e.g. the divine nature of the Emperor, his special relationship to God, his superior valour, felicity, wisdom, temperance, and justice.

## 5. Some historical comments on Theoderic's rule in Italy

Theoderic's rule was not absolute. While he conducted his external policies as an independent sovereign, he was in some internal areas subordinate to the Emperor. Theoderic did not create laws, nor abolish existing ones, nor did he confer Roman citizenship on his Goths; for these were the privileges of the Emperor only. Neither did he hold the titles usually reserved for Emperors, i.e. imperator, or Augustus. The King did, however, issue edicts based on Roman law, which were binding on Goths and Romans alike. Since Romans and Goths were not legally equal, the latter could not hold any civil offices. The Goths, however, monopolized all military positions. Thus Theoderic's kingdom never became a melting pot of two nations, but a kingdom where both peoples had distinct duties to fulfil. The Ostrogoth had come to Italy not to usurp the vacant western imperial throne, nor to create an independent Gothic nation on Italian soil; rather he wanted to conform his rule to the already existing internal strata, the Roman laws and institutions, as Theoderic himself once confessed to the eastern Emperor Anastasius, "Regnum nostrum imitatio vestra est, forma boni propositi, unici exemplar imperii" (Cass. Var. I; 1, p. 10).<sup>1</sup> His coins too, reflect this conformity to some extent: the King's bust is not depicted on the obverse or reverse, but the contemporary Emperor's. Only Theoderic's monogram is engraved opposite the Emperor's bust. One gold solidus, struck for a special occasion, has been found that portrays Theoderic with imperial gesture.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> On his visit to Rome in 500 Theoderic promised the Roman people, "quod retro principes Romani ordinaverunt inviolabiter servaturum" (Anon. Val. 12.66)

<sup>2</sup> For a brief discussion of this coin see RE VA 2, (pp. 1769-1771) and Wolfram, (p. 289).

As to Theoderic's constitutional position, only so much will be said. The discussion concerning this is complex and contains many points of controversy, and no attempt will be made here to analyze or mention in detail all the various points of dispute. The last legitimate Emperor of the western Roman Empire was Nepos, who took power in 474. He was driven from Rome in 475 and spent his remaining years in exile in Dalmatia. Theoderic came to Italy as King of his Gothic followers and was again confirmed king in 493 by his Goths, without awaiting the Emperor's sanction (Anon. Val. 12.57). What exactly this renewed elevation to the kingship signified and if it changed Theoderic's constitutional position in Italy is a point of controversy. Finally in 498 Anastasius returned to Theoderic all the imperial regalia which Odoacer had sent to the eastern Emperor in 477 (Malch. fr. 14). Whether this now meant that Theoderic hereby was also officially declared King of Italy or whether the return of the palace ornaments was merely an imperial gesture acknowledging consent to Theoderic's rule, is again a point of controversy (see, for example, Wolfram, p. 284 and n. 173). Theoderic never called himself rex Italiae. His favoured title was Gothorum Romanorumque rex (Hodgkin, The Letters of Cass., pp.16 and 20).

## Panegyric to the most clement King Theoderic

I 1. (p. 209) Venerable ruler, let another man's profession detain him from your praises; let the consideration of his purpose keep him, whom some duty has prevented from your tutelage, from praising you! Grant the voice of the people obligated to you for their fortunes to repay you! An unequal exchange compensates you with praises, for what was gained by your hard work. Freedom, indebted to your arms, has learned how to announce its joy in shouts of praise, the only thing it can do. 2. It is in your hands, renowned one, to offer reward to devotion. You know that your subjects are unsurpassable in their faithfulness to you. With sacred order you will estimate what you may demand from your servants, who, as you recognize, serve you with all their might. May your majesty consider my literary offering worthy for your altars! Experience in eloquence must be summoned, so that your achievements not fade! May a succession of speakers bind together your accomplishments, lest time obliterate them! You will give us peace, so that we may pursue our studies, through which you will be made immortal. 3. The Creator of the Divine Mystery demands nothing else from man's intellect except that he realizes who is the source of his wisdom. To have acknowledged the one who excelled amongst those close to God is to have returned a kindness. What descends from the heavens is proper to be praised with the sole payment of hymns. The Maker of the world is invited by harmonious oration to greater gifts! If my speech, offered as reward, does not please its creator, speak! 4. The commemoration of your divine majesty must be asserted by a man of good conscience; it demands not merely polished language, but also that my ruler's praises flow from the temple of a pure heart. With devoted voice the serene mind conducts the sacrifice in divine

worship. Consequently, your glory, which I thought would overpower me, invited even me. Could but my sincere declaration harmonize with my inner thoughts and my body with my beaming heart!

¶ 5. Hail, now, greatest of Kings, in whose dominion noble minded vigour has affirmed its own strength! Hail, prosperous Republic! For it is blasphemous to mention separately the feats achieved by you at once and to differentiate among your blessings of a single time by a division of words. If I count the wars of my king (p. 204) I find as many as triumphs. No enemy attacks you in battle, except to add to your praises. He serves as trophies who resists your will. For he who dared to attack, always succumbed to your glory: he was captured either by your clemency or by your courage! 6. He who fixed his eyes on you in battle was overpowered and who looked on you in peace, feared nothing. Your venerable promise did not weaken in prosperous times nor did your vigour endure delay in battles. Your path, blocked by many obstacles, saw daily victories and posed no hindrances to your journey: so enclosed was your path by enemy soldiers that it denied you advance - but in such a way did your onslaught open it up that the precaution of the enemy could do no harm. 7. If these achievements are to be ascribed to your felicity, they are the abundant dowry of the ruler: they are more august than all honour, if they are to be ascribed to your labour. Under auspicious omens your first battles were against nature; firstly you overcame the climates different from what you thus far experienced, the natural defences of the land, and the arrogance of rivers so that your enemies could have no hope of resistance. I would lie if I said that your plans were frustrated by heat or cold, that rising rivers held you back, that the need to quench your thirst and the mountain

ridges of the Alps, joined by their height to the vaults of heaven, slowed down your pace. 8. Those whom you found, once you had defied the natural fortifications of the places, knew not how to resist; because mountainous terrain makes those whom it protects carefree, and since they hold safer grounds, they live in leisure, their minds at ease. The plain dwellings could offer no equal against you. Those who were surrounded by pathless land were not spared depredation, except if they came forth as suppliants. Placed in your hands, a man showed his wealth without dread. It did not help the rebel if he was known to be poor. 9. No one was spared your wrath, except by submission, although he who asked was advanced into the number of your allies. Cold Scythia is not unknown to you, nor, as possessor of the other orb, are you unfamiliar with the isle of Meroe, and the tropic of Cancer, panting from heat. By conquering all, you learned what is scarcely accessible for us through hearsay. Indeed, it takes more than a man to accomplish these feats, but he who is ready to govern the world must have knowledge of the whole world. 10. In my hunger to narrate I have snatched the period of your later glory and the fruits of your mature age, as if in the beginnings the river of your already gushing talent would not tire me. He who seeks the lists of your triumphs, is vanquished by their multitude and swift succession. Most invincible one, the feats we relate were quicker done than said. Can he, who suffered no sluggishness in action, endure mine?

III 11. Greece, prescient of the future, reared you in the bosom of civilization. She educated you, as you entered the threshold of your life, so that, while still a cheerful boy, you presently came under a tutor's security.<sup>(2)</sup> You lived still in the bright flower of adolescence nor had the milky stem, anticipating experience, brought forth the full crop of virtues; still you were the

smooth faced image of puberty, and no shading down covered your face, when the Emperor of the time and the feebleness of the subsequent sovereign caused the troubled people to be alarmed by the change of power. Fury burst from her chains and lashed out; then, by seizing the opportunity, she subjugated the minds enfeebled from prolonged inactivity, so that you could demonstrate your strength and clemency. 12. Immediately the legitimate Emperor was driven from the city and a tyrant, admitted without bloodshed, entered the vacant possession. After he had gained control over the palace and subdued his enemies through fear, he concluded that there was nothing left for him to do. Then, the valour of your nature, without the benefit of maturity, encouraged your spirits, neither that the better cause be suppressed, since you were positioned close by, nor that, in time of need, you fail to return the benefit of peace that you had accepted. (p. 205) The invader withdrew at your very approach. You restored the sceptres to the exile, who was uncertain of his safety. 13. Let us read the histories! Let us search the annals! Where in these was there mentioned a monarchy that a born king had secured with his own blood and restored to an exile? Military glory is shared by many a soldier, and what was achieved through the collaboration of many cannot be attributed to one. But the bridling of greed is the fruit of one singular hero, particularly in that time when you could hold on to the acquisitions without loss of reputation. 14. Renowned lord, equal glory you receive for defending and restoring the diadem. If the ruler of those parts did not love you, though expelled, he governed the Republic; if he cherished you, he was obligated to you. You had a purple-clad witness to your merits.<sup>(2)</sup>

IV 15. At that time, then, the very palace put itself under your authority. Everyone believed that you could transfer what you had restored to whomever you wished. But sparing in your demand for rewards, you accepted the fascēs as though they were a return sufficient for your troubles, not so that the dignity of the consulship enrich you, but that the consular robe acquire rewards from you. Who could believe that this respect for law exists, in full bloom, among your familiar virtues? 16. That year enjoyed a consul who guarded the Republic not so much with anxious concern but by good repute, and once he had donned the ceremonial robe, the arms that were taken up by the enemy trembled.<sup>(3)</sup> Did a reader ever chance upon such a leader? Did the splendour of Kings, examined from the very infancy of the world, display such a man? 17. I do not wish to wander through the fortunes of sovereigns; those found in your family-tree are esteemed. The ploughs brought forth Serranus to the staffs of honour, and while he planted great seeds in furrows, his crops of honours rose. But I cherish less successes that take their beginning from despair. Very few have the opportunity to fall short of their nobility nobly, since you are obligated to your family to protect nobly the actions of your race. Why Antiquity, do you confront me with rustics adorned in military cloaks? 18. I set before you my ruler so that it is impossible not to acclaim him; for he has such origin that it surpasses admiration, and yet acts in such a way as though he still pleads to be added amongst the generals.

V 19. But what am I to do, overwhelmed by the fecund fruits of your achievements, when, in trying to choose, I am overpowered by them all? I do not know which crop to carry into silos, which to leave behind. The leader of the Bulgars appears before my eyes. He is prostrate, while your right hand affirms liberty; not dead, lest he be lost from our recollection,

not whole, lest he live boastingly, tamed amongst an untameable race, condemned to live as a witness to your strength. Had he received the death blow, you would have conquered only him! But he lived and abandoned his wild origin.<sup>(4)</sup> 20. This is the nation that before your arrival achieved all that it wanted; in which he who secured his rank by slaughtering his enemies gained honours; the battlefield establishes their birthright, because he whose weapon turns bloodier in combat is undoubtedly regarded more highly. Before this nation fought against you, for a long time it conducted its battles with a single skirmish and had never known anyone to resist it. 21. No massive mountains, no river-barriers, no need for self-denied nourishment, no law of necessity contained these peoples within a narrow space, as long as they believe it to be a sufficient delicacy to drink the milk of their mares. Who can endure an enemy, who, through the swift beast's kindness, not only rides it but also feeds on it? 22. What of the fact that they deliberately instill endurance of hunger in those animals through which they have learned to avoid hunger? (p. 206) How does it happen that the rider of a hungry horse can extract from its inside food while the rider diligently takes care that the animal does not hoard it? These people previously believed that the world was theirs: now they recognize that this part of the world which you protect is completely shut off to them.<sup>(5)</sup> Quickly I pass over much, lest - through the fault of my oversluggish pen - you should arrive too late and the torch of the Roman Senate, kept in darkness for a long time, should shine forth delayed.

VI<sup>(6)</sup> 23. Between the first campaigns of your life and the triumphs of your adulthood, celestial benevolence filled your sacred heart with love for us. Then, with the cost of long peace the fruitful land had lain waste because of the worthlessness of its governors; unbroken peace

already had lessened the wealth of the state, since an intestine pillager, enriched by a succession of daily plunderings, lived amongst us. Wasting his own fortune, he craved to increase the state treasury not so much with tax money but with plundered gains. This lord, impoverished through unbridled bribery had incurred hatred through his wastefulness. What of his wealth he paid out depleted his resources, but earned him not love. 24. Then the impoverished palace put private fortunes in dire straits, and the spent fuel of the tyrant had never allowed the sparks of his subjects to ignite. Odoacer, admonished by the honour of another to remember his origin, feared the army that obeyed him. For he ordered the legions to march under his own command, and cold with panic, to return. For obedience which serves unworthy men is suspect, and whenever superiors are visited by consciousness of their low origin they are indeed afraid because they are feared. 25. A motive for felicitous discord arose between you, when Rome's good fortune enticed treacherous spirits to murder your relatives. The reason for fighting was weak and in order that not even from negotiation confidence arise in those doomed to perish, part of the fugitives started battles.<sup>(7)</sup> 26. Then, after the able-bodied were advised far and wide, you summoned the nation, spread throughout numerous peoples; the world travelled with you to Ausonia. Everyone obediently undertook the journey. Wagons served as their dwellings and in the moveable houses were loaded their necessary belongings. Then, oxen pulled the implements of Ceres and the stones for milling grain. The mothers in your families, carrying their unborn, oblivious of their gender and pregnant weight, continued working at preparing food. 27. Then, they spent winter on the plains. White ice coated their hair, so that hoary locks became entangled in beards, themselves covered in icicles. The cloaks which wives had

so diligently spun were penetrated by harsh frost and clung to the body. Either disobedient tribes or beasts, reared in lairs, supplied nourishment to your followers.

VII<sup>(6)</sup> 28. Amongst those difficulties which you overcame in heat and ice, I am pleased to outline your greatest struggle. The river Ulca is the guardian of the Gepids; she guards them instead of ramparts, and makes them bold. Like walls which no battering-ram can smash, in the manner of mountains she enfolds the flanks of their territory. The roughness of your journey brought you to this river, whereto the tribe, unconquered for a long time, rushed, its mind bent on resisting instead of sending legations and requesting friendship; and that at a time, when the lack of food was nearly over-powering your troops as they faced the enemy squadrons. 29. Speak, I beseech you, most clement lord, did the people, innumerable as sand and stars, have any glimmer of hope left, except you? Threatened by Gepids, river and starvation, you flew across a path that a fugitive would have avoided, against swords drawn from their scabbards. Despising death, no man sank his footprints unknowingly into the mud. The power of the human mind is overcome by the premonition of peril, and the brave lose their courage whenever situations that ought to be dreaded are thrown before one's eyes. There appeared before the unconquerable (p. 207) Goths a clear choice of death, since there was no certainty of safety. 30. Ancient records, why did you praise Cato? Because he led an army through Libyan Syrtes, while he made human slaughter the sport of snakes, when, amidst the heat of the sky, he even endured the death-chill of poison, drunk without the value of courage? No one could see the vipers until death occurred, when amidst a prodigious gale even the fabric of the body flew into the winds, such as souls are accustomed to do. He who does not know from whence death

comes, does not die with the honour of a brave man. The fortitude of those soldiers must not be compared to your fighting men, nor is the wisdom of their leader the same. The madness of civil war incited Cato; the Empress of the world, Rome, was demanding you to restore her prosperity. But why postpone what the auspicious outcome offered you?<sup>9</sup> 31. The Goths who had reached the other side of the river-bank retreated from the tightly packed squadrons of the enemy; they, whom rough terrain or swift current were not holding back, were harassed by weapons. Spears, guided by powerful arms, pierced famished chests, when amidst this terrene shipwreck and the waves of blood the most invincible commander appeared, and encouraged his men, who were standing by, with such words: "He who longs for a way into enemy ranks, follow me! 32. He who demands an example of a warrior, let him not look to another! Courage does not require a multitude! Few fight wars, though the fruits of war go to many! The army will be judged according to me. The nation triumphs in what I achieve! Raise the standards, so that it is clear I am not hiding! Let them know whom they seek, or let them die by my blows! Let those who meet me in battles die nobly!" 33. After he had spoken these words, he demanded the cup for the sake of good auspices and slackening the reins, he rushed into battle. Like a drought to a crop, a lion to a herd, you brought destruction. No one who charged at you stood his ground, nor could anyone escape your chase. You rode through all; your weapons were already spent, yet your rage was growing still! Immediately the conditions of the Gepids changed. The "conquerors" were seen scattering aimlessly, since their fortune had changed. For you, venerable one, who unaccompanied had indulged your taste for combat, now advanced, hemmed in by soldiers. 34. A great number of your enemies was slaughtered until the approaching night saved a few; you gained the travelling storage wagons filled with the

supplies of cities. These not only satisfied your needs but amidst the good things of luxury they pleased fastidious taste. Thus adversity served your prosperity, and the enemy attack staved off starvation of your men. Hostile onslaught consumed famine. If there had been no fighting, you would not have regenerated your strength! From a line of untold feats let these excerpts suffice!

35. I pass over the Sarmatians, migrating with their tents, and leave unmentioned the innumerable people counted as trophies.

VIII 36. Odoacer, together with my ruler, I attack you! You, like the Earth-shaker roused nations against him. So many kings had mustered with you for war that the population was hardly able to support their soldiers. It is understood that a multitude contains diverse minds, and that hope for victory does not come from numbers.<sup>(10)</sup> 37. The right arms of the Gothic soldiers were still weak from their earlier starvation, and their feeble limbs could not execute the wished for blows; nevertheless, one will suffice for numbers and one unified plan about the enemy in the place of strength brought revenge. No camps, fortified for a long time, and no deep rivers held you back. Your enemy was good at constructing ramparts, but not at guarding them. 38. Suddenly, the fugitives scattered and covered the plains over which you announced to the fleeing men that the intestine danger was to be conquered. Meanwhile, your army won the battle by its appearance not by fighting. There, your good fortune opened the gates for you and revealed clearly that those who gave in at the first instance fought no second battles.<sup>(11)</sup> 39. But Odoacer's fickle mind deceived him and made ready again for war, while at (p.208) your Verona, with costs, he prepared his large force for battle against your noble splendour.\*

*\* Part of this sentence is corrupted. I have translated Vogel's emendation which is, however, not satisfactory.*

Before the battle no one was braver than your enemy, but once the war-trumpets sounded, no one was weaker. Courage is highest and the wealth of words greatest in the overtures to war - as if words could substitute for strong arms. 40. Odoacer's men carefully chose a position in a region which was useful not so much for fighting as for catering to fear, so that not even the first flight of runaways was the result of chance. Nevertheless, the bright fortune of the Republic urged you not to desist from your undertaking. As your march brought you closer you saw the fires of the enemy flickering like stars so that if ever you had been familiar with fear, now you would have learned to see yourself in peril. 41. Never was your state of mind discomposed in the enthusiasm of good times nor passive in the face of uncertainties. The day of battle that was to bring death to many was imminent: Aurora in her two-horse saffron chariot announced the first rising of her radiance when the flames of the sun arose from the waters of the ocean, already the war trumpets were sounding hoarsely, already the army, forgetting itself, was calling for you. 42. As you encased your chest in a protection of steel, armed yourself with greaves and fitted your sword, the avenger of freedom, to your side, you offered your respected mother and venerable sister - who had come to you in solicitude while their feminine cares were vacillating between hope and fear, while apprehensive of the outcome they feasted on the splendour of your appearance - courage with such words: 43. "You know, mother, through the glory of your giving birth well known to all nations, that at the moment of my birth, you, in your fecundity, bore a man! This is the day when the plain will announce the manhood of your son! Weapons must be wielded so that the glory of my ancestors not perish through me! If we do not increase our own glories, without reason we rely upon the splendours of our ancestors! There stands before my eyes my father, of whom fortune never made sport in battle,

who himself made her auspicious for him, his strength creating his successes. One must fight under such a leader who feared not uncertain omens, but who himself was aware of omens favourable to him. 44. You, however, fetch the embroidered cloaks and the woven cloths! More conspicuous than on festive days may the battlefield see me. Who shall not know me by my charge, let him recognize me by my splendour! Let the preciousness of my garments invite the eyes of jealous men! Let my splendid image indicate who must be struck at!\* He is to have comfort for his toil, to whom, you, Fortune, manifest my throat! Those who cannot see me fighting, let them eagerly desire the glory of my fallen body!" After you had spoken such words, your steed received you on its back, restless with longings for the war trumpets. 45. But while you were devoting yourself to your address your legions were hard pressed by the enemy's onset. You gave confidence to the cowardly while you delayed - even this I believe to be the providence of the powers in heaven, so that you owe your victory not to a multitude. At once a host of slaughtered displayed to the enemy your arrival. The slayer was revealed by the great number of dead; but the enemy did not lack their usual antidotes: without delay they took wings which Panic provided, and chose their destruction in headlong flight through fear of death. 46. He who knows not that I speak the truth, let him see that by your retaliation the waves of the river Atesis were billowing with cadavers and while you swelled the waters with blood, elsewhere the flow of water was blocked. And so, should you not have been efficient with your sword, the river too fought for you. I salute you, most glorious of rivers! You washed away the filth from the greater part of Italy, taking with you the dregs of the world without losing (p. 209) your purity. 47. See that plain, which had been covered with armed

\* *Vogel reads feriendos*

men, shone ennobled by the whiteness of human bones! We have that to look at as often as the memory of bygone suffering presses us. Let the sublime earth preserve this most beautiful sight! May what they endured remain until oblivion blots out what they have done. Oh, I wish that voracious beasts could not drag away anything! What the theft of the beasts has gained is lost from the longed for sight!<sup>(12)</sup>

**IX 48.** Regardless of your age, Rome, I wish you could have come there! Even if you tottered on trembling footsteps, the joys would have changed your years! Why are you always cloistered in your sanctuaries? Here, it has been accomplished that you will have more consuls than previously you have seen candidates. Acknowledge the clemency of your lord! He wished you to savour the taste of triumphs rather than that he chose not to know the uncertainties of war.

**X 49.** See, again, part of the enemy, deserving death, ran to surrender, a well-known habit for them and since the dying had exceeded their number, these troops, outfitted with splendid arms, submitted themselves to you. Your mind was influenced, always ready to pardon. You believed that through the teaching of necessity they would become accustomed to loyalty which they never exhibited to their leaders cultivating them.<sup>(13)</sup> **50.** What protected you, greatest of kings, was that you rejected caution through your confidence in their oath. We were waiting anxiously lest those enemy soldiers whom you had received deserved to die. God, ruler of the world, we thank you! You drove those minds, possessed by their old mistake, onto the avenging swords.<sup>(14)</sup> It should shame me to recall their innate treachery except I know that it serves your praises. Why put off the conclusion of the story? **51.** They were pleased to promise, again, the kingdom

to Odoacer, who stretched out his unarmed right hand to them. The error of the enemy mind became well known immediately when their dealings were brought to light. You summoned Prudence, the companion of your actions, and that their obsession for switching sides not stay unpunished, you shook the banners of revenge and made the people already proven loyal partners of your secret plans. It was advantageous that none of your enemies realized that a greater part of the world had sided with you.<sup>(15)</sup> Death was sworn and ordered throughout the most remote regions. 52. Who, except the will of heaven, was responsible for this, that through one simultaneous attack, the destruction of Roman reputation together with the longstanding wickedness of the times came to an end?<sup>(16)</sup> Here, I know not where to turn! Should I, who undertook the panegyrist's duty, give thanks, or should I proceed on the road paved with your praises? The war ended with a propitious and fatal battle. Odoacer's audacity was cut down after it turned out that cunning did not save him.<sup>(17)</sup> Why recall the routed Herulian troops? Here, they were led against you in order that they recognize whom to fear even in their own homelands; the fury of another pleaded the case for your enduring peace.<sup>(18)</sup> 54. I am silent, Burgundian, when long lasting peace has been enjoined to you, since you have so obeyed the treaty that the fact that you live in peace is attributed to your constancy, not fear.<sup>(19)</sup> Furthermore, who can allow that knowledge to perish that through the benefit of your felicity we saw the weapons of the treacherous men clashing against each other and you, occupied elsewhere, slaughtered enemy squadrons in righteous battle? How often has he won who has vowed to fight against you? 55. Let Fridiricus speak, who, after he broke his oath, joined your enemies in death (p.210). He brandished his weapons against those whom he joined in his madness, since the evil ones quarrelled over the point they thought they agreed upon.

May God assist us and reveal his benefits forever, who determined that the criminals break out in the prayed for quarrels!<sup>(20)</sup> For Fridiricus, after he made you a triumph over your adversaries, gave you one over himself.<sup>(21)</sup>

**XI** 56. A great portion of your venerable achievements pulls me in another direction. Under your generous government I see the unexpected beauty of cities risen from ashes, and the palatine roofs glow golden everywhere. Before I had a chance to see the buildings laid out, they were already finished. That very mother of cities, Rome, grows young again, through the cutting back of her limbs, withered from old age. Forgive me, sacred Antiquity of the Lupercalian dignity, but it is better to stop decay than to start new foundations. 57. In addition, you garlanded the crown of the senate house with untold flowers. No suppliant with a good conscience despaired over his honours. The resourceless, rich in merits, who asked not, does not know how to doubt the outcome of his petition. Either we are good of our own volition, or we are shaped by your example. 58. The wealth of the Republic has grown along with private resources. Nowhere is there bribery in your palace, and wealth is diffused everywhere. No one leaves without gift, and no one groans over disastrous confiscations. Your embassies are continuously active. You set in order your instructions before you see the ambassadors. There are no counter-arguments to your judicial arguments, and to your objections no ready answer occurs. 59. The good repute of our sovereign protects us instead of weapons. The great King's care guards our leisure. You do not abandon the erection of guard posts as you extend your attentions. You lack neither the confidence of the brave nor the apprehension of

the cautious. Oh, a double wealth of virtues combined in one sovereign! They reveal God as their author! For the origin of what our king displays is not found amongst mankind.

**XII 60.** But see, after unbroken peace we direct our words anew to the battlefield. Again, the war trumpet summons the orator. The city of the Sirmians was once the frontier of Italy, where the former rulers held watch so that the Roman body not accumulate wounds from its neighbouring tribes. Later, through the neglect of its rulers, Sirmium fell under the jurisdiction of the Gepids. Whence they made daily incursions and sent off disorganized embassies.<sup>(22)</sup> **61.** The blandishment of cunning lies and the untimely association of Trasericus with the other Gepids, under their leader Gunderith, incensed the mind of the sovereign. You considered the loss of Sirmium to be your disgrace, because for a long time, while you were ruling, a possession of Italy was allowed to be held back; nor was it sufficient consolation that you had not lost Sirmium, since your anger was immense that the dishonest possessor had not handed over Sirmium at the beginning of your reign. You consider the empire diminished which does not grow.<sup>(23)</sup> **62.** However, after the deceit of Trasericus was plain to see, you sent the most noble of the Goths, Pitzia, Herduic, and young men, not yet set on war, so that, if Trasericus approved of the conditions offered he could hold onto the lands that he had once invaded, by your decision. But his habit of inconstancy yielded to your felicity. Of his own accord he fled the land that belonged to him not and without your army attacking he deserted what he owed to you. Immediately, Pitzia, who had learned from you how to take advantage of helpful circumstances and was weighing the crucial points of plans, considered the land not conquered but given back; and so he did not pillage it as a conquered land but preserved it by managing

it like his own.<sup>(23)</sup> 63. Then, while Pitzia was setting things in order there, Greece, by harassing Mundo, the federate (p.211), openly broke the harmony. Accompanied by her Bulgars for protection and deploying them like a fortress amidst the clash of war, Greece made threatening overtures. 64. Then Mundo, thinking it to be sufficient protection if your cohorts learn what he endured, sent proof of his danger by swift messengers and before he had learned of the arming of his protectors he saw them already fighting on his behalf. Yet, Pitzia when he caught sight of the wild Bulgarian soldiers from afar, fanned the blazing fire of his men with mightier verbal conflagration: 65. "Remember, comrades, under whose command you have come to these lands! Let no one assume that the eyes of our king are absent! For his glory we must fight! Even if a shower of lances shall have covered the sky, he who flings his weapon more bravely will not be unknown! Plunge your breasts amongst the enemy swords so that clear hope of victory come from contempt for life! I believe that the witness to our king's strength is already dead and gone! He was accustomed to explain to his men what king we have. Or perhaps they think our men unworthy of our ruler? Let them realize that what we carry out has originated from him! Let no one person be credited with what our ruler has passed on to the whole race." These forceful words were followed by the war trumpet. 66. Immediately, just as a dark rain cloud usually thunders on noisy roof tops through the swirling of storm winds, thus the people of the war-god charged headlong into battle. For a long time war vacillated on wavering balance, since on both sides equal fierceness for fighting had arisen. Two nations were engaged in combat, to whom the thought of flight never occurred once fighting had started. Goths and Bulgars were mutually amazed to find each other similar, and, to see another among the human race withstanding them. 67. Meanwhile, as the fate of the battle was

undecided and Winged Deaths were demanding the Aether for themselves, the memory of our leader prevailed, while they saw to it that the plain claimed the merits of each for the king. The Bulgars turned in flight, more heavily punished because they escaped. The stirred earth shook with the thunder of hooves. Once they saw that they were sure of their safety, they ran away amidst mighty lamentation. God, Ruler of heaven, multiply your favours bestowed! Those, never doubting their triumphs, those whom the world stood in awe of, now are defeated and run for safety, their banners of war lost! "Three and fourfold blessed are those," they shouted, "who were lucky enough to be killed!" 68. Why recall the heaps of slaughtered soldiers, and the most dishonourable retreat of Sabinianus, when it is unreasonable to reveal what happened to the defenceless men, after his protectors were driven away? Then, lest it appear that Pizia, whom we must celebrate for centuries, has served greed rather than glory, he left behind his achievements on the battlefield for wild beasts and vultures, since he ordered his eager soldiers to take nothing from the richly adorned corpses. 69. But, with what words can these deeds be adequately related? With what gift of eloquence can they be revealed? For a long time you were victorious in all battles, now you begin to have conquerors under your command. Meanwhile, the Roman kingdom returned to its former boundary. You gave the Sirmians decrees after the custom of our ancestors. Those who thus far held our lands fear for their own territory, because you are nearby.<sup>(24)</sup>

**XIII** 70. Why mention the plundering Vandals, restrained by obedient winds? A people to whom your friendship is now enough instead of annual payment? Since they are guided by

wisdom they know not how to stray beyond what is in their power; and because they do not refuse to be obedient, they have deserved to be neighbours.

XIV 71. I, better in prayer than in eloquent speeches, have retold briefly excerpts from the great number of your accomplishments, and leave others untouched for better speakers. I shall see who will defeat me in eloquence, but no one will be capable of surpassing me in my adoration for you. The mercy you possess is God inspired, so that (p. 212) you believe you have more power through love than fear. These excellent blessings of your glory are preserved on monuments; namely, although kings fear you, your subjects love you; for you believe that what you order to be given to you from the assessed wealth of your subjects can also be denied. Oh king, arrayed in all serenity, you charge to our tribute what we offer in devotion.

XV 72. What more! You settled the Alamannic people within the Italian boundary, without harm to Roman possession. The Alamanni acquired a king, after they deservedly lost one. They who always plundered our people became guardians of the Latin Empire. It was their luck to have fled their own homeland, for thus they obtained the richness of our soil. 73. You (Alamanni) gained that land which knows how to accept the hoe; we, however, happened to know no losses. Under your rule we see adversity produce excellent outcomes and a perilous moment turned into a source for fortunate events. The Alamannic people were freed from their marshy grasses and rejoice as they inhabit land which rose up through the benefit of earth more solid than their earlier, unstable habitations.<sup>(25)</sup>

XVI Equally important was that you encouraged eloquence with rewards of praise, so that we will not cause your glorious achievements to be lost by our silence. 74. Every art is active. The skilled, wherever he is hidden, is sought out. He who deserves it holds the magistracy, even if he lives far away. Never is he hidden from view whom virtue brings into the limelight, while you, excellent judge, are not satisfied with words but achievements. 75. The services of our deceased forefathers are preserved well with you. According to the law of heredity, what you owe to the deceased, whose trust in your clemency was well known, you immediately return to the descendant. We enjoy the fruits of our ancestors' services, and yet we do not fear punishments for their deviations. Your temperate indignation dies together with the man, while your sense of responsibility seeks the heir for restitution. 76. There remains much that I could mention, but it is proper that something untouched be reserved for the great many praisers of your achievements. The venerable studies owe it to you that they speak. Your predecessors loved ignorance, because they accomplished nothing praiseworthy. The most eloquent were dirty amidst the plough, and what skill had given, strength denied. The tribunal platforms were in mourning, their speakers silent; nor was any palm granted to the speaker. 77. In public affairs, results swayed undecidedly, since no dignity was given to the lettered. One sadness oppressed talents everywhere, because inactivity weakened the capabilities of the eloquent. A rapacious negligence possessed the splendours of the elders, nor was the novice roused to follow in emulation. But see, the riches of your age! Then, the podiums scarcely supported excellent speakers, now the church steers the encomiast!

XVII 78. Let antiquity go now and show off Alexander with his high stepping stories! For him the gift of eloquent historians brought a wealth of fame, so that his praise, poor in substance, seemed to grow through the help of fecundity. The merits of our king do not require the solace of a publicist! The accomplishments of the old ones, no matter how embellished with lies, are minor compared to his genuine achievements. Poets, you fabricate great deeds but it is proper for you to admit that our present lord accomplished greater feats. 79. The Pellean leader wished his entire praises to be composed by the services of a Choerilius, so that the multitude not catch his desire to deceive and that he who was lured into confirming his victory not become a witness to his impudence. I would detract nothing from those whom antiquity considered exceptional, had not the revival of Roman renown brought you forward. 80. Him, his mother unaware of her error (p. 213) kept ignorant of true religion, but vital instruction initiated you into the worship of the highest God at the very threshold of your life. Never do you accredit to your labours what an auspicious event offered you. You know that responsibility rests with you, and that God is the force responsible for your achievements. Your conduct is such, that you deserve to obtain prosperity, yet everything you gain you ascribe to your Maker. Your strength, watchfulness and good fortune show the sovereign, your clemency, the priest. 81. What more! In vain our ancestors called those on whom the sceptres were conferred divine and pontifices! It is singular to fulfil the most sacred and not hold venerable titles! Let my king by rights be Alamannicus, but let another hold the title, so that divinely blessed he may live his life by the fruit of his conscience and not require the empty titles of pompous boasting. His character turns the sycophancy of the ancients into reality.

XVIII 82. Conquered by your enormous achievements and blinded by your brilliant former glories, I should (I admit) come to end of my speech and bypass new accomplishments. Just so would mortal darkness be overshadowed by heaven's splendour and the glimmers of humble orations lack the power to equal the brilliance of the night, had I wished to reduce to a number the ornaments of the heavens, including the great Bear, and to describe the beauty of the sky with powerless language. This situation which reveals me inadequate has testified to my willingness to comply.

XIX 83. For whose tongue ought to celebrate that you maintain the arms of the Gothic flower while you see to it that our leisure is not disrupted and make sure that the unconquerable men practice war-games under your eyes amidst prosperous tranquillity? The victorious divisions remain still solidly strong, and already others have grown. Muscles are hardened by missile throwing and fulfil the action of the brave while they play. In the manner of a game is conducted what, in subsequent time, will suffice for courage. 84. While young men fling their pliant spears with thongs, while daily slaughter of targets aims the bows further, they trample down the city's boundary field in mock battles. This form of fighting ensures that no true battles develop to bring us danger. Furthermore, who could believe that one man has so much power that through preparations for war he conquers the fierce in battles and by his prudence ensures that no reason for fighting breaks out? 85. We learned that Rutilius and Manlius, guided by their foresight, offered gladiatorial games to the people, so that in time of uninterrupted peace they could see from their theatre stalls what is done in battle. But then, to no purpose, dead comrades were piled up by the festive crowd for display. Never are these

things good which find their origin in cruelty. First they saw the death of their comrades so that their spirits be armed against the enemy. However, the contest that exhibited the dead did not so much increase toughness as fear. In peacetime the minds of unwarlike men learned what to fear. 86. Picture these arrangements, so very different! The true loss of blood turned the minds of the latter away from battle, but the adolescent vigour of the former became inflamed by pretended combat. These then are the men who early in life learned to kill as many of their enemies as they had arrows; they are not accustomed to spend the contents of their quivers carelessly amongst roaming exotic beasts, nor to fling their sure death causing missiles into the air; they will send off as many souls as spears.

XX 87. But, between the series of battles in which you instruct all men, and procure favourable omens for conquest, do you perhaps not reserve some time for the sweetness of civil life? Who is such a man as to believe that your heroes would not reject fear that is foreign to them while times are tranquil? For law restrains their natures invincible in battles (p. 214). After they have earned their laurels and trampled down the enemy squadrons they bow their necks to your precepts to which their weapons will have yielded, and your decrees reign supreme. 88. You alone have the combination of achievements and talents and your order the highspirited men obey. Your origin, in fact, made you their lord, but your virtue has affirmed your lordship. The splendour of your noble ancestors acquired the sceptres for you, but if you had lacked the insignia, your mind would have brought it about that you be chosen King.

XXI 89. But the beauty of your frame must not be numbered amongst the least of your assets. The majesty of your regal countenance illuminates the purple of your nobility. China, supply the garments which you dye with precious murex and not in one cauldron keep the coverings as they soak up their splendour! Let a crown be fashioned with diverse gems! Add the stone which the powerful serpent guards! Whatever ornaments the obedient world will send, adorned with the splendour of your venerable body they will sparkle more. 90. Your stature is such that by your height you announce the sovereign. The blushing of your cheeks harmonizes with their whiteness. Serenity always shines from your eyes. Your worthy hands present death to traitors and desired honours to your subjects. 91. Let no one rashly boast his stateliness, because what crowns bring forth in other rulers, in my king his nature, formed by God, created. Those others are conspicuous with the aid of wealth, but my king's unchangeable and natural manner marks him the better man. What more! Let those who desire to obtain a beauty that is not their own, work at cultivating it! 92. The lord of Italy combines in harmony two opposites, so that in his anger he strikes like lightning without comparison, and in his joy he is fair without blemish. With solemn speech, in frightful likeness he announces war to the nations' embassies, in pleasing likeness peace. You combine such great character traits in you, that spread individually they would make men perfect. 93. But, would only that the goodness of our Golden Age bring forth a royal offspring! Oh, would that an heir to the kingdom play in your lap, so that the sacred child receive - in attestation of similar joys - these prayers which we offer you! But see, my debt repaid and duty performed, I have concluded my speech with a prayer.

(1)

III. 11: 29-33, (p.204)

As a youth Theoderic spent ten years at court in Constantinople, as hostage to the Emperor Leo I. Jordanes, who describes the events leading up to Theoderic's stay at court, is the only surviving source for early Ostrogothic history. According to him, the three Amali-Ostrogothic brothers, King Valamer, Theodemer, Theoderic's father, and Videmer, dwelled with their tribes in Pannonia, which they had received from the Emperor Marcian after the break-up of the Hunnic Empire. At that time they became federates of the Roman Empire, and as such, received yearly payments from the eastern Emperor; when these were stopped (probably by Leo I) the three Amali brothers sent an embassy to the Emperor to enquire why this was so and to their amazement they learned that another Goth, Theoderic, the son of Triarius (also named Strabo), not descended from the Amali line, was now in favour at court. Incensed about their treatment, the brothers took up arms and devastated Illyricum. Consequently, in 461 Leo I promised to renew the yearly payments but demanded that Theoderic, then about eight years old, be handed over as hostage to ensure that peace was kept. Theoderic stayed at court for ten years, and when about eighteen years old c. 471/2 was returned by Leo I to his father Theodemer, (Jord. Get. 259-264; 268-282).

Jordanes does not reveal if Theoderic received any formal education at Constantinople, but remarks that the child gained imperial favour "quia puerulos elegans erat, meruit gratiam imperialem habere" (Jord. Get. 271). Theophanes (AM 5977) and Malalas (383) both mention Theoderic's education in Constantinople. Theophanes even declares, "κατὰ γὰρ τὸ Βυζάντιον ἀμνηρεύσας ποτὲ τοῖς ἀρίστοις τῶν διδασκάλων ἐφοίτησεν";

sources, however, (Anon. Val. 12.61, 14.79; Proc. BG I, 2.16) explicitly state that Theoderic was illiterate.<sup>1</sup> Whatever source one may be more inclined to believe, one thing is certain: the ten years spent at court must have left some impression on Theoderic's character. It is quite possible that his admiration for Roman tradition and respect for Roman law, which his reign in Italy so clearly revealed, were a result of his stay at Constantinople.<sup>2</sup>

#### 4: 33-40, 1-9 (pp. 204-205)

Ennodius refers here to the conspiracy of Basiliscus against the eastern Emperor Zeno, at the beginning of the year 475.<sup>3</sup> Zeno was proclaimed Emperor on February 9, 474, but as an Isaurian he was not popular.<sup>4</sup> After reigning only one year, he fled by night to his native Dacia, when Verina, his mother-in-law (herself party to the plot), informed him of the conspiracy (Joh. Ant. fr. 210). When the people discovered the next morning that their Emperor had fled stealthily, they began to vent their hatred on those Isaurians still left in the city and staged a great blood bath (Cand. fr. 1). Verina, who had hoped to marry her lover Patricius and raise him to the throne, was disappointed when her brother Basiliscus, supported by Illus and Armatus, was proclaimed Emperor instead (January, 475). (Cand. fr. 1; Joh. Ant. fr. 210).<sup>5</sup> Basiliscus, however, made himself unpopular with the people through his ecclesiastical policies and excessive taxation; his reign lasted only twenty months.

Soon fortune favoured Zeno again. Basiliscus, already losing support at home (see above), now lost the support of Illus and his brother Trocundes, whom he had sent against Zeno during his reign. Apparently, Basiliscus had reneged on some promises made to the brothers,

and since they also received letters from leading ministers asking them to bring back Zeno, they decided to support the exiled Emperor. Illus' and Trocundes' decision to back Zeno undoubtedly was influenced by promises made to them by Zeno. (After Zeno's restoration Illus was made consul (478), magister officiorum (477-481) and patrician (477) (Joh. Mal. 386; for the dates see PLRE II, p. 587).

Illus accompanied Zeno to Constantinople. When Basiliscus found out that Zeno and Illus, supported by a large army, were on their way to Constantinople, he sent Armatus, his magister militum, against Zeno, but Armatus too was won over by Zeno's promise to keep him as magister militum for life (Joh. Mal. 385). Basiliscus, upon learning of Zeno's return, sought sanctuary in the church of St. Sophia, but he was lured out by Armatus. The usurper and his family were then sent into exile to Cappadocia where they were subsequently murdered (Cand. fr. 1).

Of all the sources who mention this conspiracy, only one specifically claims that Zeno requested Theoderic's help to reclaim the throne:

"Zeno confortans Isauros intra provinciam, deinde misit ad civitatem Novam<sup>6</sup> ubi erat Theodericus dux Gothorum, filius Walamerici, et eum invitavit in solacium sibi adversus Basiliscum obiectans militem, post biennium veniens, obsidens civitatem Constantinopolim." (Anon. Val. 9.42)

This source does not explain how Theoderic was involved in the restoration of Zeno, but, after relating contemporary events in Italy, continues, "Zeno itaque recompensans beneficiis Theodericum, quem fecit patricium at consulem donans ei multum et mittens eum ad Italiam" (Anon. Val. 11.49).

Although none of the sources, other than Ennodius and Anonymus Valesianus claim Theoderic's involvement in Zeno's restoration, one must bear in mind that many of the sources

are chronicles and offer only summary accounts (Theophi., Josh. Styl., Joh. Mal.); and those sources that give a more detailed picture (Malch., Joh. Ant.) are unfortunately only fragments. Therefore, it is impossible to determine all the intricate manoeuvres of the Basiliscus conspiracy.<sup>7</sup> But the fact that other sources also mention various honours that Theoderic received between 476 and 478 seems to bear out Anonymus Valesianus. Theoderic was made patrician about 476/477, magister militum praesentalis, about the same time, 476/477, and declared son-in-arms<sup>8</sup> by Zeno no later than 478 (dates in PLRE II, p. 1079). None of the above mentioned sources specifies why or when Theoderic received each honour.

Ennodius' message in this section is bold: Theoderic is the Emperor restorer and could have taken over the throne without any damage to his reputation had he chosen to do so. Implicitly Ennodius also alludes to Zeno's cowardice (12; 36-37, p. 204). Theophanes (AM 5967) and Evagrius (HE III; 3) both mention this character trait of Zeno and Malchus, who has a marked dislike for the Emperor, generally portrays him as a coward. (fr. 5; 18.3).

1. Ensslin (Histor. Jahrbuch 60, 1940, 391 ff) argued that Anon. Vales. confused the story of the illiteracy of Justin I with that of Theoderic. In a later article, (Settimane, pp. 534-535) he summarizes as follows: "Nun habe ich an anderer Stelle zu erweisen versucht, dass diese Anekdote beim Anonymus Valesianus eine Uebertragung von Justinus I. auf den Amaler ist; denn er konnte Briefe an die römische Synode unterschreiben mit dem Gruss: orate pro nobis domini sancti et venerabiles patres. Aber nun steht eben doch auch in dem Teil des Anonymus, der dem Amaler günstig ist, er sei inlitteratus gewesen. Ja, trotz aller Ausbildung, die ihm Kaiser Leo I. hatte angedeihen lassen, fehlte ihm eben das, was in der römischen Oberschicht seiner Zeit als letzter Schliiff gelten konnte und musste, die rhetorisch/philosophische Bildung."

2. So, for example, Wolfram (pp.262-263): "During this decade [his stay at Constantinople] Theoderic caught up on all the Romanitas it had taken the Visigothic Balthi generations to acquire. Perhaps many of the instances of extreme and erratic behaviour by Theoderic could be explained by the tensions to which he had been exposed as a barbarian child and a young man."

3. Zeno's reign was marked by two major conspiracies. On Zeno's reign see Bury, (pp. 389-404); see also Brooks, EHR 8.

4. Josh. Styl. XII: "In the days of Peroz the Greek empire too was in disorder; for the officials of the palace hated the emperor Zenon because he was an Isaurian by race, and Basiliscus rebelled against him."

The Isaurians were notorious brigands. (See Jones, Vol. I, pp. 25, 116 and 192. See also Bury, p.389).

5. Basiliscus apparently had long before his coup d'état aspirations of becoming Emperor (Priscus, 53.3, 8-12, p. 362).

6. Theoderic and his father Theodemer had settled with their followers in Macedonia by about 474 (Jord. Get. 287-288). If we are to trust Anon. Val., Theoderic had to be in Novae no later than 475/476.

7. Theoderic Strabo also appears to have been involved in the conspiracy. Unfortunately, our sources are not specific about the degree of his involvement. Apparently, Strabo saw himself as successor to his relative Aspar and had been appointed magister militum praesentalis by Leo I. He then lost that post when Zeno came to power. This could be the reason why he supported Basiliscus. Malchus (fr. 15) mentions that Strabo encouraged Basiliscus in his treacherous designs (see also Theoph. AM 5970). Neither source is specific about Strabo's involvement. According to Anon. e. Suda, 2 (p.477) Strabo was envious of Armatus' position.

8. This Germanic tradition is well illuminated in one of Cassiodorus' letters to the King of the Heruli (Cass. Var. IV, 2).

(3)

IV, 15-16; 12-16, (p. 205)

Theoderic was nominated consul for the year 484 which also saw the uprising of Illus and Leontius in the east (the third conspiracy against Zeno)<sup>1</sup> and Theoderic's participation in the reduction of that revolt. According to Ennodius, Theoderic received the consulship as reward for having saved Zeno's throne. The panegyrist's reference to the outbreak of the civil war of 484 is vague and brief, "quo [Theoderic] in segmentis posito quae ab hostibus tremuerunt" (16; 15-16). However, the panegyrist's brevity need not necessarily imply that Theoderic played a minor role in the reduction of that revolt, since Ennodius' aim in section IV lies elsewhere. He has already established that Theoderic was indispensable to the welfare of the eastern Empire (section III), and now he concentrates on Theoderic's noble heritage (which he has already introduced in section III with genitus rex (13; 3 p.205), and his leadership qualities both as military commander and leader of his people. Contrasted to Theoderic is the plebeian Gaius Atilius Serranus (17; 18-20), who had advanced to the rank of praetor and in a time of need, when Rome saw itself at war with Hannibal and some Gallic tribes, was given command over some troops in order to fight the Gauls. His mission, however, was unsuccessful and his troops were defeated (Livy XXI, 26, XXI, 39, XXII, 35).

The historical events preceding Theoderic's consulship are as follows: in 482 Theoderic and his followers were devastating Macedonia and Thessaly and they plundered the city of Larissa (the sources do not tell us why [Marcell. com. s.a. 482; Joh. Ant. fr. 213]). Zeno, an opportunistic politician,<sup>2</sup> who during his reign not only managed to survive three major conspiracies but also skilfully alternated his alliances between Strabo and Theoderic, decided in

483 to turn his attention again to Theoderic. In order to make peace palatable to the Amaligoth, Zeno conceded not only parts of Moesia and Dacia Ripensis to him for settlement but also appointed him again magister militum praesentalis (a post he had lost to Strabo in 478) and nominated him consul for the year 484. Brooks (p. 223) has plausibly proposed that Zeno courted Theoderic with the intention of using him for the reduction of the revolt of Illus and Leontius.

At some point in 484, probably before he sent Theoderic to the east, Zeno persuaded Theoderic to murder Rekitach (Joh. Ant. fr. 214.3), the son of the recently deceased Strabo, who had taken over his father's leadership (Joh. Ant. fr. 211.5). Brooks (p. 223), however, suggests that the murder of Rekitach was "insisted upon by the Goth for he could not go to the east and leave his rival in undisputed possession of the provinces of Europe," and appears to forget that Zeno had just as much to gain from Rekitach's murder as Theoderic; for surely the Emperor wanted the troublesome Rekitach<sup>3</sup> out of the way before he despatched not only his forces but also his Gothic allies to the east and left the Balkans largely under-protected. Ennodius, understandably, does not mention Rekitach's murder.

In the year of Theoderic's consulship, Zeno sent Theoderic to the east together with the magister militum per Orientem, John the Scythian. The main sources who mention Theoderic's participation in the quelling of the civil war give conflicting reports as to the degree of the consul's involvement. One source (Joh. Ant. fr. 214.4; 214.6) writes that Zeno sent Theoderic to the east but then mistrustingly recalled him from Nicomedia. The Gothic troops stayed on, however, and were recalled only after the flight of Illus and Leontius. Evagrius (HE III. 27) and Theophanes (AM 5977), on the other hand, has Theoderic himself participate until Illus and

Leontius are enclosed in the fortress Papyrion, after which time he returns to Zeno, John the Scythian staying on.

Modern historians also have differing views concerning Theoderic's participation in the reduction of the civil war. Jones (Vol. I, p. 229) follows John of Antioch's account. Brooks (p.228) accepts Theophanes' description, because he doubts that the Goths would have fought without their leader. Ensslin (Th.d.Gr., p. 56) favours John of Antioch's account; he does not, however, believe that Theoderic was recalled from Nicomedia because Zeno mistrusted him, but thinks that the war against Illus and Leontius was as good as over when Theoderic returned to Constantinople. Moreover, Ensslin suggests that Theoderic received a triumph and equestrian statue (two honours which are only mentioned by Jordanes, Get. 289, without any reference as to why and when he was supposed to have received these) as a reward for having reduced the revolt in the east. But if the war was as good as over, why only recall Theoderic and not his troops also, and why send not only Rugian reinforcements under Ermenaric, but also a fleet to the east, as John of Antioch states (fr. 214.4)?

It is impossible to form a precise picture of the events, simply because the two contradictory statements of Theophanes and John of Antioch cannot be reconciled.

Two years after Theoderic's consulship (486), Zeno and Theoderic were again in a state of war. What Theoderic's motives were for this revolt and devastation of Thrace escapes our knowledge.

1. On this conspiracy see Bury (pp. 394-398).
2. The historian Procopius (BG I, 1) describes Zeno as a man who knew how to turn any situation to his advantage, Ζήνων δὲ βασιλεὺς τὰ παρόντα εὖ τίθεσθαι ἐπιστάμενος".
3. According to John of Antioch, Rekitach who first co-ruled his dead father's followers with his uncle, soon slew the latter and "μόνος τῆς Θρακῶν ἐδουάσθηεν, ἀτοπώτερα τοῦ πατρὸς ἀπεργασόμενος".  
(Joh. Ant. fr. 211.5).

(4)

V (19; 26-30 p. 205)

Besides Ennodius there is only one other source, Paul the Deacon, who mentions a battle between Theoderic and a Bulgar named Busa: "at tamen prius quam Italiam adventaret, Trapstilam Gepidarum regem insidias sibi molientem bello superans extinxit, Busan quoque Vulgarorum regem magna simul cum suis agminibus caede prostravit" (Paul. Diac. Hist. Rom. XV, 15, p.213). In contrast to Ennodius' account, Paul connects this battle to Theoderic's fight against the Gepids on his journey to Italy. Furthermore, Paul claims that Theoderic killed the Bulgar, whereas Ennodius specifically says that the Bulgar leader was not killed, "nec extinctus...nec intactus..." (19; 27-28, p. 205). It is therefore not certain at all if Paul even refers to the same historical event as Ennodius. Quite clearly, Paul employs a source now lost to us, for none of our extant sources mention a battle of Bulgars and Gepids against Theoderic. As to the veracity of this unknown source, nothing can be said. When Theoderic was supposed to have fought the Bulgar leader of whom Ennodius speaks, we do not know and the historical circumstances concerning this fight is also unknown. The Bulgars cannot be connected to the uprising of Illus and Leontius since none of the sources mention a Bulgar contingent allied either to Zeno or the rebels.<sup>1</sup>

Tomacheck (RE III, p. 1040), basing himself on Paul's account, has proposed that Theoderic fought against Bulgar allies of the Gepids on his march to Italy in 488/489. Martin and Lumpe, on the other hand, do not give much credence to Paul's account.<sup>2</sup> Martin (p. 67) for instance, remarks:

"Schon der Umstand, dass der Amaler die Bulgaren erst nach dem Siege über die Gepiden niederwerfen lässt, macht den Bericht verdächtig, da die Bulgaren die Gegenden am schwarzen Meere bewohnt haben. Zudem hat Paulus, der doch erst im achten Jahrhundert schrieb, diese Nachricht allein."

On the basis of Ennodius' account Ensslin (RE V A 2, p. 1752) had suggested that the Bulgars crossed the Danube in 485 and that Theoderic fought them under the express command of Zeno. This argument had been made in order to give context to Jordanes' account of Theoderic's triumph (Jord. Get. 189)<sup>3</sup>; but as has been mentioned in my commentary IV, Jordanes, who is the only source who mentioned a triumph, does not specify why or when Theoderic received it. However, it seems unlikely that the Bulgars were already a threat to the eastern Empire as early as 485. The Bulgars became a dangerous menace only after the Goths departed to the west, thus enabling them to expand.<sup>4</sup>

Ensslin, in a later book (Th.d.Gr., p. 57) changed his mind and proposed that Zeno, probably at some point in 486, when Theoderic was devastating Thrace (Joh. Ant. fr. 214.7), employed the aid of the Bulgars against him. His suggestion seems plausible, especially since Zeno had used the Bulgarians for the first time as allies in 481 in the battle against Strabo where they were defeated (Joh. Ant. fr. 211.5).

Of course, a third possibility is that the fight between Theoderic and the Bulgar leader was merely a minor territorial squabble between the two nations, without any involvement of the eastern Emperor.

(5)

20-22; 30-38, 1-3 (pp.205-206)

Ennodius describes here the Bulgarians as a non-hereditary hierarchical society where the greatest warrior obtains the highest distinction. The horse has always played a major role with nomadic Steppe people. For the characterization of the Huns cf. Ammianus Marcellinus' digression (XXXI, 2). Huns, like Scythians and Alans, drank the milk of their mares. Ennodius employs here various topoi applied to Steppe people, and especially emphasizes the drinking of mare's milk. This habit is not emphasized by others (e.g. Ammianus Marcellinus, Jerome; see also Maenchen-Helfen, p. 220).

1. Joh. Ant. (fr. 214.4) mentions only Rugians and Goths who were sent to help quench the civil war of Illus and Leontius.
2. Lumpe (p. 208): "Paulus Diaconus verlegt die Schlacht Theoderichs gegen die Bulgaren irrtümlicherweise auf seinen Zug nach Italien, wo er mit den Gepiden zu kämpfen hatte...Demnach hätte der Bulgaren-Chan Busa geheissen und wäre von Theoderich erschlagen worden; natürlich kommt der Angabe Ennodius, dass er den Chan nur schwer verwundet habe, die grössere Glaubwürdigkeit zu."
3. RE V, A 2 (p. 1749): "Ein Triumph auf Kosten Zenons war der Lohn für T. Bulgaren sieg (*Getica* 289)." (For Ensslin's proposal as to when Theoderic received his triumph see my commentary IV.)
4. On the Bulgarian invasions see Marcell. com. (s.a. 493, 499). On the Bulgars, see also Jones, Vol. I (pp. 213 and 235) and Vasiliev (pp. 109-110).

(6)

VI (p. 206)

It was important to Theoderic that his reign be recognized in the east; twice he sent embassies to Constantinople in 490 and 492, without results, but finally he received recognition from Emperor Anastasius in 497, with the return of the western ornamenta palatii sent by Odoacer in 477.<sup>1</sup> It seems, therefore, at first odd that Ennodius should not have referred to Theoderic's decision to take his people to Italy as concordant with the Emperor's wishes, or even better, proposed by him, as this would justify Theoderic's intervention in western affairs rather well. But at the time of the composition of the panegyric (about 507) relations between the eastern Emperor Anastasius and Theoderic were strained (see further my commentary XII) and therefore it was probably more expedient politically to forego any positive references<sup>2</sup> to the Emperor and depict Theoderic primarily as an independently acting sovereign. Hence Ennodius aims at a more dramatic aspect of Theoderic's decision to march to Italy, "pectori sacro affectum nostri caelestis favor infudit" (23; 6-7, p.206). Theoderic's love for the Italian people has been aroused by God so that the King may deliver Italy from the "intestinus populator", Odoacer (23; 9).<sup>3</sup> That is the main theme of section VI, and so with the first sentence Ennodius implicitly and elegantly introduces Theoderic as the future King of Italy, chosen by God, an idea which is, of course, but a slight modification of the topos of the sovereign's divine sanction to rule.

A careful reading of this section also suggests a thematic resemblance to Virgil's Aeneid. Like pius Aeneas, or pater Aeneas, who takes his Trojans on an arduous journey to Italy, overcomes his adversaries (especially Turnus) and founds what was to become later the Roman

Empire, so Theoderic, by Heaven's design leads his people on an onerous march to Italy to restore it to its former greatness. But whereas Aeneas has to flee a devastated homeland, Theoderic comes to the rescue of a devastated Italy. Ennodius thus cleverly inverts a Virgilian theme, Romanizes Theoderic and, most importantly, legitimizes Theoderic's intervention into western affairs.

Section VI is the key section of the whole speech and as such it is carefully and strikingly balanced. Roughly half of the section deplores the sad state of Italy under the "tyrant," while the other half mostly describes Theoderic's strenuous trek west in rather poetical language, echoing Virgil.<sup>4</sup>

The theme of divine intervention is picked up again in 25; 17-19. Thus the conflict between Odoacer and Theoderic is not only blessed, "nata est felix inter vos causa discordiae", but it is also Rome's good fortune itself that kills Theoderic's relations "dum peruelles animos in propinquorum tuorum necem Romana prosperitas invitavit", because these murders finally necessitate Theoderic's intervention. God's hand then is clearly revealed with the final clause with which Ennodius concludes his references to the wars between the Rugians and Odoacer, "ne vel a negotio perituris veniret fiducia pars fugacium proelia concitavit" (25; 19-20). Ennodius' implicit message is this: not only did Theoderic's relations have to die, but also God could not allow negotiations to be fruitful because in order to deliver Italy from the tyrant, Odoacer and his followers must die. Theoderic becomes a divine avenger. If this message strikes us as somewhat macabre or ill-befitting a member of the clergy, we need only turn to section VIII, 47; 1-5 (p.209), where Ennodius bemoans the fact that wild beasts drag away the dead corpses of the enemy and so leave nothing for his eyes to feast upon.

(7)

25: 17-19 (p.206)

According to Ennodius, the casus belli between Odoacer and Theoderic was the murder of Theoderic's relatives by Odoacer. None of the sources specify who these relatives were. We do know that the Rugian royal couple, King Feva-Feletheus and Queen Giso were taken captive by Odoacer (Auct. Prosp. Havn. s.a. 487, Fast. Vind. Prior s.a. 487, Cass. chron. s.a. 487). However, these sources do not mention the murder of Feva and Giso. Historians (e.g. Wolfram)

nevertheless have assumed that Ennodius referred to the death of the royal Rugian couple and that Giso perhaps was an Amali Princess, related to Theoderic. While this is a plausible interpretation of the sources, it cannot be proven.

The historical background leading up to the capture and subsequent murder of the Rugian royal couple is as follows: in 486, the eastern Emperor Zeno urged the Rugians to attack Odoacer. The reason for Zeno's action, according to one fragment of John of Antioch (214.7) was that he knew that Odoacer was preparing an alliance with Illus in the east (for this civil war, see my commentary iV; for a complete discussion, see Bury, pp. 394-399). But another passage of the same source also states that Odoacer had earlier, possibly in 484, refused to form an alliance with Illus (Joh. Ant. fr. 214.2).

Historians disagree whether Odoacer actually decided to intervene in the east. O'Flynn doubts John of Antioch's statement. He points out that Odoacer's position in Italy was too precarious, his resources too limited to intervene in the east, and that it was also against his general policy to do so (p. 143 ff). Ensslin, on the other hand, takes John of Antioch as a trustworthy source and does not doubt the arming of Odoacer's forces; he does doubt, however, that it was aimed

for the intervention in the east (Th.d.G., p. 59). Bury has similar views. He too follows John of Antioch's account and claims that Odoacer did not help the rebels in the east, but then continues that he did prepare "an expedition into the Illyrian provinces" (p. 410). Wolfram seems to accept John of Antioch's account unquestionably since he claims, "Odoacer prepared for an intervention in the East on the side of the anti-Zeno party" (p.278).

It is highly unlikely that Odoacer had suddenly developed a better reason to intervene on behalf of Illus and Leontius in 486 than in 484 when he refused an alliance with the rebels (Joh. Ant. fr. 214.7). By 486 Illus and Leontius were besieged in a fortress in Isauria and no longer posed a threat to the eastern Emperor. Besides, in Thrace, which he would have had to pass through if he wanted to reach Isauria, there were the rebellious Goths of Theoderic with whom he had to contend. Odoacer, however, was shrewd enough to act in his own interest when the situation proved advantageous. After the western Emperor Nepos, who lived in exile in Dalmatia, was killed in 480, Odoacer, perhaps under the pretext of punishing Nepos' murderers, marched into Dalmatia and extended his kingdom there.<sup>5</sup> Dalmatia, as part of the diocese of Illyricum, had been handed over to the eastern Emperor Theodosius, by Placidia, at the marriage of her son Valentinian III to Theodosius' daughter Eudoxia, in about 437 (Jord., Rom. 329, Cass. Var. XI, i).<sup>6</sup> It has been suggested that when Leo I appointed Nepos, then magister militum of Dalmatia, Emperor of the West (474), Dalmatia was handed over to him (Bury, p. 410). However, this is not certain at all, since none of the sources tell us so. Nepos, after his flight from Italy may have chosen Dalmatia as exile for the very reason that it still belonged to the eastern Empire and thus he would be under the protection of the eastern Emperor Leo I to whom he was related (Zeno, who succeeded Leo in 474, however, was not interested in Nepos'

plight). Nepos had not been the only royalty who fled to eastern territory for imperial protection.<sup>7</sup>

Just as Odoacer opportunistically invaded and annexed Dalmatia in 480<sup>8</sup> so he could have again in 486, when Theoderic's forces were devastating Thrace and keeping the Emperor's forces engaged, prepared to invade one of the Illyrian provinces belonging to the east.<sup>9</sup> Ennodius' cryptic sentence: "metuebat parentes exercitus, quem meminisse originis suae admonebat honor alienus; nam ire ad nutum suum legiones et remeare pavore algidus imperabat" (24; 14-15) may then actually refer to Odoacer's preparations to march into eastern territory which, however, were thwarted when Zeno roused the Rugians against Odoacer who was occupied at the home front.

Odoacer, according to the majority of the sources, anticipated the Rugians by attacking first.<sup>10</sup> Only one source (Eugip. V. Sev., XLIV) offers a reason for Odoacer's offensive. The background is as follows: Ferderuch, brother of Feva-Feletheus, had plundered St. Severin's monastery after the saint's death and soon afterwards, as was foretold, divine vengeance descended upon him and he was murdered by Fridiricus, the son of Ferderuch's brother Feva. Eugippius then writes, "quapropter [the murder of Ferderuch] rex Odoacer Rugis intulit bellum" (XLIV, 4; 14-15, p.29). However, the murder of Ferderuch occurred in 482, months after Severin's death, and Odoacer fought against the Rugians in 487; therefore, the idea of a punitive action seems highly unlikely.<sup>11</sup> Ennodius clearly states that the reasons for the outbreak of war were weak "generata est ab invalidis causa certandi." (25; 19). It is probable that the true reason for Odoacer's offensive was that he found out that Zeno had the Rugians turned against him and so anticipated their attack.

In the first battle, the royal Rugian couple, King Feva and Queen Giso, were taken captive. Fridiricus, Feva's son, was able to flee, but soon he was engaged in a second battle, this time with Odoacer's brother Onoulf:

"post audiens idem Odoacer Fredericum ad propria revertisse statim fratrem suum misit cum multis exercitibus Onoulfum, ante quem denuo fugiens Fredericus ad Theodericum regem, qui tunc apud Novas, civitatem provinciae Moesiae, morabatur, profectus est." (Eug. V. Sev. XLIV, p. 29)

Ennodius also indicates that a second battle erupted, "pars fugacium proelia concitavit" (26; 20, p. 206).

There seem to have been negotiations between Odoacer and Theoderic as Ennodius suggests (25; 19-20), but which he more specifically refers to in his Vita Epiphani:

"Post multas tamen quas apud Odovacrem regem legationes violentia supplicationis exegit, dispositione caelestis imperii ad Italiam Theodericus rex cum inmensa roboris sui multitudine commeavit." (V. Epiph., 109, 37-39, p. 97)

Whatever the aims of these negotiations were, they did not save the royal couple's life.<sup>12</sup>

However, love for the Italian people and revenge for the death of his relations, which Ennodius would have us believe, were surely not the major reasons for Theoderic's decision to take his people to Italy; rather, the Goth's incentives must have been more pressing and complex. The devastation of the Balkan area may have been a major reason for Theoderic's departure to Italy. Procopius writes that Zeno wanted Theoderic to march to Italy in order to get rid of Odoacer and to ward off further devastations of the Balkan area (Proc. EG I, 1). (Theoderic devastated Macedonia and Thessaly in 482 and Thrace as recently as 486). Concerning the plight of the Balkan, Burns explains: "[by 488] the entire Balkan area showed the effects of a century of brigandage, looting, burning and severe economic disruptions" (Historia, p. 73). If, then, the devastation of the land was such that it could not sufficiently

support its inhabitants, Theoderic's Goths surely were also affected by this; as Wolfram lucidly points out: "If Theoderic proved incapable of solving the economic problems of his retainers, his people would desert him and he was certain to meet an inglorious end" (p. 279)

Whether it was Zeno or Theoderic who first proposed the trek west is not clear; according to Procopius (BG I, 1) and Theophanes (AM 5977) Zeno made the proposal, but Jordanes (Get. 290-292) and Anonymus Valensianus (11.49) make Theoderic the initiator. We know from another source (Malch. fr. 20) that the Goth had expressed interest in the west much earlier (about 479) when he claimed he was willing to restore the then exiled western Emperor Nepos. At that time, however, his proposal fell on deaf ears; but in 488, Zeno, when approaching Theoderic or being approached by him, must have thought the timing excellent to solve both an economic and political problem by getting rid of the destructive Goths as well as the distrusted Odoacer. Likewise, Theoderic, who himself may have mistrusted Zeno as Malalas notes (383)<sup>13</sup>, could only gain by his departure to Italy.

1. Anon. Val. (11.53; 12.57; 12.64). Concerning the political significance of the transmission of the ornamenta palatii Claude writes: "Die Übersendung einer vestis regia bedeutete in den Augen des Kaisers eine Anerkennung seiner Suprematie durch Theoderich; für den Amaler war die Investitur ein Unterpfund der kaiserlichen Sanktionierung der praesumptio regni von 493." (p. 5)
2. For a derogatory comment on Emperor Anastasius see section XVII, 81; 7, (p.213): "rex meus sit iure Alamannicus, dicatur alienus." The implication of this comment is as follows: since Theoderic incorporated the Alamanni into his kingdom he rightly is Alamannicus, whereas the eastern Emperor merely holds the title Alamannicus. Vogel, (p. XVII) writes: "cur autem Theodericus cognomen Alamannici mereret, p. 212, 5-12 explanatum est. at quis est ille alienus rex, qui indignus illum titulum sibi vindicavit? unus intellegi potest Anastasius, orientis imperator. Alamannicus enim non solum Justinianus posterioresque imperatores appellati sunt, ut ab aliis iam observatum est, sed iam Anastasius hunc titulum ipse sibi indidit in epistula ad senatum urbis Romae V kal. Aug. anni 5/6 data (Thiel epist. pontif. p. 765)."
3. For a similar thought see Vita Epiphani (109; 38, p. 97) Theoderic enters Italy with "dispositione caelestis imperii".
4. Throughout the panegyric four imitations of Vergil can be found (references taken from Vogel's text)
  - VI, 26;23 - Aen. I, 177
  - VI, 27; 26 - Georg. III, 366
  - VIII, 46; 31-32 - Aen. VIII, 244
  - XII, 67; 25 - Aen. I, 94.
5. Auct. Prosp. Havn. s.a. 482: 1. "Odoachar rex in Dalmatiis proficiscitur, cui cum obsistere cum exercitu Ovida conaretur, ab Odoachre oppressus interiit V. id. Decemb. Odoachar devicto Ovida atque interfecto regnum late proeliis et ferro extendit."
6. Bury (pp. 225-226): "Now [referring to the date October 29, 437, Valentinian's marriage] if not before, a considerable part of the diocese of Illyricum - Daimatia and Eastern Pannonia certainly - were transferred from the sway of Valentinian to the sway of Theodosius...The new provinces were now controlled by the Praetorian Prefect of Illyricum, and his seat was transferred for some years from Thessalonica to Sirmium." (ibid. nn. 5 and 7).
7. Placidia, after she was expelled from Ravenna, went into exile to Constantinople in 423, (see Bury, p. 210). Honorius, himself, had entertained the idea of going into exile to Constantinople in 408, but was dissuaded by Stilicho, (see Bury, p. 171).
8. Wolfram (p.320): "Of the original seven provinces of the western Illyrian - Pannonian diocese Odovacar ruled Dalmatia which he occupied in 481/482 as the avenger of the murdered emperor Nepos and which he annexed to his Italian dominion."

9. My suggestion differs from O'Flynn in that he thinks that Odoacer was unwilling or incapable of modifying his policies. His argument is as follows: "In the light of Odoacer's position in Italy and of his general policy, it seems improbable that he would have planned an attack on the Eastern Empire in 486, either in connivance with the rebel Illus, as Zeno apparently suspected or simply to take advantage of his own account, of the difficulties that Zeno was having with Illus and Theoderic simultaneously" (p.144).

I am not convinced by this argument because it hinges upon the assumption that Odoacer's policy did not change and is, of course, a question-begging argument.

10. So Anon. Vales. 10.48 "...Odoacar rex gessit bellum aduersus Rugos...", and Eug. V. Sev., 44. Fast. Vind. Prior s.a. 487 is non-specific as to who started the war, "pugna est inter Odoacrem regem et Fevvanum regem Rugorum...". Auct. Prosp. Havn. s.a. 487 is the only source that states that "Fevva rex Rugorum aduersum regem Erulorum Odoachrem bellum movet."
11. See Bieler (pp. 26-27, n.79)
12. Ensslin doubts that Theoderic had any serious intentions with his legations: "Dass es ihm damit Ernst gewesen sei, wird man schwerlich glauben wollen, doch wird er so Gelgenheit gewonnen haben, Aufklärung über die Lage zu gewinnen." (Th.d.Gr., p. 60). Maybe this statement should be qualified: peace most likely played no role in the negotiations, but the freeing of the hostages surely must have.
13. According to Malalas (383) Theoderic was afraid that the same end would meet him as Armatus. He had first sided with the usurper Basiliscus, but then betrayed him after Zeno promised Armatus the position of magister militum for life (see hereto my commentary III). Zeno, generally of a suspicious nature, later mistrusted Armatus and had him killed (Joh. Mal. 379, 380, 381-382).

(8)

VII (pp. 206-207)

Ennodius is the only primary source who describes the battle between the Gepids and the Ostrogoths in the winter of 488/489. Ennodius places the battle on the river Ulca which cannot be identified with certainty, and so it has been much debated amongst scholars to which river the panegyrist refers. Earlier historians like Manso and Martin<sup>1</sup> have taken the Ulca to be the modern Vuka by Cibalae, as do the modern historians Wolfram (p.280) and Burns (*Historia*, pp. 74-75). While it is etymologically sound to equate the modern Vuka with Ennodius' Ulca, as Löwe pointed out (pp. 2-3, n. 10), some scholars nevertheless were, in the past, unconvinced of this identification; they assumed that the river names had changed. Moreover, in order to travel the road along the Save, which was the quickest road to Italy, they correctly argued, Theoderic did not need to cross the Vuka. And so, Schmidt, who had first assumed that Ennodius referred to the Jelenitza (Ensslin favoured this supposition),<sup>2</sup> later changed his mind and equated the Ulca with the Save, as did Diculescu.<sup>3</sup> Löwe, in a convincing historio-geographical essay, has sufficiently proven that Theoderic took the road south of the Drave, not the one south of the Save, and that the modern Vuka is indeed the Ulca of Ennodius.

The Ostrogoths began their arduous journey in Novae, Moesia II, and marched on the road along the Danube, past Oescus, Viminicum and Singidunum, that is from modern Bulgaria into Yugoslavia. Then the road led them to Sirmium which most likely was already then in the hands of the Gepids. (About sixteen years later it was in their power for certain; see my commentary XII). After the fall of the Hunnic Empire, and the battle at the Nedao (454/455) the Gepids had largely taken over the former territory of the Huns, which stretched from the

Titia to the Carpathian mountains. After the Ostrogoths abandoned their settlement in Pannonia, the Gepids crossed the Danube and gradually extended their territory into Slavonia Sirmiensis. The sources do not mention action around Sirmium<sup>4</sup> but that does not necessarily mean that Sirmium was not yet held by the Gepids. They may have decided firstly to monitor the Ostrogothic trek as it made its way into their territory, perhaps hoping that it would take the road south of the Save, which lay farther to the south, outside their area. Theoderic in turn probably did not consider it prudent to waste time besieging a city which might hold out longer than he had provisions for his people, and thus moved on. Not far beyond Sirmium, Theoderic had two roads to choose from which eventually joined at Emona and led into Italy: one lay to the south of the Save, and was the quickest way to Italy, but not the best, as some parts of it (between Sirmium and Siscia) were threatened by yearly flooding. Moreover, stretches of it lay in the shadows of the Bosnian mountains squeezed in between these and the Save, so that the Gothic cavalry would have little or no manoeuvrability in case of a possible attack. The terrain surrounding the road to the south of the Drave was open and drier (Löwe, pp. 4-10). However, in order to reach that road, Theoderic had to turn northwards deeper into Gepidic territory and cross the river Vuka which flows through parts of Slavonia, north behind Cibalae, parallel to the Drave and empties into the Danube.

Ennodius describes the river Ulca as difficult to cross. The river is nestled between high banks which protect the Gepids "in iugorum more" (28; 32, p. 206). The area surrounding the river is muddy "nullius in scii mersa caeno haesere vestigia" (29; 38, p. 206). Löwe (p. 15) explained that the Vuka has indeed steep river banks, and lies in an area of Loess-ground which in bad weather is conducive to mud formation:

"Die jugoslawische Karte von Vinkovce lässt nun aber erkennen, dass die Vuka tatsächlich - wie die Ulca des Ennodius - Steilufer besitzt. Wir befinden uns hier am Nordrand der nach Djakovar hin auslaufenden westsyrmischen Lössplate. Der Löss neigt zur Bildung senkrechter Wände, und die Staunässe, die sich auf Lössboden in feuchten Klima und in ebener Lage bildet, erscheint ebenfalls in der Schilderung des Ennodius..."

According to Ennodius, the Ulca embraces the flanks of Gepidic territory. Wolfram has suggested that the Vuka may have constituted the formal imperial border (p. 280). It has been conjectured that the Gepids may have been in league with Odoacer and therefore acted in a hostile fashion towards the Goths. Diculescu (p. 107), however, has pointed out that the Gepids' animosity towards the Goths was longstanding and sufficient reason for attack. But apart from whether it was sheer animosity of the Gepids or an alliance with Odoacer that made the Gepids hostile, the prospect of having to supply food for a large number of starving people, who might have designs on their land, should have been ample enough reason for the Gepids to want to keep the Goths out of their territory.

Paul the Deacon informs us that in this battle Theoderic killed Trapstila, the King of the Gepids: "at tamen priusquam Italiam adventarent, Trapstilam Gepidarum regem insidias sibi molientem bello superans extinxit..." (Hist. Rom. XV, 15; p. 713). It is difficult to believe Paul's claim. Would the panegyrist have left such a momentous deed untouched?

(9)

30: 1-9, (p.207)

Ennodius contrasts Theoderic to Cato Uticensis, staunch Republican, who opposed the triumvirate and served under Metellus Scipio in Africa, where, after Caesar's victory at Thapsus, he committed suicide. Theoderic and his soldiers are aware of the dangers they are

facing, whereas Cato and his men are but helpless victims of snakes. Theoderic single handedly rescues his hard pressed soldiers and wins the battle for them; Cato, on the other hand, succumbs to adversity and commits suicide.

1. Martin (p. 66 n.1) writes: "Die Bestimmung des von Ennodius erwähnten Ulcaflusses ist viel umstritten; seit Manso (Gesh. d. ostgoth. Reiches in Italien, Breslau 1824, p. 40) hat man angenommen, dass er mit der Hiulca palus bei der Stadt Cibalis (Vinkovze) identisch ist. Indessen bin ich geneigt, ihn mit dem jetzt Vuca genannten Flusse zu identificieren, der nördlich von Cibalis parallel zur Drave in die Donau mündet."
2. Ensslin, (Th. d. Gr., p. 64): " Es muss also einer der Flussläufe sein, die ostwärts von Sirmium in einigem Abstand von Singidunum zur Save gehen und vielleicht hatte L. Schmidt ursprünglich das Richtige gesehen, als er an die Jelenitza dachte...Jetzt nimmt er mit Diculescu die Save an." (See Schmidt I, p. 153)
3. Diculescu (p. 109): "Ennodius sagt nämlich, dass sie Goten nicht nur mit den verschanzten Gepiden, sondern auch mit dem Fluss selbst...zu kämpfen hatten. Ein solcher Fluss kann aber hier kein anderer als die Save gewesen sein, wie auch schon M. Büchinger (Gesh. Oesterreichs I, 53) richtig erkannt hat. Ennodius spricht von dem Übergang der Goten über die Save eben darum nicht, weil sie bei ihm Ulca genannt wird."

Diculescu assumes that a small river is less treacherous.

4. Löwe (p. 4) writes: "[Es] ist anerkannt, dass der Bericht Prokops über gotisch-gepidische Kämpfe im Gebiet von Sirmien nichts mit dem Zug von 488/489 zu tun hat." (BG I, 1; I, 11)

(10)

VIII, 36; 30-32. (p. 207)

Ennodius mocks the multi-tribal forces of Odoacer. The latter, whose father was a Hun named Edeco and his mother a Scirian<sup>1</sup>, had come to Italy in 470 and was hailed rex on August 23, 476 by the Italian army, which seems to have consisted mainly of various Germanic tribesmen, i.e. Herulians, Scirians, Rugians and Turcilingians (RE XVIII, 2, p. 1889). Hence the sources call him either rex Herulorum (Auct. Prosp. Havn. s.a. 487), or rex Turcilingorum (Jord. Get. 242). Marcellinus names him even rex Gothorum (Marcell. com. s.a. 489). If we were to take Ennodius literally, Odoacer had reinforcement from federate tribes, who under their respective kings had rallied to Odoacer's standard. Bury (p. 423) took Ennodius seriously. More convincingly, however, Laufenberg appears to have recognized the panegyrist's overtly derisive stance; (see especially his depiction of Odoacer as some sort of Poseidonic figure "quasi orbis concussor", 36; 31, p. 207):

" Die Bezeichnung reges in der fraglichen Stelle dürfte wohl-allerdings mit starker rhetorischer Lizenz - lediglich die Führer der mannigfachen Stammesteile in Odovacars Söldnerheer bezeichnen sollen, wenn man darunter nicht das persönliche Gefolge des Herulerkönigs verstehen will, in dem sich mancher Spross fürstlichen Geblüts befunden haben mag." (p. 35)

How large Odoacer's army was is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to estimate. Sundwall has calculated Odoacer's army to be about 15,000 men. The basis of his estimation is weak, but our sources for Odoacer's period are so few that this is best one can do:

"Wenn wir die Zahl der germanischen Söldner auf etwa 15,000 schätzen - dass sie eine grössere Wehrmacht als die, welche Belisar<sup>2</sup> später nach Italien mitnahm, dargestellt hätten, halte ich für kaum glaublich - ist schon daraus ersichtlich, dass die Bodenverteilung für die einheimische Bevölkerung nicht sehr drückend wurde." (p.179)

Sundwall's calculation has been generally accepted.<sup>3</sup>

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Theoderic's soldiers, on the other hand, were mostly Ostrogoths, who were joined by Fridiricus and his Rugian followers (see commentary VI). Stein (p. 54) has calculated that Theoderic's warriors numbered about 20,000. In a more recent estimation, Dannenbauer has arrived at the number 10,000.<sup>4</sup> It must be pointed out that the calculations for the number of soldiers available to Theoderic on his march to Italy have no basis at all, but are simply guesswork,<sup>5</sup> related to the normal size of armies at the period. They varied from as high as 40,000 (Hodgkin Th.th.Gr., p.112) to as low as Dannenbauer's 10,000.

(11)

37-38; 36-41, (p.207)

Ennodius refers here to the battle at the river Sontius, where Theoderic first met the forces of Odoacer, towards the end of August, 489 (Anon. Val. 11.50). Theoderic had led his people along the Drave road (for this interpretation see my commentary VII) to Emona, where the Drave and the Save roads join, and then onwards over the Julian Alps. Odoacer chose not to meet Theoderic on his march to Italy, but instead appears to have dispatched some troops to the bridge of the river Sontius which flows west to the Julian Alps. There they awaited the Goths. Ennodius claims that Odoacer built an entrenchment which he guarded poorly and that Theoderic's mere appearance sent the enemy forces scattering. The continuator of Prosper offers a similar picture:

"Theodericus rex Gothorum ingressus est fossatum ponte Sontis adversum Odoachar regem, quem cum ingenti copia hostium munitum et insolentis animi cerneret non posse eum vi superare, amore percussus aufugit..." (Auct. Prosp. Havn. s.a. 490).

Jordanes does not seem to distinguish a battle at the river Sontius, but merely remarks that Theoderic halted there for some time to refresh his men and animals while Odoacer in the meantime sent out his troops to meet Theoderic at the plains at Verona (Jord. Get. 293).

Paul the Deacon, relying on a source which seems to be related to the source used by Jordanes, comments as follows:

"ac primum iuxta Sontium flumen, qui non longe ab Aquileia labitur castra componens [Theoderic] dum uberrimis quae eo loco habentur pascuis fatigata aliquantulum ex itineris longitudine iumenta reficeret, ibi mox ei cum grandi suorum exercitu totisque Odovacer Italiae viribus occurrit. quem Theodericus alacriter excipiens magno superatum proelio postremo in fugam convertit." (Hist. Rom. XV, 15, p. 214) <sup>6</sup>

(12)

39-47; 1, (pp. 207-209)

The Scirian then awaited Theoderic at Verona, near the river Atesis-Adige, where battle ensued on September 27, 489 (Anon. Val. 11.50). Instead of barricading himself inside Verona, Odoacer opted for a pitched battle. Judging from the continuator of Prosper, the battle was heavy and victory not easy:

"quem [Theoderic] Odoachar adventasse ad sui obsidionem cerneret taedio victus collectis bellatorum copiis sese in campo Veronensi minore obvium obiicit, ubi cum magnae strages ab utroque exercitu fierent, dum unum desperatae rei necessitas cogeret, alterum, ne coeptae victoriae gloriam fuga macularet, diu utrisque pugnantibus tandem victus Odoachar fugit et Ravennam cum exercitu fugiens pervenit." (Auct. Prosp. Havn. s.a. 490)

According to Ennodius, Odoacer chose a battle site that made flight highly dangerous (40; 4-5, p. 208). The object of this unorthodox method - though Ennodius insinuates it was a necessary measure to keep Odoacer's unwarlike men engaged in battle (40; 2-4, p. 208) - probably was to bring about a decisive outcome; however, if Theoderic's soldiers had greatly outnumbered

Odoacer's, the latter would not have chosen such a battle site, unless he nurtured suicidal tendencies.

1. Jordanes (Jord. Rom. 344) call him a Rugian "genere Rogus." Historians, however, have generally favoured John of Antioch's statement. (See RE, XVIII, 2, p.1889).
2. Belisarius took 15,000 men to North Africa and about 7,000 to Italy and Sicily (Jones, vol.1, p. 685)
3. Stein (p.41), O'Flynn (p. 199, n.64).
4. Dannenbauer makes the following observation: "Man muss sich vor übertriebenen Vorstellung hüten. Selbstverständlich hat sich nicht eine Volksmenge von 100.000 Köpfen auf den Weg von Untermösien (Nord-Bulgarien, Dobrudscha) nach Italien gemacht. [This estimation is Stein's, p. 54]. Wie hätte sie auf dem weiten Marsch durch die armen dünnbevölkerten, seit über hundert Jahren fort und fort verwüsteten und ausgeplünderten Landschaften sich verpflegen sollen? Schon für 10.000 Krieger mit entsprechenden weiblichen Tross war das Unternehmen schwierig genug..." (pp. 100-103).
5. Ensslin (Th.d.Gr): "Wieviel Krieger und wieviel Nichtkombattenten zu der Wanderung sich sammelten, bleibt reine Vermutung...Wenn man zumeist mit 20.000 bis 25.000 Mannen und einer Gesamtzahl von etwa 100.000 rechnet, so sind das mindestens doppelt soviel, als Theoderich 478 über den Balkan geführt hatte, und nicht ganz soviel, wie Theoderich Strabo zuletzt befehlig: haben soll". (pp. 62-63)
6. Compare the short impersonal account of Anonymus Valesianus: "Cui occurit venienti Odoacar ad fluvium Sontium et ibi pugnans cum eodem, victus fugit et abiit in Veronam..." (Anon. Val. 11.50).

(13)

X, 49; 11-16, p. 209

It is not quite clear what Odoacer's and Theoderic's exact moves were after the battle at Verona, on September 27, 489. Anonymus Valesianus (11.50, 11.51) claims that Odoacer fled straight to Ravenna, whereas Theoderic entered Mediolanum. Paul the Deacon, on the other hand, informs us that Theoderic first invaded Verona and then went to Mediolanum (Hist. Rom XV, 16, p. 214), which sounds quite probable; there, just as later at Mediolanum (see below), he may have received the luminaries of the city who came to pay obeisance to the victor. Theoderic then may have followed the road to Brixia and Comum from where he turned southwards to Mediolanum. There, most or a great many of Odoacer's soldiers including Tufa, his magister militum surrendered to the victor. According to Paul, Odoacer fled to Rome after his defeat at Verona. This city, however, had shut its doors and denied him access. Angered by this treatment he devastated the area with sword and fire. He then went to Ravenna where he shut himself in.

Odoacer's men cannot have been the only ones impressed with Theoderic's victory. We know that at least one city, Ticinum paid obeisance to the newly arrived conqueror (V. Epiph. 109; 39, 1, pp.97-98), and it is not farfetched to conjecture that other north Italian cities already had done so, or were following suit (see e.g. Ensslin, Th.d.Gr., p. 66). Mediolanum must have welcomed Theoderic with open arms because we do not hear of any opposition to Theoderic's entrance there (see further below). The Ostrogoth, however, did not yet have complete control over Italy; for that he would have to wait until February 493, after the siege of Ravenna and subsequent murder of Odoacer.

(14)

50; 17-21, (p. 209)

Theoderic received an unexpected blow, when Tufa decided to switch sides again and returned to Odoacer's camp. Tufa, who must have quickly gained Theoderic's confidence, was ordered in 489 (the same year of his surrender) to march against Odoacer. But instead of fulfilling Theoderic's order, Tufa went as far as Faventia; there, he treacherously handed over to Odoacer Theoderic's high officers who were then shackled and led to Ravenna (Anon. Val. 11.52). In his Vita Epiphani, Ennodius tells us what happened when Theoderic found out about Tufa's treachery:

"Interea perduelles animos Aediticii exercitus mutationum incendit ambitio, quorum caput Tufa fuit, homo in perfugarum infamia notitia veteri pollutus: qui concepit mente ingenti ut se desperatis partibus cum multitudine redderet. quod cum Theodericus rex principali sollicitudine cognovisset, continuo omnem illam, quam totus oriens vix sustinuit, contraxit manum atque ad Ticinensis civitatis se angustiam contulit." (V. Epiph. 111; 10-16, p. 98)

The strain that this small city was put under by the occupation of the Ostrogothic army is vividly illuminated by Ennodius (see further, V. Epiph. 112-113; p. 98):

(15)

51; (p. 209)

Odoacer staged a short-lived come-back. He gained control over Cremona and punished Milan by incarcerating its bishop Laurentius, who seems to have opened the gates for Theoderic all too willingly (Ennod. In Nat. Laur., 15-18, p.3; Ensslin, Th.d.Gr., p.67). Furthermore, probably at the beginning of the year 490 as Sundwall conjectures, that is, after Tufa's betrayal

of Theoderic and before the decisive battle at the river Addua, in August 490<sup>2</sup>, Odoacer proclaimed his son Thela caesar (Joh. Ant. fr. 214 a). Ennodius may be indicating this: "libuit eos rursus tendenti inermem dextram Odoacri regna polliceri" (51; 19-20, p. 209). Sundwall (p. 187), Bury (p. 424) and Ensslin (p. 67) have plausibly assumed that Odoacer made this move to gain the support of those who were hostile to the east, because supporters of constitutional legitimacy were more likely inclined to side with the Ostrogoth, who claimed to be acting in the name of the Emperor.<sup>3</sup> (Note that Ennodius never mentions that Theoderic came to Italy in the name of the eastern Emperor (see my commentary VI). How great a following Odoacer could muster is impossible to tell. The panegyrist claims that he miscalculated his support, "neminem adversarium agnovisse contigit, quod tecum pars mundi potior disponebat" (51; 23-24, p. 209).

(16)

51-52; 23-26 (p.209)

"mandata est per regiones disiunctissimas nex votiva. quis haec praeter supernam voluntatem praestitit, ut unius ictu temporis effunderetur Romani nominis clades longa temporum improbitate collecta?" (51-52; 23-26, p.209)

These sentences are quite obscure, because no parallel references exist in other sources. Dahn (II, p. 75, n. 7) has interpreted these sentences to refer to a type of "Sicilian Vespers" by which those who were loyal to Theoderic had sworn secretly to kill Odoacer's supporters in one day. Maybe more specifically, they swore to kill those who, together with Tufa, betrayed Theoderic. Hodgkin (III, pp. 203-204), elaborating Dahn's historical metaphor further, concludes: "from the sanctimonious manner in which the Bishop claims Heaven as an

accomplice in the bloody deed, we may perhaps infer that the Roman clergy generally were privy to the plot."

Ennodius omits the third major battle at the river Addua on August 11, 490. Here, Theoderic was aided by the Visigoths, and the defeated Odoacer lost his comes domesticorum Pierus. Ennodius may have decided to omit this battle since the fact that Theoderic had help from the Visigoths could reflect negatively on the king's strength. Ennodius, unlike a historian, had no compulsion to note each battle painstakingly. His object was to depict Theoderic in the best possible light.

(17)

52; 28-29, (p. 209)

"Consumpta est res prospero fatalique bello: succisa est Odovacris praesumptio, postquam eum contigit de fallacia non iuvari."

It is not clear what Ennodius insinuates here. His choice of words (praesumptio, succido, fallacia) seem to suggest that the panegyrist perhaps referred to Theoderic's murder of Odoacer. In fact, Ennodius' choice of verb (succido) strongly indicates that the panegyrist had one specific action in mind: the literal cutting down of Odoacer. Thematically, the slaughter of the "tyrant" would make a fitting climax to the war between "tyrant" and "saviour of Rome," who stated his mission at the river Sontius, when he proclaimed that "superandam domesticam tempestatem" (VIII, 38; 38, p. 207). The intestine danger, of course, is no other than Odoacer.

Theoderic had finally forced Ravenna into submission in 493 (according to Agnellus, Theoderic starved it out, Agn. s.a. 493 c.39) and peace was negotiated on February 24, 493. On February 25, Odoacer handed over his son Thela as hostage to Theoderic, and on March 5,

493, the Archbishop of Ravenna, Johannes, solemnly opened the gates to Theoderic (Agn. s.a. 493 c.39). According to John of Antioch, both Odoacer and Theoderic agreed to rule jointly (Joh. Ant. fr. 214a), but within a couple of days after Theoderic's entrance into Ravenna, Odoacer was murdered by Theoderic on March 14, 493. Both Cassiodorus and Anonymus Valesianus imply that Odoacer may have planned the same end for Theoderic: "sic ingressus est Theodericus et post aliquot dies, dum ei Odoacar insidaretur, detectus ante ab eo praeventus in palatio manu sua Theodericus eum in Lauretum pervenientem gladio interemit" (Anon Val. 11.54); "Theodericus Ravennam ingressus Odovacrem molientem sibi insidias interemit" (Cass. Chron. s.a. 493); see also Paul the Deacon (Hist. Rom. XV, 17).

A slightly different version comes from John of Antioch. He claims that Odoacer was murdered because of what he had done to Theoderic's relatives/men (royal Rugian couple or his soldiers?). Theoderic, as he struck down Odoacer, apparently said: "τοῦτο εἶναι ὁ καὶ σὺ τοὺς ἐμοὺς ἔδραρας".

Ennodius, though still keeping within a larger chronological framework, departed from a strict chronological account of the historical events and instead grouped the events which he portrayed in the following sections (53-55) thematically so as to present a fitting denouement to the climax of Theoderic's battles for supremacy over Italy, i.e. the murder of Odoacer. What follows then, sounds like a Mediaeval morality tale: the former enemies, Burgundians and Heruli, have become obedient allies, while the traitors, Tufa and Fridiricus, have met their deserved end.

(18)

X, 53: 29-32, (p. 209)

"Quid Herulorum agmina fusa conmemorem? qui ideo adversus te deducti sunt, ut hic agnoscerent, etiam in propriis sedibus quem timerent. egit causas longae quietis tuae furor alienus."

Those Heruli who had served under Odoacer, one can only conjecture, fled to their own seats, perhaps right after the battle at the Pine Grove in 491 when their magister militum Levila fled and lost his life ("...et fugiens Levila...occisus est in fluvio Bedente " Anon. Val. 11.54), or after Odoacer's death in 493. The Heruli settled between the rivers March and Eipel after the fall of the Hunnic Empire (454/455), and after the departure of the Ostrogoths from Pannonia (473) they, like the Gepids, extended their territory (Schmidt I, pp. 333-335). The Heruli subjugated weaker tribes like the Sciri and Turcilingi and forced the Langobards to pay tribute (Ensslin, Th.d.Gr., pp. 140-141). When Theoderic began cultivating their friendship is not clear. But by 507 we find Theoderic requesting their aid in settling the growing tension between Franks and Visigoths (Cass. Var. III, 3; pp. 79-80). Between 507 and 511 Theoderic emphasized his friendship with Rodulf, King of the Heruli, by adopting him son-in-arms (Cass. Var. IV, 2; in this letter Theoderic remarks: "ille [Theoderic] a te devotionem petit, qui te magis defensare disponit...nota sunt enim Erulis Gothorum deo iuvante solacia, nos arma tibi dedimus..." 3-4, 8-11, p. 115).

(19)

54: 32-33, (p. 209)

"taceo ubi tibi iniuncta est pax diuturna, Burgundio, quando sic foederibus obsecutus es, ut deputetur quod vivis feriatu constantiae non pavori."

At some point during the war between Theoderic and Odoacer (maybe in 490, before the battle at the river Addua), the Burgundian King Gundobad, once magister militum of Italy, invaded Liguria with a sizeable army, devastated the land and carried thousands into captivity (V. Epiph. 138-178; pp. 101-106). His reasons for doing this are unclear, but he may have wanted to establish a good bargaining position with the newly arrived Ostrogothic power. In 494 Theoderic sent Bishop Epiphanius to Gundobad to ransom back those whom the latter had taken prisoners. Gundobad, when justifying the capture of the Italians is supposed to have said to the Bishop:

"reposui regi partium illarum contumeliam, quam putas inlatam. ludificatus specie foederis nihil egi studiosius, nisi ut, quod est cautelae, apertos inimicos agnoscerem. concedat tamen divinitatis adsensus, ut solidatum inter nos foedus longa aetate servetur." (V. Epiph. 166-167; 10-13, p. 105)

Cryptic words indeed; they seem to suggest that Theoderic and Gundobad had some sort of a treaty when the Goth entered Italy, which, however, was broken by Theoderic. By 494, the two royal houses had negotiated a marriage alliance between their children, Gundobad's son Sigismund and Theoderic's daughter Ariagne, for Bishop Epiphanius makes the following comment to Gundobad: "sit fili tui sponsalicia largitas absolutio captivorum, offerat pactae suae munus quod et Christus accipiat" (V. Epiph. 163; 37-39, p. 104). While Ennodius does not directly note the Burgundian raid on Italy and the subsequent ransom of the Italian captives, he expects his readers to know this fact; otherwise, the reference to the treaty with the Burgundian in this section, which deals with former enemies of Theoderic and their defeat, is pointless.

(20)

55: 36-37; 1-4. (pp. 209-210)

"dicat Fridiricus, qui postquam fidem laesit, hostes tuos interitu comitatus est, contra illos arma concutiens, quibus fuerat errore sociatus..."

Ennodius recalls here the betrayal of Fridiricus who went over to Tufa's camp, and later fell out with him in 493 for unknown reasons. Fridiricus, after he was defeated by Onoulf, Odoacer's brother, had fled to Novae to Theoderic, to seek his help (see here: to my commentary VI). After Theoderic left Ticinum in the spring of 491 he left behind a Rugian occupation force, probably as rearguard in order that Odoacer's men could not capture this town. The Rugians stayed in Ticinum for two years. The population of this small city suffered greatly under occupation, until the saintly bishop Epiphanius tempered the behaviour of the Rugians (V. Epiph. 118-119; p. 99). We do not know when or why Fridiricus changed sides and went over to Tufa; Ennodius is the only source who mentions Fridiricus' betrayal, but does not tell us why. The fight between Tufa and Fridiricus between Trent and Verona in 492/493 is mentioned in the Fasti Vindobonenses and by the continuator of Prosper (Fast. Vind. Prior s.a. 493; Auct. Prosp. Havn. s.a. 493). In this battle Tufa was killed.

(21)

55: 3-4. (p. 210)

"nam Fridiricus, postquam tibi de adversariis tuis peregit triumphum, de se praebuit."

At some point Theoderic must have also defeated Fridiricus and his followers who were still roaming about; no one but Ennodius, however, refers to a fight between the two.

1. Hodgkin (III, p.198) conjectures why Theoderic used Ticinum instead of Milan: "Milan seemed to him [Theoderic] too exposed, too accessible from Ravenna, to be selected safely as his winter quarters. He chose instead the city of Ticinum which, resting on two rivers, the Ticino and the Po, would offer more difficulties to an advancing army."
2. Sundwall (p. 187) who dated Odoacer's proclamation of his son Thela as caesar to the beginning of 490, which has been accepted by most historians, writes: "Ich glaube, dass dieser Schritt (die Proklamation) nur im Anfang des J.490 erfolgen konnte, nachdem er durch Tufas Rückfall wieder obenauf zu kommen auf dem besten Weg war. Darauf ist auch der Passus in Ennodius Panegyrik 51 zu beziehen."
3. For a different view, see O'Flynn, p. 145.

(22)

XII (pp.210-211)

Ennodius, in his desire to justify Theoderic's incorporation of Sirmium in 504,<sup>1</sup> glosses over the fact that this city was constitutionally at that time part of the eastern Empire, and that the Ostrogothic advance into Sirmium was an act of aggression against the eastern Emperor Anastasius, even though the de facto rulers over Sirmium were now the Gepids. By omitting also the fact that Sirmium once was the seat of Ostrogothic power (see below) the panegyrist is catering explicitly to Roman imperial sentiment; likewise, the short but powerful sentence, "minui aestimas quod non crescit imperium" (61; 32-33, p. 210), which recalls the "golden" days of aggressive Roman expansionism, addresses the Roman imperialist.

Sirmium, once a distinguished city, was the birthplace of the third century Emperors Aurelian and Probus. Down to Theodosius the Great, many Emperors had enjoyed it as their residential town. Belonging to the province of Pannonia II,<sup>2</sup> Sirmium remained part of the western Empire after Gratian appointed Theodosius co-Emperor there on January 19, 379 and divided the Empire between them; but about fifty-eight years later (437), Pannonia II was legally ceded to the eastern Empire.

The reason for this cession was as follows: the Augusta Placidia, after the death of her husband Constantius and the alienation of her step-brother Honorius, was banned from Rome and fled with her children to the east (423). Theodosius II, Emperor of the east, had at first not acknowledged Constantius as co-Emperor nor Placidia as Augusta, but since after Honorius' death a new usurper Johannes had risen in the west, Theodosius deemed it wiser now to support Placidia and her children and thus to keep the Empire under the control of the Theodosian

house. Valentinian III, Placidia's son, was created Emperor of the west on October 23, 424. Placidia, however, who was clearly in no position to bargain for anything probably already then promised to cede Illyricum to the east, that is Pannonia II and Dalmatia for certain, and in exchange, Theodosius' daughter Eudoxia was promised in marriage to Placidia's son Valentinian III. The marriage took place in on October 29, 437.<sup>3</sup>

Parts of the two Pannonian provinces had been occupied by barbarians as early as 379,<sup>4</sup> but Sirmium seems to have been left untouched by them. It has been plausibly postulated that when Pannonian territory was regained from the Huns in 427 (Marcell. com. s.a. 427)<sup>5</sup> it was east Rome that regained it operating out of Sirmium, so that when Placidia did cede Illyricum to the east in about 437, it was merely "a legal settlement of a de facto situation" (Mocsy, p. 350). Sirmium finally did fall to the barbarians, when in 441 Attila besieged and captured it. How long the Huns actually remained, or even if they stayed in Sirmium is not certain.

In 456/457, after the fall of the Hunnic kingdom, another barbarian people, the Ostrogoths, under their leaders Valamer, Theodemer (Theoderic's father) and Videmer acquired from the eastern Emperor Marcian that part of Pannonia that lay between Vindobona and Sirmium (Jord. Get. 264-265; Cass. Var. III, 23) where they lived until about 473.<sup>6</sup>

After the Ostrogothic departure from Pannonia, Sirmium and its surrounding area fell to the Gepids.

(23)

61-62: (p.210)

The events concerning the manoeuvring of the Gepidic chiefs Trasericus and Gunderith are obscure. Ennodius is the only source who sheds some light on the situation. It appears that there were two Gepidic tribes that each possessed its own ruler. Traseric, according to Ennodius and Jordanes (Get. 300), ruled Sirmium. Small siliqua pieces, bearing the monogram of Trasericus have been found there (RE VI, AI p. 559). About Gunderith nothing is known, except the short remark by Ennodius. Diculescu (p. 100) postulated that he ruled north of the Danube in Dacia and that both rulers were independent of each other. A possible alliance between these two Gepidic leaders and perhaps an expansion of Gepidic power could prove a dangerous threat to the Italian kingdom which Theoderic had to undercut. A further worry may have prompted Theoderic's decision to move against the Gepids, as Diculescu (p. 110) points out:

"Theuderik aber, der seinerseits auch die Befürchtung gehegt haben wird, dass ein Kaiser, um Barbaren mit Barbaren zu bekämpfen, ihm aus der Mitte der Gepiden einen Nachfolger schicken möchte...kam der Versöhnung beider Gepidenkönige zuvor."

Burns (A Hist. of the Ostrog., p. 194) has a most peculiar misinterpretation of Ennodius' reference to the incorporation of Sirmium. He writes:

"The city was guarded by an alliance of senior lords under a retenator charged with the defence of the city. These Roman lords probably commanded what, if anything remained of Roman forces and the local militia."

Firstly, Ennodius' remark "Sermiensium civitas olim limes Italiae fuit, in qua seniores domini excubabant..." (60; 24-25, p. 210) clearly pertains to the Emperors of old, through whose neglect Sirmium had fallen into the hands of the Gepids. Secondly, there is no such thing as

a retenator. (This is no misprint; on page 195 he has the Sirmians appoint a retenator from amongst them. A retenator is a person who illegally or unjustifiably holds something in his possession. Ennodius means here specifically the Gepids, who should have paid obeisance to Theoderic and recognized his right to rule Sirmium. (On the term retenator see Zimmerman, Odo, The Late Latin Vocabulary of Cassiodorus, p. 32.)

(24)

63-69; (pp. 210-211)

Ostrogothic intervention in Byzantine territory did not stop with the incorporation of Sirmium. While Pitzia was setting affairs in order at Sirmium, Mundo was attacked by Byzantine forces and their Bulgar contingent, under the magister militum per Illyricum, Sabinianus. We do not know how or when Mundo, apparently a Gepid,<sup>7</sup> became an ally of Theoderic. Jordanes seems to indicate that Mundo became an ally after Pitzia rescued him from Sabinianus' soldiers, "hunc [Mundo] ergo pene desperatum et iam de traditione sua deliberantem Petza [Pitzia] subveniens e manibus Saviniani eripuit, suoque regi Theodorico cum gratiarum actione fecit subiectum" ( Get. 301; 16-18, p. 135). If we are to believe the panegyrist, then Mundo was already an ally of Theoderic before the battle at Horreum Margi; indeed, Ennodius makes the very reason that one of Theoderic's allies was attacked the casus belli of 505. Thus he places the blame for the "show down" between eastern and western forces squarely on the shoulders of the east. And more; without indulging in expansive speculations of the political motives that may or may not have been behind Pitzia's move farther into eastern territory, the following statement can be made: since we know that throughout his reign Theoderic placed

great emphasis on a system of alliances to ensure peace and on the protection of his allies (he was not always successful)<sup>8</sup> we can say that Ennodius also reflects his king's alliance policy. The battle at Horreum Margi in 505 (Marcell. com. s.a. 505) took Theoderic's forces deeper into eastern territory, the province of Moesia I. The Ostrogoths, however, did not appear to have annexed any territory there.

In his description of the battle at Horreum Margi, Ennodius concentrates mainly on the Bulgarians, but not without supplying the reader with a tantalizing hint of the severe disaster that apparently befell Sabinianus and his troops: "quid strages militum revolvam et Sabiniani ducis abitionem turpissimam, cum a ratione dividatur retexere exterminatis patrociniis quid evenerit indefenso?" (68; 26-28, p. 211).

By concentrating in his description of the battle on the barbarians (Bulgars) and "Romans" (Theoderic's soldiers), Ennodius again picks up the theme of "Theoderic, protector of Roman civilization against barbarian incursions" (see hereto my chapter 4).

Theoderic's incorporation of Sirmium and the battle at Horreum Margi were not without consequences. Emperor Anastasius did not immediately retaliate, as he was at that time engaged in the Persian war (Marcell. com. s.a. 504). By 508, however, Byzantine vessels raided the shores of southern Italy and plundered the city of Tarentum (Marcell. com. s.a. 508). After 508 Theoderic tried to establish good relations again with the Emperor (Cass. Var. I, 1, which begins: "Oportet nos, clementissime imperator, pacem quaerere...").

1. In 505 the first governor of Pannonia Sirmensis was appointed by Theoderic, a man named Collosaeus (Cass. Var. III, 23).
2. Sirmium shortly belonged to the province of Moesia Superior from 86-106. After the defeat of the Dacians, it was included again in the province of Pannonia inferior, i.e. Pannonia II. (Mocsy, pp. 6, 92).
3. Jord. Rom. 329; Cass Var. XI, 1. What areas Jordanes and Cassidorus exactly had in mind when they wrote that Placidia ceded Illyricum to the east is a subject of debate amongst historians. That they could not have meant the prefecture of Illyricum, which included the dioceses of Macedonia and Dacia is certain, for these had already belonged to the east since 395. The diocese of Illyricum comprised the provinces of Pannonia I and Pannonia II, Dalmatia and Noricum. I have followed in my interpretation Bury's account (pp. 225-226, n. 5). For the province of Dalmatia, see also my commentary VI.
4. Mocsy (p.347) commenting on Marcell. com. (s.a. 427): "It is obvious that Marcellinus counted the round fifty year's rule by the Huns from 379, that is from the date when the peoples of Alathcus and Saphrax [Greuthungians, later called Ostrogoths], part of whom consisted of a Hunnic tribe, obtained a footing in Pannonia."
5. In turn, by 433 the Huns regained parts of Pannonia which, however, did not include Sirmium. Mocsy (p.350): "...the Hunnic conquest, sanctioned in 433, did not relate to the surroundings of Sirmium, but to Savia and the areas north of the Drave," (see also Bury, p. 273, n.3).
6. On the Pannonian Kingdom of Ostrogoths, see Wolfram (pp. 258-268).
7. For a convincing reconstruction of Mundo's career see Croke, (pp. 125-135). Historians are divided as to whether the Mundo of Ennodius and Jordanes is the Moundos of Theophanes (AM 6032), Marcellinus (s.a. 530) and Malalas (417).
8. E.g. his sincere attempt to avert the confrontation between Visigoths and Franks, in which he failed. See especially Ensslin (Th.d.Gr., pp. 132-138, 142-146).

(25)

XV, (p. 212)

The background to Theoderic's incorporation of the Alamanni in about 506 is as follows: the Frankish King Clovis gained a major victory over the Alamanni<sup>1</sup> in 496/497, where they lost their King. Gregory of Tours, who mentions this battle, does not tell us where it was fought. His only interest in the battle is its result, because it was responsible for Clovis' conversion to Christianity. Hard pressed by the Alamanni, Clovis makes a pact with the Christian God that if he wins the battle, he will convert to Christianity. Clovis wins. The King of the Alamanni has fallen and the Alamanni have surrendered. Clovis returns home (Greg. Tur. HF II, p. 91-92). Both Gregory and Ennodius (72; 6, p. 212) say that the Alamanni lost their King, but neither explains why the Alamanni ended up under Theoderic's control about nine years later. Theoderic's letter, written to his brother-in-law Clovis about 506, though difficult to interpret because of its allusions to events we know nothing of, nevertheless sheds some light on the situation (Cass. Var. II 41; p. 73). In a brief introduction, Theoderic confesses his joy over the Frankish victory, then he advises the King to be satisfied to have punished those who deserved punishment and to leave alone that tired remnant that fled to his boundaries, since they deserve to have escaped by the rights of mercy:

"sed quoniam semper in auctoribus perfidiae reseccabilis videtur excessus qui nec primariorum plectibilis culpa omnium debet esse vindicata motus vestros in fessas reliquias temperate quia iure gratiae<sup>2</sup> merentur evadere quos ad parentum vestrorum defensionem respicitis confugisse." (Cass. Var. II 41; 1, 4-7, p. 73)

He then continues that Clovis should let it suffice that he has killed a great number of Alamanni, together with their King:

"estote illis remissi, qui nostris finibus caelantur exterriti memorabilis triumphus est Alamannum acerrimum sic expavisse, ut tibi eum cogas de vitae munere supplicare, sufficiat illum regem cum gentis cecidisse superbia, sufficiat innumerabilem nationem partim ferro partim servitio subiugatam." (Cass. Var. II, 41; 1-2; 7-11, p. 73)

These quotations rise the following questions: what was the "plectibilis culpa" that some Alamanni committed, how many events does this letter refer to, and most importantly, to where did the Alamanni flee? The first question is not answerable historically (for an interpretation see below), since we have no detailed knowledge of the dealings between Alamanni and Franks for the period 496-506. To the second question, the following can be said: it is possible that the phrase "partim ferro partim servitio subiugatam" pertains to two distinct historical events. Yet Schubert, who has discussed this letter at length, understood it to refer to one event, the battle in 496/497, and to mean that some Alamanni were slaughtered and other taken prisoner (p. 34). Hasenstab (pp. 59-61) on the other hand, has argued that this phrase refers to two separate historical events, the battle in 496/497 where the Alamanni suffered a crushing defeat, and to their voluntary surrender about nine years later. His argument deserves a closer look, because he incorporates Fredegar's account of Alamannic wanderings into his argument. According to Fredegar, the Alamanni wandered nine years, but unable to form a nation, voluntarily surrendered to Clovis:

" cumque bellum contra Alamannus Glodoveus rex moverit , suadente regina, movit si victuriam obtenebat, effecerit Christianus. cumque uterque phalangiae certamine iugentes, dixitque Chlodoveus: Deum invoco, quem Chrotechildis regina colit; si me iobaret in hoc primum, ut vincam hos adversarius eroque illi fidelis; Alamanni terga vertentes, in fugam lapsi. cumque regem suum cernerint interemptum], novem ann. exilis a sedibus eorum nec ullam potuerunt gentem conperire qui ei contra Francos auxiliaret; tandem se dicionem Chlodovicae subdunt." (Chron. Fred. III, 21, p. 101)<sup>3</sup>

This account could explain Cassiodorus' choice of words, for he calls the remnant of the Alamanni fessae. Fredegar's story, of course, does not explain why the Alamanni eventually

ended up with Theoderic. Hasenstab thinks that somehow Clovis was tricked by the Alamanni and after they voluntarily surrendered they changed their minds and decided to place themselves under Theoderic's protection instead. This interpretation would give some meaning to the phrase "plectibilis culpa" and to the following sentence, for here, Theoderic reminds Clovis to be more careful in the future: "quaedam vero, quae ad nos pro vestris utilitatibus pervenerunt, per harum portiores verbo vobis insinuanda commissimus, ut cautiores effecti optata possitis victoria constanter expleri" (Cass. Var. II, 41; 3, 20-22, p. 73). However, Hasenstab's interpretation and Fredegar's account seem to have been neglected by recent historians. Both Ensslin and Wolfram, for example, claim that a renewed Alamannic revolt occurred in about 506 which was again subdued by the Franks.<sup>4</sup> There is no independent evidence for a renewed revolt, however.

The third question is complex, because it touches upon a major historical dispute, namely, where exactly the northern boundaries of the Ostrogothic kingdom were. Wolfram has pointed out that local historians seek to push the boundary to the upper course of the Danube, whereas general historians make the exits of the Raetian and Norican Alps the farthest extension of the northern border.<sup>5</sup> It is hard to believe that Clovis contemplated or actually attempted to invade Ostrogothic territory in order to punish the fleeing Alamanni; for this surely would have constituted a casus belli and would have resulted in a stronger Ostrogothic response than a mere slap on the Frankish wrist, an appeal to Clovis' mercy and friendship, and in conclusion, the sending of a Citharoede as a gift, as stated in the letter towards the end (Var. II, 41; 3; 23-24, 20-25, p. 73). It is possible that the Alamanni sought refuge from Clovis' wrath in a Niemandsland between Burgundian, Frankish and Ostrogothic boundaries. This interpretation

suggests that with the incorporation of the Alamanni, Theoderic also incorporated some hitherto unclaimed territory,<sup>6</sup> perhaps part of Thurgau, Vorarlberg and Oberschwaben, as Wolfram thinks. His argument is quite convincing and runs as follows: "according to Ennodius the Alamanni were settled as "custos imperii" and "sine detrimento Romanae possessionis" (72; 7-7, p.212). From this follows that the Alamanni could have been settled only "in those territories where the Roman taxation system either no longer existed or was not called upon." He then concludes with his choices: modern Oberschwaben, south of Lake Constance, Thurgau and northern Vorarlberg. Hence, the Alamanni were settled in three groups (p.317). Some Alamanni also were sent to the eastern borders, probably Pannonia. Theoderic, in a letter to the provincials of Noricum, dated about 507, ordered them to exchange their cattle with those of the Alamanni who were about to travel through their territory (Cass. Var. III, 50; pp. 104-105). Historians generally seem to agree that this refers to part of the Alamannian refugees only.<sup>7</sup>

We do not know how great the number of Alamannic refugees was that sought refuge under Theoderic. While Ennodius' term "Alamanniae generalitas" (72; 5, p. 212), which implies all Alamanni, is surely an exaggeration, on the other hand, Cassiodorus' "fessas reliquias" is no doubt a political underplaying of the actual number of refugees. Wolfram thinks that Ennodius' claim is only a slight exaggeration, because archaeological evidence in northern Italy suggests large Alamannic settlements (p. 317); but one fails to see the relevance of archaeological evidence of Alamanni in northern Italy to his argument that they were settled in parts of northern Switzerland, western Austria and southern Germany. Alamanni were settled by Valentinian at Vicenza around 370 (Amm. Marcell. XXVIII 5, 15) and there exists, of

course, a possibility that Theoderic also settled some Alamanni there. However, the problem with this suggestion is the fact that Ennodius specifically calls the Alamanni "custos imperii" and this they could only be on borders.

Ennodius' "ulvis liberata [Alamanniae generalitas] gratulatur terram incolens, quae hactenus dehiscentibus domiciliis solidioris caeni emergebat beneficio" (73; 11-12, p. 212) does not say anything about the area they were settled in, only where they came from. Alamannic homeland, especially around the Neckar, was generally depicted by Romans as marshy (e.g. Apoll. Sid. Carm. VII, 325, "uluosa quem vel Nicer abluit unda"; see also Schubert, p. 81, n. 2).

1. Dahn (VIII, p. 52) conjectures between Strassburg and Mainz, closer to Mainz.
2. iure gratiae = Schubert (p. 33) thinks it means "nach dem Recht der Gnade", Düntzer, (p. 45, n. 29) "nach dem Rechte der Freundschaft."
3. Dahn deprecatingly calls Fredegar's story sagenhaft and does not give this source much credibility. (VIII, pp. 56-57)
4. Ensslin (p. 131): "Neun Jahre später versuchten sie ihre alte Unabhängigkeit wiederzugewinnen. Der Aufstand wurde niedergezwungen und jetzt musste ein gut Teil des seitherigen Alamannen landes dem Sieger zur Besiedlung überlassen werden."
5. Wolfram on the Alamannic question (pp. 315-316): "The Alamannic question, which set the Ostrogoths and the Franks at odds, has remained to this day a controversial issue. Local historians seek to push the boundaries of the Ostrogothic kingdom as far north as possible, at least to the upper course of the Danube or even deep within the barbaricum at the modern boundary between Swabian and Franconian dialects. In contrast, general historians exercise far greater restraint, arguing that the exits of the Raetian-Norican Alps would have formed the farthest extensions of Theoderic's kingdom."
6. Dahn (VIII, p. 56): "Ohne Zweifel fand aber damals auch eine Machterweiterung des gotischen Reiches statt. Die müden Überbleibsel deren Chlodovech [Clovis] schonen soll, sind die im Alamannenland verbliebenen: denn dass er nicht die in das Gotenreich Aufgenommenen in dieses verfolgen durfte, versteht sich um selbst, bedurfte nicht erst das Ersuchen Theoderichs."
7. Bury (p. 461; Ensslin (Th.d.Gr. p. 131); Wolfram (p. 317).

## Appendix A

### Chronological Outline

- 454/455 Ereliva/Eusebia gives birth to Theoderic
- 462 Emperor Leo I receives Theoderic as hostage at Constantinople
- 472 Emperor Leo I returns Theoderic to his father Theodemer
- 475 Usurpation of Basiliscus; Emperor Zeno flees to his native Isauria
- 476 Return of Emperor Zeno to Constantinople
- 481 Theoderic Strabo dies
- 484 Consulship of Theoderic at Constantinople  
Theoderic murders Rekitach, Strabo's son  
Illus sets up Leontius as Emperor and Zeno mobilizes his forces against the rebels in the east
- 487-488 Odoacer fights the Rugians and takes the Rugian royal couple Feva and Giso captive  
Onoulf, Odoacer's brother fights the Rugians under their leader Fridiricus who subsequently flees to Novae to Theoderic
- 488/489 Theoderic fights the Gepids on his march to Italy
- 489 Battle of Theoderic and Odoacer at the river Sontius  
Battle at Verona
- 490 Battle at the river Addua  
Theoderic was aided by the Visigoths
- 491 Odoacer's night attack on Theoderic's camp at the Pine Grove, Ravenna
- 493 Theoderic enters Ravenna; Odoacer and Theoderic agree to rule Italy jointly; Theoderic murders Odoacer
- 500 Theoderic goes to Rome; he promises to rule Italy according to Roman law and tradition and donates money for the restoration of Rome

- 504                      Incorporation of Sirmium which was held by the Gepids
- 505                      Battle at Horreum Margi; Theoderic's forces clash against eastern forces
- 506/507                Incorporation of Alamanni

## Abbreviations

Anon. Val.	Anonymus Valesianus
<u>Auct. Prosp. Havn.</u>	<u>Continuatio Havniensis Prosperi</u>
Cand.	Candidus
Cass. <u>Chron.</u>	Cassiodorus, <u>Chronica</u>
Cass. <u>Var.</u>	Cassiodorus <u>Variae</u>
Ennod. <u>V. Epiph.</u>	Ennodius, <u>Vita Epiphani</u>
Ennod. <u>In. Nat. Laur.</u>	Ennodius, <u>In Natale Laurenti Mediolanensis</u>
Eugip. <u>V. Sev.</u>	Eugippius, <u>Vita Severini</u>
Evag. <u>HE</u>	Evagrius, <u>Historia Ecclesiastica</u>
FHG	<u>Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum</u>
Fred. <u>Chron.</u>	Fredegar, <u>Chronica quae dicuntur Fredegarii scholastici</u>
Greg. Tur. <u>HF</u>	Gregory of Tours, <u>Historia Francorum</u>
Joh. Ant.	John of Antioch
Joh. Mal.	John Malalas
Jord. <u>Get.</u>	Jordanes, <u>Getica</u>
Jord. <u>Rom.</u>	Jordanes, <u>Romana</u>
Malch.	Malchus
Marcell. com.	Marcellinus
<u>MGH AA</u>	<u>Monumenta Germaniae Historica Auctores Antiquissimi</u>
<u>MG Script. Rer. Merov.</u>	<u>Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptorum Rerum Merovingicarum</u>
PLRE	<u>Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire</u>

Proc. BG

Procopius, De Bello Gothico

RE

Pauly, Realencyclopädie der Klassischen  
Altertumswissenschaft

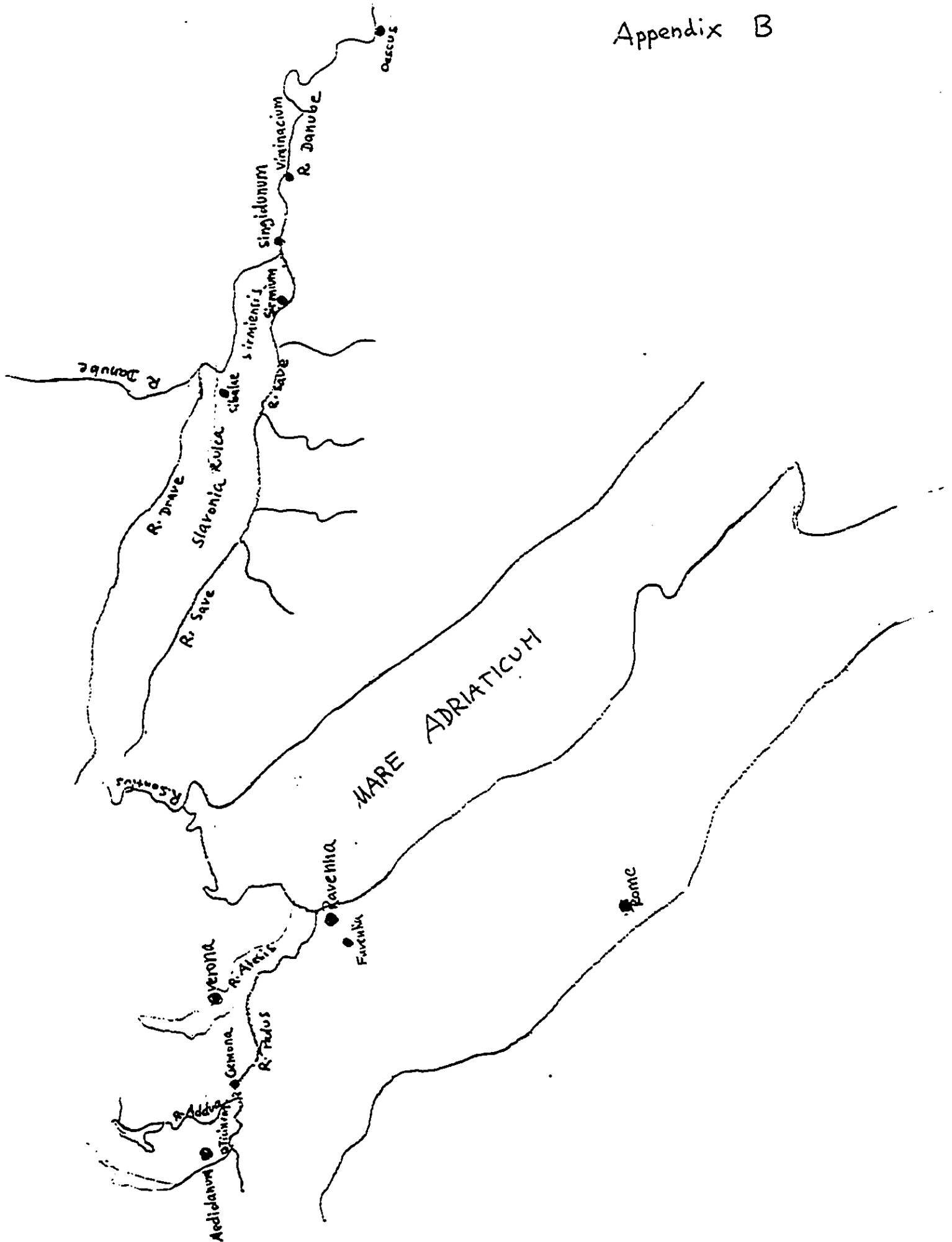
Theoph. AM

Theophanes Chronographia

Quotations from Ennodius' Opera and Cassiodorus' Variae are given as follows: author, title, (book number, letter number, where applicable), section number, line number and page number.

Quotations from Ennodius' Panegyricus dictus Theoderico are as follows: Roman numeral section, section number, line number and page number.

Appendix B



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