

# **Reconstructing Justinian's Reconquest of the West without Procopius**

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## Abstract

This thesis examines the evidence surrounding the Roman emperor Justinian's wars in western Europe (Italy and Spain) and North Africa. It argues that without Procopius' narrative, we would be left with a very bland, cursory account and even find it difficult to get a full grip on what happened when, even though Jordanes in particular does give some sort of narrative. The thesis focuses on the narrative of Justinian's western wars offered by sources like Jordanes', *Romana* and *Getica*, Victor of Tonnuna's *Chronicle*, Corippus' epic poem and Marcellinus *comes'* *Chronicle* and its addition. It also discusses when each of these sources was written and where, and the background of the author, so that the reader can identify what was important to the author and the potential biases in the presentation of the events in question. The thesis then compares the narrative of the above sources to the narrative of Procopius in order to determine what information historians and scholars would not have if they did not have Procopius' work.

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**Abbreviations:**

**For full details of the edition and translations, see the bibliography.**

- Cass. *Inst. Div Litt.*** – Cassiodorus, *Institutiones Divinarum Litterarum*
- Cass. *Var.*** – Cassiodorus, *Variae*
- Coripp. *Ioh.*** – Corippus, *Iohannidos seu de bellis Libycis libri viii*
- CJ** – *Codex Iustinianus*
- CTh** – *Codex Theodosianus*
- Greg. *Ep.*** – Pope Gregory I, *Epistularum Reistrum*
- Isid. *DVI.*** – Isidore of Seville, *De Viris Illustibus*
- Isid. *Hist. Goth.*** – Isidore of Seville, *Historia Gothorum*
- Joh. *Bicl.*** – John of Biclaro, *Chronicle*
- Joh. *Mal.*** – John Malalas, *Chronographia*
- Jord. *Get.*** – Jordanes, *Getica*
- Jord. *Rom.*** – Jordanes, *Romana*
- Just. *Nov.*** – Justinian, *Novellae*
- Landolfus Sagax, *Rom. Hist.*** – Landoli Sagacis, *Historia Romana*
- Lib. Pont.*** – *Liber Pontificalis*
- Marcell. *com.*** – Marcellinus Comes, *Chronicle*
- Marcell. *com. addit.*** – Marcellinus Comes, *Additions to the Chronicle*
- P. Ital.*** -- *Die nichliterarischen lateinischen Papyri Italiens aus der Zeit 445-700*
- PLRE II** – The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire vol II
- PLRE III** – The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire vol. III
- Proc. *Aed.*** – Procopius of Caesarea, *De Aedificiis*
- Proc. *Anecd.*** – Procopius of Caesarea, *Anecdota sive Historia Arcana*
- Proc. *BG.*** – Procopius of Caesarea, *De bello Gothico*
- Proc. *BV.*** – Procopius of Caesarea, *De bello Vandalico*
- PZ.** – Pseudo-Zacharias Rhetor, *Historia Miscellanea*
- Soz.** – Sozomenus, *Historia Ecclesiastica*

**Vict. Tonn.** – Victor Tonnennensis, *Chronicle*

**Xen. Hell.** – Xenophon, *Hellenica*

## General Introduction

The reign of the Roman emperor Justinian (527-565) was pivotal. Not only was he able to successfully build some impressive buildings like Hagia Sophia in Constantinople but he also made strides in both the realms of law and warfare. While most scholars consider Justinian's reforms in law to be the most important or the most influential part of his reign, his wars in the West are arguably just as important. Historians of this period and of ancient warfare in general are fortunate as most of Justinian's wars in the West are contained in the works of the Greek historian Procopius of Caesarea. All Justinian's wars in the West, except the one in modern Spain, are documented in Procopius' work called *The History of the Wars of Justinian*. This is why many, if not all, historians and scholars think of Procopius as our main source for Justinian's wars. If Procopius is our main source for this aspect of Justinian's reign then there have to be other ancient authors who talk about Justinian's wars in North Africa, Italy and Spain in their works.

The model of this thesis lies in Clive Foss' article on the Roman empress Theodora. In his article, Foss starts by looking at other pictures of empress Theodora, excluding Procopius, and then deploys Procopius to see how they compare. The one difference between the model of Foss' article<sup>1</sup> and this thesis is that our aim is to measure and establish the degree to which we are dependent on Procopius' narrative. This thesis will firstly identify the sources that discuss or report Justinian's wars. They will be analyzed for when they were written, where they were written, the author's background, the author's reason for writing and what wars (North Africa, Italy, Spain) the source covers. All of this is for the reader to determine the origins of these

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<sup>1</sup> C. Foss "The Empress Theodora" *Byzantion* 72 (2002) pp. 141-176.

sources, how much information the sources provide for each war, and to determine any potential biases the authors might have through their background, date of writing and where they were writing. Then this thesis will attempt to stitch the narratives and information from these sources together in order to determine what information would be available to historians and scholars without Procopius. Then it will take this narrative and compare it to Procopius' to determine if the information is different, what information would be lost, and if any information is not in the narrative of Procopius. All of this is done to argue that without Procopius' narrative scholars would be left with a very bland, cursory narrative and even find it difficult to get a full grip on what happened when.

## Chapter 1: Sources other than Procopius of Caesarea

### Introduction

Procopius of Caesarea is our main source for the wars during Emperor Justinian's reign. His account is lengthy, full of detail, full of drama, and full of wonder. He wrote three works on the reign of Justinian: *The History of the Wars of Justinian*, *Secret History* and *Buildings*. Procopius' work that this project will be focusing on will be the *History of the Wars of Justinian* and to a lesser extent *Buildings*. We will be looking more closely at Procopius in Chapter three. Classical historians usually write their works after the reign of the emperor they cover is over. But Procopius wrote his work during the reign of Justinian. He remained mostly neutral, however, was sometimes critical of Justinian who is not known to tolerate disagreement.<sup>2</sup> He was born in the city of Caesarea in 500 and became legal advisor or secretary of Belisarius in 527. He completed this work in 550/551.<sup>3</sup>

He accompanied Belisarius on the campaigns to defeat the Vandals and the Goths. Therefore, his narrative is so rich with information. He was there, he saw these things, and if he did not see first-hand, he could get a first-hand account from a person who was there. This is why his work is so important, so integral to our understanding of important events of Late Antiquity. This is also why he is considered the main source for this period. Also, there must be some other works that could challenge or confirm what Procopius reports as the truth. This is what this chapter is all about. It is about finding and understanding the sources that deal with the

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<sup>2</sup> Av. Cameron, *Procopius and the Sixth Century* (London, 1985) pp. 59, 61, 229; A. Kaldellis, "Introduction" *The Wars of Justinian by Procopius*, trans. H.B. Dewing and revised by A. Kaldellis, (Indianapolis, 2014) p. vii; A. Kaldellis, *Procopius of Caesarea: Tyranny, History, and Philosophy at the End of Antiquity* (Philadelphia, 2004) pp. 119-128.

<sup>3</sup> Av. Cameron, *op. cit.* (n.2) p. 7; A. Kaldellis, *op. cit.* (n.2) p. ix.

reconquest of North Africa, Italy and Spain by Justinian. It is about understanding who the writers are, what sort of biases they may have in their writing, and which aspect of the reconquest they cover in their works.

This chapter is divided into three parts for each different kind of source that will be used for this thesis. The first part is for literary sources. This is the category that Procopius would fall under. These literary sources range from narrative history accounts like those of Jordanes, to an epic poem written by Corippus, and chronicles that survey a large chunk of history and place events in chronological order. The second part is for archaeological and epigraphical sources. These are inscriptions, mosaics, buildings, and archaeological material found in North Africa, Italy and Spain, which attest the Roman invasion and occupation of these places during the time of Justinian. Lastly the third part will concern itself with legal sources. These will include Roman laws from the *Codex Justinianus* as well as *Novellae* that were enacted under Justinian for Italy and North Africa after he conquered them. Key questions to keep in mind are: When did these authors write? How extensive are the accounts in these sources? And which war has more information written about it?

## Literary Sources

The first author whose works we will examine is Jordanes. Unfortunately, we do not know much about him. Jordanes was probably from Thrace given his knowledge of the geography and history of the region. Some scholars like Mierow try to suggest that Jordanes is Pope Jordanes but this is just a presumption.<sup>4</sup> Jordanes may not even be the writer's real name.

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<sup>4</sup> B. Mingarelli, *Collapse of the Hunnic Empire: Jordanes, Ardaric and the Battle of Nedao* (2018) p. 6; C.C Mierow, "Introduction" *The Gothic History of Jordanes* (Oxford, 1915) pp. 1-15.

According to Goffart, there was a barbarian in the East Roman service from the fifth century who seems to have been called Jordanes from birth.<sup>5</sup> However, we do not know whether this writer received the name Jordanes at birth or when he became a Nicean Christian. Because of Jordanes' Gothic origin and because Jordanes is critical of Arianism, it is believed he converted to the Catholic church. However, Goffart believes that this could be the wrong way to interpret Jordanes' use of the word *conversio*. Because Jordanes does not explain his conversion, *conversio* may indicate that he withdrew from worldly employment and lived as a layman in religious retirement.<sup>6</sup> Jordanes wrote his works in Constantinople. However, some scholars like Björnlie believe he wrote them in Italy even though Van Hoof and Van Nuffelen show that we do not have any evidence to suggest that he spent any time in Italy.<sup>7</sup>

His most famous work, or to be exact, the work that scholars focus on is called the *Getica*, but its original title was *De origine actibusque Getarum*, or 'On the origin and Deeds of the Getae.' Scholars date the writing of this work to about 551/552.<sup>8</sup> When referring to this work by Jordanes, the modern term *Getica* will be used. Jordanes, at the time he is believed to have started writing the *Getica*, was already writing another book on history that we call *Romana*. The *Romana* will be discussed in detail later in this chapter. Jordanes, although he writes about secular history, he does so in a Christian framework. The *Getica* and even the *Romana* are written as a narrative but Liebeschuetz is right to point out that there is little attempt to produce a continuous story. It has some of the discontinuity of a chronicle, though it is not composed

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<sup>5</sup> PLRE II, Jordanes 3, p. 620.

<sup>6</sup> W. Goffart, *The Narrators of Barbarian History (A.D. 550-800): Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Bede, and Paul the Deacon*, (Princeton, 1988) pp. 43-44. Jord. *Get.* 132; *ODLA*, Jordanes, pp. 835-836; PLRE III, Jordanes 1, p. 713.

<sup>7</sup> S. Björnlie, *Politics and Tradition Between Rome, Ravenna and Constantinople* (Cambridge, 2013) p. 110; B. Mingarelli, *op. cit.* (n.4) p. 7; L. Van Hoof. P. Van Nuffelen, "The Historiography of Crisis: Jordanes, Cassiodorus and Justinian in Mid-Sixth-Century Constantinople." *The Journal of Roman studies*, 107 (2017) p. 292.

<sup>8</sup> B. Croke, "Jordanes and the Immediate Past" *Historia*, 4 (2005) p. 473; C.C. Mierow, *op. cit.* (n.4) p. 12; PLRE III, Jordanes 1, p. 713L. Van Hoof. P. Van Nuffelen, *op. cit.* (n.7) p.275.

annalistically, and indeed minimally concerned with chronology. This work as a whole is very important as it is the only surviving work that deals with information about the Goths that is recorded nowhere else.<sup>9</sup>

Jordanes states in his work that he wrote the *Getica* because Cassiodorus told him to. Jordanes says “You urge me to leave the little work I have in hand, that is, the abbreviation of the chronicles, and to condense in my own style in this small book the twelve volumes of Senator [Cassiodorus] on the origin and deeds of the Getae from olden time to the present day.”<sup>10</sup> This is true but only partly so. Liebeschuetz has argued that Jordanes indeed had the twelve books at his disposal, but quite a lot of passages in the *Getica* seem to be based on his own reading and research and Jordanes states that he has added material from other authors to his work.

Some scholars like Momigliano and Goffart believe that Jordanes' rationale for writing the *Getica*, besides being told to by Cassiodorus, was to “persuade Gothic readers in Italy to welcome the imperial armies and to give up their separate identity by allowing themselves to merge with the Romans”<sup>11</sup>. Goffart believes that Jordanes stated he was abridging Cassiodorus' Twelve Books because it was a literary device to hide his true intention which was to argue that after Justinian ended Gothic independence, children born of mixed Roman and Gothic descent would further erase the distinction between Romans and Goths which is also confirmed by his statement after the defeat of the Goths by Belisarius: “the birth of a child of mixed Roman and Gothic blood, symbolizing the assimilation or fusion that would take place once the emperor

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<sup>9</sup> W. Liebeschuetz, *East and West in Late Antiquity: Invasion, Settlement, Ethnogenesis and Conflicts of Religion*, (Leiden, 2015) pp. 134-136.

<sup>10</sup> Jord. *Get.* 1.

<sup>11</sup> W. Goffart *op. cit.* (n.6) pp. 97-105; A. Momigliano, “Cassiodorus and Italian Culture of His Time.” *Proceedings of the British Academy* 41 (1955) pp. 207-245; A. Momigliano, *Studies in Historiography* (London, 1966), pp. 195-196.

Justinian had suppressed Gothic independence.”<sup>12</sup> This belief is based on a few sentences that show Jordanes' loyalty to Justinian.

The most important part of the *Getica* to this work is the last few pages. Most of the narration deals with the origin of the Goths and their dealings with Romans during earlier periods of time. He does not speak of peaceful times between the two nations, but he does not over-emphasize the hostilities between them either. When talking about Justinian and the reconquest of Italy his narrative ends with Belisarius and his defeat of Vitigis at Ravenna. He does not dwell on defeats or the offensive maneuvers of Narses when Belisarius was recalled to Constantinople. Hence the aforementioned rationale suggested by Momigliano and Goffart. Jordanes even makes the statement that “thus the famous kingdom and most valiant race, which had long held sway, was at last overcome in almost its two thousand and thirtieth year by that conqueror of many nations, the Emperor Justinian, through his most faithful consul Belisarius.”<sup>13</sup> This statement is not true. We know that there were still Goths in regions such as Tuscany who still had to be defeated by Narses but it probably felt as a total victory. This is mentioned not only by Procopius but also by Jordanes in his second work, the *Romana*. The space in the *Getica* may be small but the content is loaded with information that we can use in our comparison to what Procopius says for the period up to 540.

The *Romana* by Jordanes will also be consulted for this project. As was stated above the *Romana* was started before the *Getica* but was put on hold and completed only after the completion of the *Getica*. *Romana* is our modern term for it but the original title of the work is *De summa temporum vel origine actibus gentis Romanorum*. When talking about this work it

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<sup>12</sup> W. Goffart *op. cit.* (n.6) pp. 22, 73-79.

<sup>13</sup> Jord. *Get.* 313.

will be referred to as *Romana* for simplicity. This work is also written in Latin, like the *Getica*. There is a debate whether this work is dedicated to Pope Vigilius or not. What it comes down to is how one translates and interprets the words *nobilissime frater Vigilii*. James O'Donnell believes that if this really did mean Pope Vigilius and we believe that Jordanes was a bishop then it would be a "an extraordinarily inept form of address, not likely even from a man whose grasp of Latin grammar was imprecise."<sup>14</sup> Whatever the case may be, one thing is for sure: the scope of the *Romana* is broader than that of the *Getica*. In the preface Jordanes states that this Vigilius wanted to know how "the Roman state began and endured, subjugated practically the whole world and should endure up to now in the imagination; or even how the series of kings should have proceeded from Romulus and in succession, from Augustus Octavian to Augustus Justinian."<sup>15</sup> This is what Jordanes discusses in this work. Although the *Romana* and the *Getica* are separate works, they should not be read that way. They should be read as a unified corpus instead. The *Romana* and the *Getica* discuss the same thing but just from different points of view. While the *Getica* deals with the history of the Goths in relations with the Romans, the *Romana* is the history of the Romans in relations with the Goths and others.

Just as with the *Getica*, we are only concerned with the last twenty-two chapters of the *Romana*. Unlike the *Getica* however, the *Romana* does not stop at the victory of Belisarius over Vitigis. It continues with the defeats that the Romans endured not only in Italy but also in North Africa. Here is where Jordanes is critical of Justinian's achievements and writes in a way that also makes the reader critical of them as well. At the beginning Justinian is viewed as a great emperor by expanding the empire and dealing with the empire's enemies. However, after the

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<sup>14</sup> J.J. O'Donnell, "The Aim of Jordanes" *Historia*, 31, (1982), p. 224.

<sup>15</sup> *Jord. Rom.* 2.

recall of Belisarius in 540 and again in 547 the tone changes to blaming the disasters in North Africa and the successes of Totila on Justinian's incompetence as a ruler. Procopius also follows this tone against Justinian when he recalls Belisarius from North Africa and Italy.<sup>16</sup> The *Romana* therefore will be much more important to this project, as it provides more information for not just the reconquest of Italy and the period after Belisarius leaves but also for the North African theatre of war.

Another literary work that discusses the reconquest of the Roman province of North Africa by Justinian is the epic poem by Corippus. Corippus' full name is Flavius Cresconius Corippus. Some believe that Corippus is actually spelt Gorippus.<sup>17</sup> He was born in Africa at the beginning of the sixth century. His birth city is unknown, but he probably lived in the countryside around Carthage. Scholars also believe that he was a teacher because he is referred to in the *Codex Matritensis* as *Africanus Grammaticus* and in the preface of the *Iohannis* he speaks of activity in the countryside before going to Carthage: *quondam per rura locutus/ urbis per populos carmina mitto palam*.<sup>18</sup> This could be true because his poems show that he is an educated man and many poets in the late Roman and early Byzantine periods were indeed grammarians. However, according to Baldwin the word *grammaticus* could simply represent no more than a scribal inference.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> S. Björnlie, *op. cit.* (n.7) pp. 82-123; Av. Cameron, *op. cit.* (n.2) pp. 134-151; L. Van Hoof, P. Van Nuffelen, *art. cit.* (n.7) p. 282.

<sup>17</sup> P. Riedlberger, *Philologischer, historischer und liturgischer Kommentar zum 8. Buch der Iohannis des Goripp* (Germany, 2010)

<sup>18</sup> Coripp. *Ioh.* Preface. 25-26.

<sup>19</sup> B. Baldwin, "The Career of Corippus" *Classical Quarterly* 28, (1978) p. 372; A. Cameron, "Wandering Poets: A Literary Movement in Byzantine Egypt", *Historia* 14 (1965), p. 491; G. Shea, "Introduction" *The Iohannis or De Bellis Libycis of Flavius Cresconius Corippus*, (New York, 1999), pp. 2-3.

The title of his poem that will be beneficial to this work has two different names. The first is the *Iohannis*, while the second is *De bellis Libycis*. The former will be used throughout the work. It was written in the sixth century. It is a possibility that he wrote his poem in Carthage near the end of his life. Corippus' poem, like Jordanes' works, was written in Latin and became such a success that he moved to Constantinople. Some argue however, that it simply could be that Corippus was not making any money in Carthage with the *Iohannis*, so he moved to Constantinople because it was larger and offered more opportunities for him.<sup>20</sup> This was probably because Justinian was constantly engaged in an attempt — all too often unsuccessful — to find panegyrists, and if Corippus had found his way to Constantinople, as he somehow did, there is no way that he would have failed to be solicited by the imperial office.<sup>21</sup> Just as Justinian liked to see himself as an emperor of old, who went out and conquered territory, so too Corippus thinks of himself as a poet of old. He saw himself as Justinian's Vergil even though in his poem he says, "the poem that I write is unworthy of Vergil."<sup>22</sup>

Another source that this project will look at with regard to North Africa and Italy is the *Ecclesiastical History* of Pseudo-Zachariah. We do not have much information about Pseudo-Zachariah, but it is generally supposed that he was a monk at Amida, who had access to good sources from the cathedral library. Scholars debate whether we should consider Pseudo-Zachariah's work as an *Ecclesiastical History* or a *Chronicle*. However, most scholars suggest that it has more in common with an *Ecclesiastical History* because it claims to "continue where Socrates and Theodoret left off"<sup>23</sup> and in our principal manuscript there are several folios with

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<sup>20</sup> B. Baldwin, *art. cit.* (n.19), p. 372.

<sup>21</sup> Av. Cameron, "The Career of Corippus Again" *Classical Quarterly*, 30 (1980) p. 535.

<sup>22</sup> Coripp. *Ioh.* Preface: 6.

<sup>23</sup> PZ. II.1.a.

the label *Ecclesiastical History* found as a title. Also some scholars debate whether Pseudo-Zachariah should be considered as one author. He may not have written this work at all and instead may have been a compiler who gathered different collections of stories and accounts and put them together into this miscellaneous history. However, because the name Pseudo-Zachariah has been employed so frequently in academia and it is convenient, scholars continue to use it. It gets the name of Pseudo-Zachariah because the work incorporates the four books written by Zachariah of Mytilene but the author or compiler adds his own words to it with notices both secular and ecclesiastical. He then adds eight more books which he is supposed to have written or adds his own information too if he did not write them himself. This then was used by Michael the Syrian and Barhebraeus, who mistakenly attributed the complete composition to Zachariah of Mytilene. Therefore, scholars gave the author the name Pseudo-Zachariah.<sup>24</sup> This work was written or compiled around 569 in the Syriac language. The reason he wrote the work was because "his superior urged him to, hoping thereby to instruct the faithful."<sup>25</sup> This source will be used for both the invasion of North Africa and the capture of Rome by Belisarius.

The next source that will be looked at for this project with regard to Italy is the *Liber Pontificalis*, the Book of Pontiffs. It is a collection of Latin biographies of Roman bishops. It goes through 90 lives of Roman bishops that held the see at Rome from 64 to 715. It seems that this work went through three editions before it became the one that we have today. Therefore, there were several different compilers and writers for the entries with the last one being Anastasius the librarian. Whoever they were, they were not educated or of any cultured literary

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<sup>24</sup> G. Greatrex, C. Horn, R. Phenix, "Introduction" in *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Zachariah Rhetor: Church and War in Late Antiquity* (Liverpool, 2011) pp. 33-34.

<sup>25</sup> PZ. II.1.b.

elite because the Latin in which they wrote rules such men out.<sup>26</sup> As with most of the other sources we are only interested in a very small portion of the work. In this case we are only focusing on the three Roman bishops who lived during Justinian's war in Italy.

The main literary source this study will look at with regard to Spain is by Isidore of Seville and his work *Historia Gothorum*. This work has the distinction of being the first chronicle that is completely dedicated to the history of the Visigoths. In addition to this work Isidore produced many writings in many different genres. Today seventeen major works and thirteen letters are known.<sup>27</sup> Isidore probably started writing the *Historia Gothorum* around 620 at a time when the Visigoths were attacking the imperial outpost of Cartagena. He was probably from Cartagena, which may have inspired him to write about the history of the Visigoths because it concludes with the rise of the Visigothic people at the expense of the Romans even though he was of Hispano-Roman decent. Or it could be because of his closeness to the monarchy, especially to Sisebut, who was a student of Isidore's and may have asked him to write the history of the Visigoths.<sup>28</sup> Whatever his reasons were, it was to praise the Visigoths and their history and he presented the Romans as the villains. Scholars think that he became a bishop in 601 but that would mean that he became bishop just as he reached the minimum age.<sup>29</sup> There is a debate between historians as to whether this work is a chronicle or a work of history like Procopius. He lists things in chronological order which would point to it being a chronicle. However, he divides his writing into six sections based on interactions with certain people or things like the Romans

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<sup>26</sup> R. Davis, "Introduction" *The Book of the Pontiffs: The Ancient Biographies of First Ninety Roman Bishops to AD 715* (Liverpool, 2010) pp. xi-xv.

<sup>27</sup> A. Fear and J. Wood, *Isidore of Seville and His Reception in the Early Middle Ages: Transmitting and Transforming Knowledge* (Amsterdam, 2016) pp. 13-16.

<sup>28</sup> K.B. Wolf, "Introduction" *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, (Liverpool, 1999) pp. 11-12.

<sup>29</sup> A. Fear and J. Wood, *op. cit.* (n.27) pp. 12-13; K.B. Wolf *op. cit.* (n.28) p. 10.

or Christianity. This would point to a work of history. Therefore, it should best be seen as both.<sup>30</sup> Isidore's work is quite long and like the rest of our sources we are only interested in three entries that deal with the topic of this project.

The last literary works that this project will look at are chronicles, three chronicles to be exact. These chronicles are written by Marcellinus *Comes*, Victor of Tonnuna or Victor of Tunnuna, depending on the editor or translator, and John Malalas. These works do not follow a narrative like Jordanes or Isidore of Seville and to an extent even Corippus. As the word chronicle suggests, the author is most concerned with the chronology of events. They give the most important events of a given year with plain and simple language. Sometimes chronicles can be much more than just bullet points of what major events happened, as some authors give their opinions or even a little more detail about events. These chronicles are very long as they cover sometimes several decades at least of history, so for our purposes we are only looking at a small part of their work. They are very helpful for a work like this as they are easy to follow and the authors are able to place an event in a given year with ease even if their calculations are often inaccurate.<sup>31</sup>

The first of these chronicles that will be considered is the *Chronicle* of Count Marcellinus or Marcellinus *comes*. He is one of the lesser-known literary figures of Late Antiquity. He is only known for his chronicle but there are other works that we know about, which unfortunately have been lost. What we know about him comes from what he writes about himself in his preface and what Cassiodorus has written in his *Institutiones*. Whether Cassiodorus met Marcellinus in

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<sup>30</sup> P.M. Bassett "The Use of History in the Chronicon of Isidore of Seville." *History and Theory* 15 (1976) p. 290.

<sup>31</sup> R.W. Burgess, M. Kulikowski, *Mosaics of Time: The Latin Chronicle Traditions from the First Century BC to the Sixth Century AD. Volume I: A Historical Introduction to the Chronicle Genre from its Origins to the High Middle Ages*, (Turnhout, 2013), pp. 20-35.

Constantinople while Cassiodorus was a refugee is unknown. What we do know is that he has heard of him. He says this about Marcellinus:

[Jerome] has been followed in turn by the aforesaid Marcellinus the Illyrian who is said to have acted first as *cancellarius* of the patrician Justinian, but who later, with the Lord's help upon the improvement of his employer's civil status, faithfully guided his work from the time of the emperor(Justin) to the beginning of the triumphant rule of the emperor<sup>32</sup>

Even though Cassiodorus says that Marcellinus was from Illyricum, probably from a "Latin-speaking Balkan province,"<sup>33</sup> it is unknown in which city he was born. The post of *cancellarius* was given up by Marcellinus before Justinian became emperor. There are two versions of Marcellinus' chronicle. The first version extends from the ending of Jerome's chronicle to 518 and was written in Constantinople. However Marcellinus, like so many other chroniclers, decided to add to his work, going all the way to 534, giving us the second version that survives today. This extended edition is said to have been "written to display his gratitude to Justinian for previously inviting him into his service."<sup>34</sup>

Even though Marcellinus' chronicle only goes to 534 someone did continue it to about 548. This part of the chronicle only survives in the Oxford Manuscript (**T**). Contained in **T** is also the early text of Marcellinus, but it was once believed that there were two different scribes writing. However, now it appears that both the text and the continuation contained in **T** is the work of one scribe. The date for the continuation part is around the 550s. The translation of Marcellinus' chronicle that will be used is by Brian Croke. In his translation of the text, he includes the continuation found in **T**. Therefore, this continuation will be combined with

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<sup>32</sup> Cass. *Inst. Div. Litt.* I.17.2.

<sup>33</sup> B. Croke, "Introduction" *The Chronicle of Marcellinus*, (Sydney, 1995) p. XIX.

<sup>34</sup> B. Croke, *Count Marcellinus and his Chronicle*, (Oxford, 2001) p. 31.

Marcellinus' chronicle for this project. The justification for this is that without it the chronicle stops at 534, the year that is celebrated as the victory of Belisarius over the Vandals. Therefore this work only allows for a very narrow comparison with Procopius. However, if the continuation is added, then it opens up more parts of Procopius' narrative to be compared and contrasted with. The inclusion of this extra material allows this project to yield conclusions on a larger scale.

The second of the chronicles that will be considered is that of Victor of Tonnuna. His chronicle is part of a chain of works that was started by Sextus Julius Africanus in the second century. There are three other continuators besides Victor of Tonnuna. They are Eusebius, Jerome and Prosper of Aquitaine. The continuation of works is not by accident. Chroniclers generally lack a fixed ending as in this genre they should be carried on for as long as individuals continued to exist, and events continued to take place. They expected or at least hoped that their works would be continued.<sup>35</sup> This is exactly what Victor of Tonnuna did. Like so many of the other authors we have looked at, we again know little about his life, beyond what he has shared with us in his chronicle and what other authors have said. What we do know is that he was a bishop of Tonnuna in North Africa. Early on as bishop he was imprisoned at the monastery in Mandracium near Carthage and then in the Balearic Islands and then in Alexandria. He was summoned to Constantinople in 564 with five other bishops to accept the decision of the Council of Constantinople in 553 on the Three Chapters. When he and the five others refused, they were imprisoned in monasteries around Constantinople.<sup>36</sup> We know that he escaped but we do not

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<sup>35</sup> R.W. Burgess, M. Kulikowski, *op. cit.* (n.31) p. 28; D. Dumville, "What is a Chronicle", *The Medieval Chronicle, II: Proceedings of the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference of the Medieval Chronicle, Driebergen/Utrecht 16-21 July 1999*, ed. E. Kooper et al (Amsterdam, 2002) pp. 18-21; H. White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation*, (Baltimore, 1987), pp. 1-25.

<sup>36</sup> Carthage, Balearic Islands and Alexandria: Vict. Tonn. 153 a. 554; Constantinople: Vict. Tonn. 169 a. 564.

know when he escaped. It cannot be later than 566, as that is when his chronicle ends but it probably could have happened when Justin II came to the throne as he was much less oppressive than Justinian.

If this is true, then one might assume that Victor might have used Marcellinus' work as a source for his chronicle but there is no evidence to support this. He then appears in a letter of Pope Gregory's in 601 as bishop again in Tunnuna but this time he was supporting the orthodox position and ready to condemn the Three Chapters.<sup>37</sup> As regards the age of Victor of Tunnuna in 601, it is believed that he was nearly seventy years old if we guess that his age was around thirty-three when he was made bishop for the first time. Being seventy is not unusual for a bishop as "they remained in their Sees until death, even when they are sick in body or in mind, and Saint Augustine helped in the defence of Hippo against the Vandal attacks when he was seventy-six years old."<sup>38</sup> However, in C. Cardelle de Hartman's edition of Victor's *Chronicon* she states in her introduction that he died between 568 and 575. This is probably because Victor was the second most frequent name among bishops in the North African Church, and so she believes that the correspondent of Gregory was probably a different person. This would mean that this Victor became bishop in Tonnuna shortly after the chronicler's death, which J.R.C. Martyn says is possible but is a most unlikely coincidence.<sup>39</sup>

Also, the bulk of Victor of Tunnuna's chronicle deals with Christian Church matters, especially the divisive Three Chapters problem. Events that do not really have a Christian theme,

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<sup>37</sup> Greg. Ep. 12.3, 12.8, 12.9; J.R.C. Martyn, "Introduction" *Arians and Vandals of the 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Centuries*, (Newcastle, 2008) pp. xxv.

<sup>38</sup> J.R.C. Martyn, *op. cit.* (n.37) p. 26.

<sup>39</sup> J.R.C. Martyn, *op. cit.* (n.37) p. 131; Vict. Tonn. ed. C. Cardelle de Hartman "Victoris Tunnunensis Chronicon cum reliquis ex Consularibus Caesar -augustanis et Iohannis Biclarenensis Chronicon." *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*, 174A. (Turnhout, 2001) pp. 93-102.

motivation or basis, are given one. Therefore his priority for events to make it into his chronicle is that they have a Christian element, whereas Marcellinus' chronicle is focused on geography, politics and social life in Constantinople and Illyricum, but there is a more pro-Justinian viewpoint in his politics during the additional section that we are looking at.

The third and final chronicle that will be considered for this work is by John Malalas. From here and throughout the work John Malalas will be referred to as Malalas for the sake of simplicity. Everything we know about the author comes from his *chronicle*. He was probably born around 490 as he dates his access to oral sources of information from the time of emperor Zeno.<sup>40</sup> Although we do not know where he was born, we do know that he was educated in Antioch and then moved to Constantinople either in 535 or 540. His chronicle is 18 books long and covers from Adam in the Bible to at least 565, even though this uncertain.

The Greek in which it was written is considered 'spoken Greek' instead of 'written Greek' because of the many blunders and its disregard for the rules of classical usage over so long a text. This is probably why it is believed that his work was popular because it appealed to the Roman masses.<sup>41</sup> His aim in writing his chronicle is twofold but for the purpose of this project the second reason is of more significance, "which is to provide a summary account of events under the Roman Emperors up to and including his own time."<sup>42</sup> Even though the focus of his writing was the emperors' reigns, he concentrates much on Antioch until he moves to Constantinople and starts writing about Justinian's reign from the 530s. Justinian's reign is

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<sup>40</sup> Joh. Mal. Preface: 1; W. Treadgold, *The Early Byzantine Historians* (New York, 2007) p. 235.

<sup>41</sup> J.B. Bury, *A History of the Later Roman Empire from Theodosius I to the Death of Justinian (AD 395 to AD 565)* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London, 1923) p. 435; A. James, "The Language of Malalas: General Survey", *Studies in John Malalas*, ed. E. Jeffreys et al (Sydney, 1990), pp. 217-225; W. Treadgold, "The Byzantine Histories of John Malalas and Eustathius of Epiphania", *The International History Review* 29 (2007) pp. 709-710; W. Treadgold, *op. cit.* (n.40) pp. 236-238.

<sup>42</sup> Joh. Mal. Preface. 1.

covered in book 18 but for this project we are only interested in three entries that cover the Vandal War and Narses' defeat of Totila. Malalas may have said more about the west but it does not survive in our twelfth-century manuscript.<sup>43</sup> There is evidence that Malalas' Chronicle was produced in two stages and editions. The original was completed in 530 but only had 17 books and was available to Evagrius in 590. The second edition, which was not available to Evagrius, includes book 18.<sup>44</sup> Therefore, Malalas will be compared with Procopius for both the Vandal and Gothic War.

The *Chronicle* by John of Biclarum will be used for the discussion about Spain. The content of this source is outside of the years that this project is looking at, but it helps to create a picture of the extent of territory of the Roman holdings in Spain. With it we can formulate an idea of which cities Justinian controlled, based on later Visigothic kings and their reconquering of cities from the Romans, but other than that this source has no point of comparison with Procopius. John of Biclarum was of Gothic birth and born in Lusitania or more specifically the city of Scallabis.<sup>45</sup> He returned to Spain after studying for either seven or seventeen years in Constantinople. The figure depends on how one reads the passage in Isidore's *De viris illustribus*. In the edition prepared by Merino, the Latin reads *septimo demum anno* while in the MGH it says *decimo anno*.<sup>46</sup> Regardless, while in Constantinople he learned Greek as well as literature and history. After his return, he was exiled to Barcelona for ten years because of a crack-down on Catholic clergy until Reccared became king. After his release he founded a

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<sup>43</sup> G. Greatrex, "Malalas and Procopius" *Die Weltchronik des Johannes Malalas: Autor - Werk - Überlieferung*, ed. M. Meier et al (2016), pp. 170-171.

<sup>44</sup> E. Jeffreys, M. Jeffreys, R. Scott, "Introduction", *The Chronicle of Malalas: A Translation* (Melbourne, 1986), p. xxiii; W. Treadgold, *op. cit.* (n.40) pp. 240-246.

<sup>45</sup> Isid. *DVI*, 44.

<sup>46</sup> Isid. *DVI*, 44; S. Šilmordová, "The significance of chronology in the chronica of Iohannes Biclarensis." *Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, 54 (2014). p. 455

monastery, from which his name stems. He wrote his chronicle sometime during his time as abbot of the monastery.<sup>47</sup> The monastery has yet to be identified. He wrote his chronicle in the style of Sextus Julius Africanus and Eusebius of Caesarea.<sup>48</sup> In his work he applauded Eusebius and the continuers of his chronicle and he simply intended to extend their work by "recording, using a concise format, those events which have occurred in our own times."<sup>49</sup>

While these three chroniclers, and the *Chronicle* by John of Biclarum will be considered for this project, there is one chronicler that does record details about the Vandal war, but who will not be considered for this project. The chronicler is Theophanes the Confessor. He wrote in the ninth century around 818. The reason for his work not being considered is not because he is writing several hundred years after the event (as we can benefit from outside sources' omissions and additions to see how they view the events and contrast it with the earlier sources). It is because Theophanes relies heavily on Procopius for his information even though his account of the Vandal war is abridged.

Theophanes even summarizes the speeches that Procopius attributes to different people throughout his work. He also writes a short summary of the Gothic war from Malalas. However, Theophanes does make relevant additions to the text of Procopius. Most additions can be attributed to mistakes in copying Procopius. But some may not be mistakes, the biggest one being the added lines in the description of the war between Sergius and the Moorish tribe Leuathae. It gives information in a rather vague comment in Procopius that is not otherwise attested. Roger Scott believes that this could be attributed to an unknown good source. However, because Theophanes for the majority of his chronicle does not differ from Procopius' work, the

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<sup>47</sup> K.B. Wolf, *op. cit.* (n.28) pp. 1-2.

<sup>48</sup> S. Indrikis, *The Greater Medieval Historians: An Interpretation and a Bibliography* (Washington, 1981) pp. 4-8.

<sup>49</sup> Joh. Bicl. Prologue.

discrepancy could only come from the *Wars* which implies that Theophanes had at his disposal a text that differed at places from that of the extant manuscripts, the oldest of which date from the 14th century. Therefore he cannot be compared to Procopius when the information that is in his chronicle has been taken from Procopius' work.<sup>50</sup>

## Archaeological and Epigraphical Evidence

We move now to discuss the second type of source that will be dealt with in this project. These sources will be both epigraphical and archaeological. Epigraphical sources will be mainly inscriptions that were dedicated to different victories of Justinian and by association Belisarius and other successful generals. Some of these inscriptions are wonderfully collected in a book in French by Jean Durliat called *Les dédicaces d'ouvrages de défense dans l'Afrique Byzantine*. It is a dossier of 84 inscriptions in which "32 se rapportent indubitablement à des dédicaces d'ouvrages de défense réalisés à l'époque byzantine et 6 autres s'y rapportent peut-être, parmi les documents douteux."<sup>51</sup> They are found all over North Africa, which Durliat identifies on a map (reproduced below), so that one can see in which cities these inscriptions were found. It is a very systematic way of dealing with these inscriptions. Firstly he gives a title of who it is dedicated to and in what city it was found. Next he indicates who found it and when, where it was first published and by whom, and the size of the inscription. Next he gives the Latin and a translation into French. Lastly he gives the date when they were possibly inscribed and gives background about the person who dedicated it.

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<sup>50</sup> M. Jankowiak. "Procopius of Caesarea and his Byzantine Successors" *A Companion to Procopius*, eds. M. Meier, F. Montinaro, (Leiden, forthcoming) pp. 14-19; A. Mango, R. Scott, G. Greatrex. "Introduction" *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor: Byzantine and Near Eastern history, AD 284-813* (New York, 1997) pp. XCV, LXXIX; Y. Modéran. *Les Maures et l'Afrique Romaine (IVe-VIIe siècle)* (Rome, 2003) pp. 610-611.

<sup>51</sup> J. Durliat, *Les Dedicaces d'ouvrages de Defense dans l'Afrique Byzantine*, (Turin, 1981) p. 3.

Not all of the inscriptions are in Latin. Some of them are in Latin and then translated into Greek on the same stone. Others are only in Greek; there is a wide variety of different dedications to be found in this book. The dedications in the book look like they are divided up into regions where the inscription is located, for example in Numidia, or in Mauritania Sitifensis. Then they are again divided up into under the emperor to whom they were dedicated going all the way down to the emperor Heraclius. It is only the first section of this book that is relevant here, as these inscriptions are the ones dedicated during the reign of Justinian by the prefect Solomon. There is also a second chapter for commentary about the defences and the administrative mechanisms that are used in order to build these fortresses. This section will also be employed for the discussion of the reconquest.

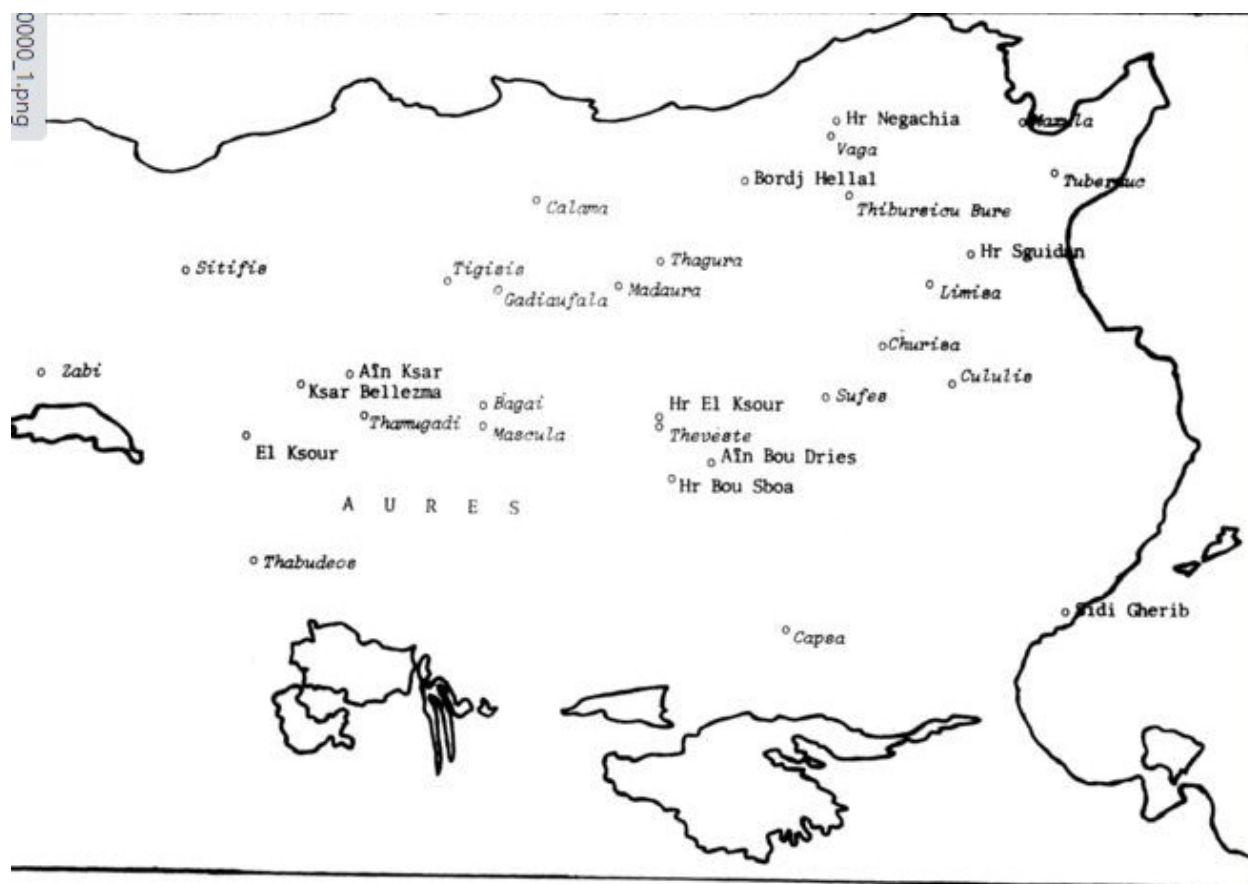


Fig. 1 – Localisation des dédicaces d'ouvrages de défense.  
(Les toponymes antiques sont écrits en italique).

Two caveats about this book are that it deals only with North Africa and all of the dedications were inscribed under Solomon. Therefore only sections of this project dealing with North Africa and after Belisarius has returned to Constantinople can make use of this source. This does not mean that the information for Italy and the defeat of the Goths will be any less rich in substance to compare it to what Procopius says. It just means there are a lot more sources relating to the defeat of the Vandals and the occupation of North Africa. The second caveat is much easier to understand. There are possibly no dedications or at least none found that were made under Belisarius' rule in Italy nor have any been found in Spain. There is, however, an inscription by general Narses on the Ponte Salario on the Via Salaria that recounts its restoration

by him in 565.<sup>52</sup> Again I can use the inscriptions to compare them to one portion of Procopius' work. Having said this, the book is still an integral source to use for this type of project.

Not only will Jean Durliat's work be used in discussing the archaeological evidence found in North Africa but also an article in the journal *Antiquité Tardive*, specifically, from volume 10. The particular article that will be used is by Pol Troussset. In this work it argues that Justinian's reconquest captured more than what most scholars think. Using archaeological evidence as well as literary documents it suggests that the boundaries of Roman North Africa extended to the border of the Saharan desert. For the reconquest to be successful it needed to follow a geographic logic which includes this border.<sup>53</sup>

Archaeological evidence consists of mosaics, buildings, and material remains that the Romans created in or brought to these newly conquered lands. In Italy and in Spain this type of material evidence will be used more extensively, as mentioned above, since very few if any relevant inscriptions have been found in Italy and Spain. Some of the material found in Italy that this project will be concerned with are coins, mosaics in Sant'Apollinare Nuovo, the Church of San Vitale and Theoderic's palace, Nicene Churches newly built or converted Arian ones and the Roman practice of portraiture. In Spain the materials that this project will concern itself with are residential buildings constructed in cities and city defences, especially in Cartagena.

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<sup>52</sup> D. Brodka, *Narses – Politik, Krieg und Historiographie im 6. Jahrhundert n.* (Berlin, 2018) p. 19.

<sup>53</sup> P. Troussset. "Les Limites Sud de la Réoccupation Byzantine" *Antiquité Tardive*, 10 (2003) p. 150.

## Legal Sources

Lastly we come to the final batch of sources that will be referenced throughout this project. These are documentary sources. These include the *Codex Justinianus* and Justinian's *Novellae* and the Ravenna papyri. One law in particular that is relevant to this project is *C.J.* I.27. It contains measures that deal with the organization of the African province. It is dedicated to the praetorian prefect Archelaus and in it, describes the defeat of the Vandals and the taking over of Africa in this way:

As Africa through Our efforts has received her freedom within a short time, after having for ninety years previously been held in captivity by the Vandals, who are at the same time enemies of both the soul and the body, since by rebaptism they have brought to their perfidious belief such souls as were not able to endure the tortures and punishments inflicted upon them, and the bodies of the latter, illustrious by birth, were subjected to their barbaric yoke, by the exercise of the greatest severity; and some of the Holy Churches of God were profaned with their perfidy, and others were turned into stables. We saw venerable men who with difficulty related their sufferings, whose tongues had been cut out by the roots; and others who, after having endured various cruelties, and having been dispersed through different provinces, passed their lives in exile. In what terms, and with what labor could We give proper thanks to God, who rendered Me, the most humble of His servants, worthy to avenge the wrongs of His Church, and to rescue the people of so many provinces from the bond of servitude?<sup>54</sup>

Not only does it tell us what he thinks of the Vandals but it also could be important for what his reasoning was for going to war against the Vandals was in the first place, when compared to other sources and also Procopius.

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<sup>54</sup> Just. *Cod.* 1.27.1; cf. Proc. *BV.* 1.8.4.

This section of the *Code* is found in a “manuscript that survives in the Würzburg Universitätsbibliothek(M.p.j.f.m 2).”<sup>55</sup> The Würzburg manuscript that Simon Corcoran discusses is unique because the sequences of the constitutions are complete and the headings and the subscripts preserved intact unlike all the other manuscripts. It is also the first manuscript that is a direct witness to the text of the African constitutions and therefore a complete *Codex Justinianus*. In all there are two constitutions inside Codex Justinianus I.27. The one which is quoted above goes on to deal with the organization of the civil administration of North Africa. The second is addressed to Belisarius, in which he lays out the organization of the troops on the frontier thereby confirming his role in the reconquest. These are apparently theoretical blueprints of what Justinian would like Africa to look like administratively. These may have to do with North Africa but they also seem to mention a little bit about Spain.

Next, Justinian's *Novels* and measures will also be examined in this work. Justinian's *Novels* or *Novellae Constitutiones* are part of the *Codex Juris Civilis* that was initiated by Justinian. The other parts of the *Codex Juris Civilis* are the *Codex*, the *Digest* and the *Institutes*. The *Novels* contain measures that Justinian took between 534 and 565. These were the only works that he wrote mainly in Greek instead of Latin but they were translated into Latin for the western Roman provinces. These novels and measures range in topic but a measure in particular that will be most relevant for this project is the Pragmatic Sanction. This novel deals with the organization of Italy after it was reconquered by Justinian. By the promulgation of this measure Justinian gave more power to the clergy and bishops in government affairs. These measures were also only applied to Italy by Justinian but were extended by Justin II to the entire empire. Along

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<sup>55</sup> S. Corcoran “The Würzburg Fragment of Justinian's Constitutions for the Administration of Recovered Africa” *Libera Curiositas: Melanges d'Histoire Romanie et d'Antiquité Tardive Offerts À Jean-Michel Carrié*. ed. C. Freu, S. Janniard and A. Ripoll (2016) p. 97.

with the *Codex*, the *Novels* and associated measures provide a first-hand account of how Justinian thought his empire should be ruled. This is not always representative of the reality of the Roman world in Late Antiquity. However, these are just as important as any source that has been discussed as they will provide a window into what Justinian envisioned after reconquering North Africa, Italy and Spain, showing that there was a real plan for these provinces to maintain them under Roman control.

Lastly, the Ravenna papyri will be acknowledged for this project. The Ravenna papyri have been compiled into three volumes by Jan Olof Tjäder. The first volume contains twenty-eight pieces that include estate records, wills, an appointment of a guardian, a release and nineteen deal with donations mostly to the Church of Ravenna.<sup>56</sup> Included in this section is a piece that mentions property taken from Arians by Justinian and given to the Church of Ravenna. The second volume contains papyri that deal with legal transactions and agreements that could be used in court to verify claims of ownership and other legal rights and privileges. These Papyri are from a long stretch of time with the oldest papyri dating from September 445 and the last papyrus dating from around 700. These papyri are also written by or for different groups like Jews and Greeks, Goths and Romans, so we get information about not only one type of landowner but multiple different landowners in Italy. We are most interested in the Papyri that are dated during the conquest of Italy but to get a bigger picture one might need to also look at the Papyri during the reigns of Odoacer and Theoderic as well.

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<sup>56</sup> N.P. Arends, *Fragments from the Past: A Social-Economic Survey of the Landholding System in the Ravenna Papyri* (Leiden, 2018) p. 1.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter dealt with three different types of sources that will be used in this work. The first are literary sources, which are narratives of events, a poetic version of events and very systematic approaches to history with the three chronicles. They have the most information about the wars. Jordanes' works are useful for the war against the Goths and the Vandals with the *Getica* giving the Goths' point of view whereas the *Romana* gives the point of view of the Romans. Corippus' epic poem is useful for information about the Vandal War. Pseudo-Zachariah will be useful for the invasion of North Africa and the capture of Rome by Belisarius. The Book of the Pontiffs will give us useful information about the invasion of Italy. Isidore's work is useful for the campaign against the Visigoths, but John of Biclar's *Chronicle* is used for figuring out the extent of the Roman province in Spain. Finally, the three chronicles also give information about both the Vandal War and the Gothic war. Count Marcellinus at first only gives us information about the Vandal War but since we have included the Oxford Manuscript (T) it also gives us information about the war against the Goths. Victor of Tunnuna's chronicle gives us information about the Vandal War and touches ever so briefly on the Gothic War. Lastly, Malalas's chronicle will give us information about North Africa and Narses' defeat of Totila.

The second kind of sources are the epigraphical inscriptions and the archaeological material found in the places Justinian conquered. These have their limitations of being only useful for the comparison of information about each war individually; moreover, the inscriptions or even the archaeological material does not go back to the time of Belisarius. However, they are important as they will not only fill in gaps where the literary sources have no information but

will give us a clearer picture as to the aftermath of these invasions in each of the newly acquired territories and on the extent of the conquests.

The last of the sources presented here are the documentary sources. These are ones that have been written by Justinian himself or his ministers that tell their reader what the organization of the civil administration should look like for North Africa, Italy and Spain in passing. In the case of *Codex Justinianus* I.27 it also gives us information as to what the defensive strategies are to look like when all North Africa is controlled again by the Romans.

One thing that should emerge from this chapter is that most of these sources contain only a small portion of information. With the exception of Corippus most only have a few short passages or pages dedicated to these events in history. They all have different agendas, different interests in writing, or their writing covers a long span of history, and they pick and choose what they talk about and also how much to say about each event. Procopius' whole *Wars* besides the first two books is dedicated to both the invasion of North Africa and Italy undertaken by Justinian. This is why they all have to be put together in comparison with Procopius to counter his cornucopia of information; otherwise when compared separately they are insufficient.

Another thing that should have been drawn from this chapter is that there is more information from these sources about the Vandal War than there is for the Gothic War. One can only speculate as to why this is. For example the circumstances of the authors are a possibility. Victor of Tunnuna was bishop in North Africa and therefore wrote mostly on ecclesiastical events and when it comes to Justinian's reconquest only goes into detail about the Vandal War even though he mentions a few events in the Gothic war but only in passing. Another possibility is the time they were writing. Marcellinus' first edition went up to 518. Then he lengthened his

second edition until 534. It is presumed that he died after this. So without even attaching Oxford Manuscript(T) he only talked about the Vandal War because that was all he survived to see.

Comparing these nine literary works, inscriptions and archaeological material and two documentary sources to Procopius is not going to be an easy task. The reason he is the main source for this is because he devotes an entire account to this one topic and it has come down to us completely. It is easier to take a whole account and follow it than it is taking a bunch of other sources patched together to create a narrative.

## Chapter 2: Narrative of the Sources Excluding Procopius of Caesarea

### Introduction

In this chapter we will proceed to put a narrative together with all the sources that were discussed in the previous chapter. The chapter is laid out in sections by earliest to last theatre of war in the west. Therefore, the chapter starts with the invasion of North Africa in 534 and ends with the invasion of Spain in 552. Next, these sections are each divided into three subsections. The first subsection will contain a narrative based on what the literary sources like Jordanes and Marcellinus *Comes* have to say about Justinian and each theatre of war. The second subsection deals with archaeological and epigraphical evidence and what they can tell us about Justinian and each theatre of war. The third and last subsection deals with documentary sources like the *Codex Justinianus* and his *Novellae* and what they can tell us about each theatre of war.

### 1. North Africa

#### *1(a): North Africa-Literature*

It was lost by the Romans to the Vandals in 439. It has been suggested that the Vandals first arrived in 428 as federates and were supplied with ships by count Boniface because he was having difficulty with the Moors<sup>57</sup> or Berbers. Eventually, piece by piece, the Vandals took over North Africa. From there they were a constant threat to the Western Empire; they raided Sicily in 440, Sardinia and Corsica, they sailed to Ostia and stripped the city of Rome of its wealth in 455 and took the widowed empress Eudoxia and her two daughters back to Carthage, where Geiseric married Eudoxia to his eldest son Huneric. At the height of their power under Geiseric, they even

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<sup>57</sup> A.H. Merrills, R. Miles, *The Vandals* (Chichester, 2010), pp. 52-55.

went so far as to launch raids to Illyricum, Greece and the eastern Mediterranean.<sup>58</sup> There were several attempts by Eastern Roman Emperors, the first by Theodosius II in 441 and the second undertaken by Leo I in 468, to recover the former breadbasket of the empire, but none were successful.

While the Vandals enjoyed a growth in their political influence in the world during the early fifth century under Geiseric, their political prowess in the Mediterranean world started to decline after his death and their place in the world started to be defined by having to defend their kingdom from the interior African kingdoms. Several Moorish communities benefited from the degradation of the Roman imperial presence and were allowed to develop with little direct contact with the Vandal kingdom at Carthage. Some of these grew so large that they were able to challenge Vandal authority in the region. Geiseric was able to manage this situation well because of his successful military campaigns abroad and was willing to offer an alliance, which the Moorish kingdoms accepted with enthusiasm. However, once Geiseric died, his reputation as a powerful leader died as well, and because Geiseric had allowed these kingdoms to keep growing semi-autonomously, they no longer feared the Vandals nor Geiseric's successors. They started taking over territory like the Aurès Mountains and attacked Tripolitania, according to Corippus and Malalas as well as Procopius. Moorish kingdoms took over the province of Byzacena as well.<sup>59</sup> Thus, the Vandal kingdom was not as powerful as it had been during the previous attempts by emperors to regain North Africa.

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<sup>58</sup> M. Deanesley, *A History of Early Medieval Europe, from 476-911* (London, 2020), pp. 76-78; J. Moorhead, *Justinian 2<sup>nd</sup>* ed. (London, 2013), p. 64.

<sup>59</sup> M. Brett, E. Fentress, *The Berbers* (Oxford, 1996) pp. 70-7; Coripp. *Ioh.* 3.205-269; Malal. XVIII.57; A.H. Merrills, R. Miles, *op. cit.* (n.57) pp.65-66; Y. Modéran, *op. cit.* (n.50) pp. 389-96; cf. Proc. *BV.* 1.8.1-2.5, Proc. *BV.* 2.5.22, 2.25.5-7.

The sources in which we are interested allow us to grasp the reasons for the invasion of North Africa while also identifying others, like for example the mistreatment of Nicene Christians in the *Codex Justinianus*.<sup>60</sup> The origins of the Roman invasion of North Africa according to Jordanes, Victor of Tonnuna and Procopius, lay in the usurpation and imprisonment of Hilderic by Gelimer. Corippus slightly disagrees. In his epic he writes that Hilderic was “overthrown because of the revolt of the native Antalas in which they [the Moors] captured the province of Byzacena.”<sup>61</sup> This showed the Vandal people that Hilderic was too weak to lead, which led the army, according to Corippus, to give the Vandal kingship to Gelimer rather than him seizing the throne. This does not mean that Corippus saw Gelimer as anything but a usurper since he repeatedly refers to him as a tyrant or acting tyrannically. Malalas gives a different account of this defeat and how Gelimer came to sit on the throne. He states that Hilderic and the Vandals defeated Antalas in Byzacena but then Gelimer decided to ally with Antalas and then marched on Carthage and seized it with a native [Moor] army.<sup>62</sup>

According to Procopius and Jordanes, Hilderic was a close friend of Justinian's. Hilderic was the grandson of Valentinian III through his mother Eudoxia and he was trying to become closer to the Roman Emperor. This might have been seen by the Vandal elites as Hilderic being subservient to Justinian and he needed to be removed from the throne. Justinian was willing to go to war with Gelimer because of his unlawful usurpation of the throne from his friend. This is the presented motive but the real reasons must have been more complex.<sup>63</sup> The first justification which Justinian provides is that there was a religious cause, however, he did not provide this

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<sup>60</sup> *CJ*. 1. 27. 1.

<sup>61</sup> Coripp. *Ioh.*, 3.205-269.

<sup>62</sup> Malal. XVIII. 57.

<sup>63</sup> W. E. Kaegi, “Arianism and the Byzantine army in Africa 533-546” *Traditio* 21 (1965) p. 25; A.H. Merrills, R. Miles, *op. cit.* (n.57) p. 229; D. Mirsanu, “The Imperial Policy of Otherness: Justinian and the Arianism of Barbarians as a Motive of the Recovery of the West” *Ephemerides theologicae Lovanienses*, 84 (2008) pp. 485-486.

justification until after he recaptured North Africa. This reasoning will be discussed in a later section.

A second reason Justinian might have been eager to go to war with Gelimer is the land of North Africa itself. At the height of the Roman Empire, North Africa along with Egypt was the breadbasket of the empire. It provided enough grain and olive oil to feed the populace of Rome as well as thousands of soldiers and excess supplies were stored in granaries in case of food emergency in the empire. There is little evidence to suggest that under Vandal rule this production of grain and oil stopped. On the contrary, it was still prosperous, as we can find Vandal fineware and amphorae in the western Mediterranean and the increase of Palestinian and Aegean ceramics at Carthage in the late fifth and early sixth century. This indicates that they were trying to strengthen trading connections with the Eastern Mediterranean.<sup>64</sup>

While this arrangement was very profitable for the Vandal Kingdom, it was not for the shippers and the buyers, that is, the Eastern Roman Empire, as the price was costly. So Justinian might have been interested in the “agricultural wealth that the province had provided the empire before and hopefully would provide again”<sup>65</sup> and getting it without paying a hefty price. Not only that but according to Pseudo-Zachariah, through African elites telling Justinian about North Africa they explained that:

this land was torn and snatched away from the Romans in the days of Zrzyrkws, who had besieged Rome and also had carried off valuable vessels of gold and silver and other precious [things] and departed to Carthage in Africa, the distinguished city, which he besieged, captured and in which he resided, storing his treasures there.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> R. Hodges & D. Whitehouse, *Mohammed, Charlemagne and the Origins of Europe* (Ithaca, 1983), p. 26–30. Mattingly, “Oil for export? A comparison of Libyan, Spanish and Tunisian oil production in the Roman Empire” *JRA* 1 (1988), pp. 33–56; P. Reynolds, *Hispania and the Roman Mediterranean, AD 100-700* (London, 2010), pp. 91–100, 105–7.

<sup>65</sup> A.H. Merrills, R. Miles, *op. cit.* (n.57), p. 229.

<sup>66</sup> PZ. IX.17.b.

So Justinian could also regain lost treasures if he were to invade North Africa.

The final and most important reason is the desire to deflect the mounting discontent within Constantinople towards his high-handed style of rule and the unpopular fiscal policies of his senior officials. A year earlier, Justinian was almost overthrown during the Nika revolt. He was saved by his generals who massacred 30,000 or more of his subjects in the Hippodrome. This was not an ideal situation for any ruler to be linked to, especially when their reign was claimed to be chosen by God. Not only did the Nika revolt damage his reign but the way he ended the war with Persia also hurt his authority. The new Persian King, Chosroes wanted peace so he could concentrate on establishing his rule. With Justinian's regime being politically weak at this point due to the Nika riot, Justinian was willing to give the Persians much that they demanded, further weakening the regime as Persia was Rome's oldest and most consistent enemy.<sup>67</sup>

Therefore, Justinian needed a win to rebrand his regime as a success instead of the failure that it seemed. However, the invasion of North Africa was not the only option he and his advisors had, as an invasion of North Africa might not have gone Justinian's way. He and his people looked to have open talks with people in the anti-Chalcedonian circles about the theological differences and the issues between them. However, these talks were not very promising as theology was not the only problem. The problem was the anti-Chalcedonian

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<sup>67</sup> J.B. Bury, *op. cit.* (n.41) pp. 40-48, 79-89; Av. Cameron, *The Mediterranean World in Late Antiquity AD 395-700*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Abingdon, 2012), pp. 108-109; P. Heather, *Rome Resurgent: War and Empire in the age of Justinian*, (Oxford, 2018) pp. 103-114; A.H. Merrills, R. Miles, *op. cit.* (n.57), pp. 229-230.

bishops that Emperor Justin I had exiled and Justinian refused to bring back.<sup>68</sup> Therefore, the rebranding would need to come from a successful invasion of North Africa.

Deflecting the mounting discontent as a reason for invading North Africa, to achieve a positive win for Justinian's administration is relevant because in the eyes of the population Roman East Justinian was an ineffective leader. He persecuted his own people, and he made the Empire look weak in the deal he made with the Persians, the empire's consistent enemy. The population of the empire was now looking for any reason or even a person capable of overthrowing Justinian. Hilderic was overthrown because the Vandal population saw him as an ineffective leader as he could not provide results for his kingdom and therefore his people. Justinian could have suffered the same fate if he did not show himself to be competent and so Justinian needed to take advantage of the turmoil in North Africa so that same turmoil did not happen to him.

The sources show that the reign of Justinian had not started out well for the emperor. He had cast himself in a bad light with his actions against his people during the Nika revolt. He needed to show the people he was a competent ruler. There is no better way for an emperor to show that they are a competent ruler than by successfully winning wars which benefit the Roman people. This, along with his religiously driven efforts and plans to gain lost territory and wealth, contribute to our understanding of Justinian's decision.

Justinian's plan to invade North Africa was therefore implemented. People in Justinian's inner circle were sceptical and wary of launching an invasion into North Africa. Justinian

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<sup>68</sup>S. Brock, "The Conversations with the Syrian Orthodox under Justinian (532)", *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 47 (1981), pp. 87-121; W.H.C Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement: Chapters in the History of the Church in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries*, 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. ed. (Cambridge, 2008) pp. 260-271 P. Heather, *op. cit.* (n.67), pp. 118-119. The talks ended in stalemate anyway.

considered everyone's arguments, whether for or against the invasion. This included Romano-African nobles who were living in Constantinople according to Zacharias, who says:

There were some notables from Africa in Constantinople, who, because of a dispute that they had with the local prince, had departed from their region, and took refuge with the emperor and informed him concerning the region, [saying] that it was very expansive and very peaceful, and that it was not concerning war with the Romans but was engaged in a struggle with the Moors, a people dwelling in the desert, living from robbery and destruction like the Tayyayê.<sup>69</sup>

The inclusion of African nobles in the discussion about going to war against the Vandals by Pseudo-Zachariah is not found in Procopius. Once Justinian's mind was made up, he sent Belisarius and an army to North Africa under the pretense that they were only there to establish Hilderic back on the throne as he was the legitimate ruler. However, Victor of Tonnuna states that Justinian made the decision to invade North Africa after the North African martyr Laetus appeared to him in a dream and persuaded him to launch the expedition.<sup>70</sup> This pretense changed when Gelimer found out about the invasion after Belisarius landed in Africa and reacted by "killing Hilderic along with the latter's family"<sup>71</sup> according to Victor of Tonnuna. Since there was no legitimate ruler for the Vandal throne, Justinian decided that he was going to capture North Africa and re-establish it inside the Empire. It is debated whether this was Justinian's plan all along. It was probably one among many depending on how Belisarius saw the situation.

Belisarius' campaign against Gelimer took about a year to fully defeat and capture him. The sources apart from Procopius hardly have any details about what Belisarius did to defeat

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<sup>69</sup> PZ. IX.17.b.

<sup>70</sup> Vict. Tonn. 118 a. 534. *Iustinianus imperator visitatione Laeti episcopi ab Hugnerico Wandalorum rege martyre facto exercitum in Africam Belesario magistro militum duce contra Wandalos mittit.*

<sup>71</sup> Vict. Tonn. 118 a. 534. *Geilimer tyrannus Hilderieum regem cum quibusdam generis eius affinibus occidit.*

Gelimer. Before the army landed at Carthage, Corippus states that they landed at Caput Vada on the coast of North Africa as Procopius describes. After Belisarius landed in North Africa, he defeated Gelimer's brothers Gunthimer and Gebamund in battle according to Victor of Tonnuna. However, because Victor only says that these brothers were killed in battle, we are left uncertain as to where this battle took place, or if the brothers were defeated at the same or different battles. Gelimer was on the run before Belisarius captured him and sent him to emperor Justinian. Thus, Belisarius captured North Africa on the ninety-seventh anniversary of the Vandal invasion, according to Victor of Tonnuna. Lastly, we know that when Belisarius returned to Constantinople with Gelimer and the riches from looting Africa, he was given a triumph in celebration of his victory.<sup>72</sup>

However, we have more details of what takes place in North Africa when Belisarius leaves. First, there was a native revolt by the Numidian Moors under the chieftain Iaudas, which general Solomon put down, according to Corippus. Then a Roman soldier named Stotzas assumed the North African throne in 536, according to Victor of Tonnuna and Jordanes. He ruled tyrannically, which led to Belisarius being recalled before his campaign in Italy against the Goths.<sup>73</sup> Stotzas started a civil war but fled from Belisarius at Membressa.

Belisarius then returns to Sicily and is replaced by Germanus in 536, according to Marcellinus *Comes* and Corippus. Next there was a campaign under Germanus in which John, the general who is the hero of Corippus' epic poem, is said to have fought at Scalae Veteres and Autenti in 537 against Stotzas. Procopius says that Germanus and John were defeated at Scalae

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<sup>72</sup> Landing at Caput Vada: Coripp. *Ioh.*, 1.366; Proc. *BV.* 1.14.17. PLRE III, Belisarius I, p. 188. Defeat of Gelimer's brothers and capture of North Africa: PLRE III, Gebamundus, p. 505; PLRE III, Gunthimer, pp. 576-577; Vict. Tonn. 118 a. 534. Celebration of Victory: Jord. *Rom.*, 369; PLRE III, Belisarius I, p. 193; Proc. *BV.* 2.9.15.

<sup>73</sup> Coripp. *Ioh.* 3.305-313; PLRE III, Stotzas, p. 1199. Ruling Tyrannically: Vict. Tonn. 129 a. 542.

Veteres. However, according to George Shea, in Corippus there are phrases like 'miro amore' about the battle of Scalae Veteres and 'saevos mactantem hostes' at the battle of Autenti that are used to obscure the Roman defeats.<sup>74</sup> So without Procopius we would have a different picture of what the outcome was at Scalae Veteres. With these phrases, Corippus overlooks the defeats of the Romans and personifies the cities as looking at John with wonder as he destroyed the enemy but his victory was not to be.

Corippus states that Germanus was recalled to Constantinople in 539, leaving Solomon in charge. Solomon again had to deal with a native revolt, this time by the Laguatans in 544. However this time he had to retreat because of the decision by Guntarith to flee, causing panic in the Roman soldiers. This battle took place in Cilius and Solomon was killed.<sup>75</sup> The rebels then proceeded to Hadrumetum and took it over. They sent a false letter to the commander of Hadrumetum, claiming to be the Roman general John, son of Sisiniola. According to Corippus the letter claimed that these rebels were captured in a battle and were to be brought into the city to be slaves. After the loss of Hadrumetum, Justinian appointed a general named Areobindus. Areobindus was sent to share in governing North Africa and divide up the troops with the general that was already there. Corippus does not give this general's name, nor does any other source. However, it is probably the general Sergius, mentioned in Procopius. Whoever this general was, Areobindus' presence there caused a quarrel between them.

Next, Stotzas, and what was left of his army, joined the rebels and proceeded to battle John, son of Sisiniola and his army. Stotzas and John are killed in this battle, according to Victor of Tonnuna, Corippus and Marcellinus *Comes*. Guntarith then sets up a tyranny. According to

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<sup>74</sup> Coripp. *Ioh.*, 3.318-3.319; G. Shea, *op. cit.* (n. 21) p. 10; Marcell. *com. addit.* 537.3; PLRE III, Ioannes qui et Troglita 36, p. 645.

<sup>75</sup> Coripp. *Ioh.*, 3.417-441; PLRE III, Solomon 1, pp. 1175-1176; Marcell. *com. addit.* 541; Vict. Tonn., 131 a. 544.

Victor of Tonnuna, Guntarith killed Areobindus in the palace at Carthage. However, his tyranny only lasted thirty-six days according to Victor of Tonnuna, Corippus and Marcellinus *Comes*, for he was killed by the Armenian Artabanes at a banquet. Corippus adds that it was the praetorian prefect Athanasius who was responsible for the plot against Guntarith and Artabanes who put it into action. John, the hero of Corippus' poem eventually becomes general in North Africa and defeats Antalas and his Moors.<sup>76</sup>

### ***1(b): North Africa-Archaeological and Epigraphical Evidence***

Material evidence linked to the Roman occupation can be found from the period after Belisarius leaves North Africa with Gelimer, and Solomon takes over. Belisarius took over North Africa in just over a year, so he did not have much time to build anything new. He could only rebuild the walls of Carthage and other cities that needed them to keep the enemy out. Not only do we not have any defensive buildings built by Belisarius, but we also do not have any for the first 5 years of Roman occupation. We only have inscriptions on defences that start from 539.

After the Vandals were all but destroyed in Africa, the Romans had to deal with native tribes who did not want to be ruled any more. The outline for defensive works is provided in the *Code of Justinian*, even though the rules are general for defensive works in Africa. The initiative for the defence work is in the hands of the emperor alone and not with generals on the front lines. They had to get permission from the emperor to build any defence and in the *Theodosian Code* therefore the fortification must be dedicated to the emperor and no one else.<sup>77</sup> This was relaxed in the *Justinian Code* so that they could dedicate it to the person who used the public money for

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<sup>76</sup> Coripp. *Ioh*, 3.343-390; 3.391-4.218; 4.219-242; Jord. *Rom.* 369; Marcell. com. *addit.* 547.6; Vict. Tonn. 136 a. 547.

<sup>77</sup> CTh, 15.1.31; J. Durliat, *op. cit.* (n.51) p. 94.

the work if they also include the emperor.<sup>78</sup> For example, all the 24 inscriptions in the proconsular provinces are dedicated to both Solomon and Justinian. The person building a defensive fortification can build it without permission if the *dux* of a frontier province considers it “essential to immediately defend a certain area, but they still must warn the emperor”.<sup>79</sup> The 24 inscriptions show that Justinian had a vast building plan for the places he recaptured. Once the building project is approved it must be funded. The funds are always public funds according to Durliat. Then they get the people in the cities to build it and then they write the inscription.<sup>80</sup>

Two inscriptions commemorating Solomon's many projects are worth mentioning. The first was found in Bagai (Numidia). Like many of the inscriptions it refers to Justinian and Theodora but it can be actually linked to military activity mentioned in Procopius. When Solomon's troops were passing through Numidia in 539 they found this city abandoned and were attacked by mountain people. They were saved by Solomon's main force and ordered the construction of this fortification according to the inscription. It is not known why the city was abandoned, who decided on the materials to build it or who paid for it. The second is from the city of Tebessa. The inscription is dedicated to Solomon for building the fortress after the Moors were defeated. However, neither Solomon nor the John of Corippus' poem defeated the Moors completely as Justin II was still in arms against them and had to construct several fortresses as well.<sup>81</sup>

Because of these inscriptions on the defences and the administrative mechanism that gives complete authority to the central administration to approve buildings, one cannot view the

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<sup>78</sup> *CJ.* 5.11.10.

<sup>79</sup> J. Durliat, *op. cit.* (n.51) p. 96.

<sup>80</sup> J. Durliat, *op. cit.* (n.51) pp. 103-106.

<sup>81</sup> J. Durliat, *op. cit.* (n.51) pp. 22-25, 44-46; L.M. Frenkel, *North African Encomiastic verses for Byzantine Greeks*, (Forthcoming) pp. 9-11.

fortifications as a reaction of the locals to the feeling of insecurity as a result of the ineffectiveness of the state and therefore a decline in the face of the dangerous Moors. The fortifications were used to protect populations in towns and villages and fortified strategic points but not because there was immediate danger from the Moors. After the defeat of the Vandals, the Moors did not appear to be threatening, and Belisarius was tasked to find locations that could be strengthened and required a small number of men for defence. The function of the building work is not to protect the city but to allow the citizens of a town protection if the city is under attack.<sup>82</sup> However, after Belisarius left North Africa, the Moors did become a problem especially in the province of Byzacena. This would be where most of the fighting against Moorish forces took place, which would make sense as to why most Justinian era forts are in this area.<sup>83</sup>

Archaeology (as well as other evidence) suggests that Justinian was able to extend his territory in North Africa to the limits of the former Roman empire south of the Aurès and Nemencha. There are several scholars who are skeptical as they do not believe that certain fortresses and strong-holds, for example Tobna and Timgrad, indicate a Roman military occupation on the other side of the mountain.<sup>84</sup> However, according to Pol Trousset these forts should be considered as evidence for Roman military occupation in this region. The first piece of archaeological evidence, argues Trousset, is the fortress Thouda. It is of the same construction type that we see on the southern border of Numidia and which Procopius echoes in the *De Aedificiis*. Trousset suggests that because of the similarities between these constructions it indicates that it was carried out by the same architects and same teams. Also Trousset identifies

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<sup>82</sup> J. Durliat, *op. cit.* (n.51) pp. 107-109. A.H. Merrills, R. Miles, *op. cit.* (n.57) pp. 254-255.

<sup>83</sup> A.H. Merrills, R. Miles, *op. cit.* (n.57) p. 255.

<sup>84</sup> P. Trousset. *art. cit.* (n.53) p. 143; Skeptical scholars: R. Cagnat. *L'armée romaine d'Afrique et l'occupation militaire de l'Afrique sous les empereurs*, (New York, 1975) p. 594; C. Diehl, *L'Afrique byzantine* (New York, 1896) pp. 237-245.

Thouda as the fortress Dabousis in Procopius' list which is completely compatible with the late evolution of African names but some equate Dabousis with the fort Babousis on the north side of the mountain mentioned by Procopius in the Vandal War.<sup>85</sup> Another piece of archaeological evidence argued by Troussel, is the fort Mdila located west of Négrine. It has the same plan, the same arrangement of square towers at the angles and door on the south face of the wall like the fortress Thouda. Not only that but the same type of brick used can be found in the remains of the citadel of Badès.<sup>86</sup>

Archaeology has extensively shown that new construction and restoration happened to public utilities and new fortifications. At Carthage, new ports were redeveloped which shows that the authorities wanted to exploit Africa's agricultural productivity.<sup>87</sup> Several bath complexes and churches, monasteries and a martyr complex also show extensive restoration and construction through this period. There were walls built around the administrative heart of the city on Byrsa Hill, and the palace on top of the hill seems to have been refurbished. Not only at Carthage, but also at Leptis Magna and Sabratha the city walls were rebuilt and extended, judicial basilicas were transformed into churches and several churches were renovated or newly constructed.<sup>88</sup> Archaeology also shows that during this period of Roman occupation production of goods increased. For example, at Leptiminus there is evidence of large-scale amphora construction as well as butchery, meat processing and iron working in the disused East Baths.<sup>89</sup> The imperial revival was due to the need to provide the army with supplies but nonetheless it

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<sup>85</sup> P. Troussel. *art. cit.* (n.53) p. 146

<sup>86</sup> P. Troussel. *art. cit.* (n.53) pp. 146-149

<sup>87</sup> H.R. Hurst, *Excavations at Carthage: The British Mission* (Sheffield, 1984), p. 43.

<sup>88</sup> Carthage: L. Ennabli, *Carthage: une métropole chrétienne du IV<sup>e</sup> à la fin du VII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, 1997), p. 57; A. Leone, *Changing Townscapes in North Africa from Late Antiquity to the Arab conquest*, (Bari, 2007), p. 174; Leptis Magna: A. Leone, *op. cit.* (n.88) pp. 185-6; Sabratha: A. Leone, *op. cit.* (n.88) pp. 276-9.

<sup>89</sup> A. Leone, *op. cit.* (n.88) pp. 220-3.

shows that urban centres and cities were thriving under new management. In conclusion, if we had no literary sources, we could observe changes that indicate a take-over of some sort.

Lastly, architecture in North Africa can be seen as an attempt by Justinian in creating religious unity around doctrinal orthodoxy. While there is scholarly scepticism around a large-scale building programme in North Africa, there is evidence that there was a building programme within the religious sphere. Many of the basilicas were re-oriented towards the east by constructing a new(eastern) apse which had long been the architectural orthodoxy in the eastern Mediterranean.<sup>90</sup> There was also a renewed emphasis on the veneration of relics during this period but processing for seeing them changed with the redevelopment of churches.

During the fourth and fifth centuries the relics were in a vault under the altar or below the apse or inaccessible underground, although in some cases only accessible through a crypt. Damous El Karita is a great example of how the redevelopment of churches changed how relics were venerated. The basilica was expanded, a new eastern apse and atrium were added as well as a subterranean rotunda which was designed to be a spiritual centre where the relics were kept. To access this rotunda there was a semi-circular forecourt with a portico. The prototype for this architectural design seems to be the palace architecture of Constantinople.<sup>91</sup> There were other basilicas that were built using different layouts like the basilicas at Bir Messaouda, Dermech 1 and the monastery of Bigua but they all had the same purpose. This was to accommodate the

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<sup>90</sup> L. Ennabli, *op. cit.* (n.88), pp. 152-154; B.A-B. Khader et al., *Corpus des mosaïques de Tunisie vol 4: Karthago (Carthage): les mosaïques du parc archéologique des thermes d'Antonin* (Tunis, 1999) pp. 106-107 R. Krautheimer, S. Ćurčić, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture* (New Haven, 1986) pp. 189-190.

<sup>91</sup> A.H. Merrills, R. Miles, *op. cit.* (n.57) p. 242.

increase in interest in pilgrimage and being in close proximity and even holding holy relics or objects that are associated with martyrs.<sup>92</sup>

### ***1(c): North Africa—Legal sources***

Historians agree that the most important legacy that came from the age of Justinian and indeed the most important thing that the emperor did, happened in the field of law. After Justinian was gone and even during his lifetime, the boundaries of his empire and other kingdoms continued to shift until ultimately we are left with the boundaries of modern-day countries. Even these boundaries are not stagnant but fluid, due to bloodshed and war. However, his impact on law with his Codex continues to shape legal culture today. Historians agree that the Justinianic Codex is the true legacy of Justinian and his age. However, historians have not been able to determine, using the codex, whether or not Justinian's policy to re-conquer former Roman territory was his main goal at the start of his reign or whether it became a goal only after he was presented with an opportunity to do it.<sup>93</sup>

Many historians believe that Justinian's main goal when coming into office was to recover Rome's lost glory by launching campaigns to recover lost Roman territory. His propaganda promoted this idea by stating "God also gave us [Justinian] ... hope that he would grant to us dominion over those places yet remaining, which the Romans of old held as far as the boundaries of each ocean, and subsequently lost through their negligence"<sup>94</sup> even though this *Novella* was not connected with the West but with the reorganizing of the civil administration of

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<sup>92</sup> A.H. Merrills, R. Miles, *op. cit.* (n.57) p. 246.

<sup>93</sup> E. Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire vol. 4*, ed. J.B. Bury (New York, 1900) p. 470; P. Heather, *op. cit.* (n.67) p. 189.

<sup>94</sup> Just. Nov. 30. 11. 2. (536) [... dedit nobis deus ... et spes habere bonas quia etiam reliquorum nobis detentionem annuet deus, quam prisci Romani usque ad utriusque oceani fines tenentes sequentibus neglegentiis amiserunt]

the province of Cappadocia. However, if this statement is supposed to show that this was his underlying aim, then it would have to have been written at the beginning of his reign or at the very least before Belisarius sails to fight Gelimer in North Africa. Yet it is dated to 536, the tenth year of Justinian's reign after Belisarius had conquered North Africa and just captured Sicily.

However, the reason that this theory persists is that historians point to the fact that at the end of Emperor Justin's reign and the beginning of Justinian's reign as sole emperor, Justinian was at war with the Persians and as soon as hostilities ceased between them, Justinian was determined to put his ultimate goal into action. According to Peter Heather this is far from the truth. The war with Persia in the mid-520s, according to Heather was deliberately provoked by Emperor Justin and Justinian. He says there was clearly an opportunity to reaffirm and even strengthen long-established patterns of peaceful cooperation. If Justinian's aim was to recapture the Roman west when he came to the throne, then he would not have continued to interfere in Persian affairs and stirring up trouble in Persian territory. Therefore, the policy of recapturing lost Roman provinces was not his aim from the minute he became sole emperor but he took advantage of the circumstances.<sup>95</sup>

The relevance of explaining the debate whether Justinian had the goal recapturing the lost Roman west at the beginning of his reign in this section is that North Africa is the first of the lost Roman provinces he invades and starts a policy of invasions and seizure of other former Roman provinces. This debate is covered in almost all literature written about Justinian and his reconquest of the west and it is always brought up in modern scholarship when discussing the North African campaign. Every historian either believes that he did have a policy of re-conquest

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<sup>95</sup> P. Heather, *op. cit.* (n.67) pp. 115-16.

when he took office or that it was a policy of opportunism and circumstance and fits their interpretation of the sources into what they believe to be true. However, unless we discover something that definitively proves Justinian did or did not have a policy of reconquest at the beginning of his reign, this debate will continue. Therefore, we will never know if Justinian had a policy of *renovatio imperii* as his ultimate goal based on his *Codex* and *Novellae* when he came to the throne, but we can consider why he invaded Africa.

The first alleged reason for the conquest of North Africa was based on purely religious grounds, the intention to liberate the Nicene Christian population from the Arian heresies inflicted upon it by its Vandal rulers:

That which the omnipotent God has now...deemed proper to demonstrate through us exceeds all wonderful acts which have happened in the course of all time—namely that freedom should, through us, in so short a time be received by Africa, which 105 years before was captured by the Vandals who were enemies of both mind and body. ...By what language, therefore, or by what works worthy of God that He deemed it proper that the injuries of the Church should be avenged through me, the least of His servants.<sup>96</sup>

However, Hilderic had reversed the atrocities against Catholics. He suspended persecutions, he also allowed the Nicene Church of North Africa to function without impediment, and even allowed it to hold its first full regional council for two generations in Carthage. An edict of toleration towards the Nicene Church was also issued. This was all done as part of a major realignment of the Vandal Kingdom away from the hegemony of the Ostrogothic Italian Kingdom and towards an alliance with Constantinople.<sup>97</sup> Despite this, historians who argue for

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<sup>96</sup> *CJ*. 1. 27. 1; W. E. Kaegi, *art. cit.* (n.63) p. 24.

<sup>97</sup> J. Conant, *Staying Roman: Conquest and Identity in Africa and the Mediterranean, 439–700*, (Cambridge, 2012) pp. 83-84, 170, 313; M. Deanesley, *op. cit.* (n.58) pp. 81-82; P. Heather, *op. cit.* (n.67) p. 116; J. Moorhead, *op. cit.* (n.58), pp. 65-66; P. Sarris, *Empires of Faith: The Fall of Rome to the Rise of Islam, 500-700* (Oxford, 2011) p. 95; Vict. Tonn. 106 a. 522; R. Whelan, *Being Christian in Vandal Africa* (Oakland, 2018) pp. 49, 99, 135.

the religious grounds argument argue that either "Gelimer's reign saw an immediate backlash against Nicene Christians, and a return to the persecutions of the previous century or it was just a matter of time before it started again and therefore still a viable reason".<sup>98</sup>

While the protection of the Nicene people in Africa may have been a reason to invade North Africa, Justinian may have been influenced by the Nicene Church to invade based on more worldly motivations. Justinian promulgated *Novella 37* in 535, which is primarily concerned with the African church's right to reclaim property seized from it during the period of Vandal Rule. Not only can it reclaim its lost property but it can also reclaim property held by Arians and pagans as well as convert synagogues from the Jewish community.<sup>99</sup> *Novella 37* deals with more than just the African Church. It also involves and is oppressive to Romano-African people who did not subscribe to Nicene Christianity or who tried to re-baptize themselves in Nicene Christianity in order to be allowed to hold public office. This restores the Nicene Church as the authority in the Roman provinces of Africa. These measures and lobbying by the Nicene Church might have been seen by the administration as a good way to integrate the new provinces into the Empire.<sup>100</sup>

A second and final reason for the invasion of North Africa based on bureaucratic documents was that Justinian was convinced by Romano-African elites who had fled Vandal rule to Constantinople or who had fled the political turmoil that erupted from the usurpation of Gelimer. There have been several waves of emigration from North Africa to Constantinople and *Novella 36* points to these people having a say in whether to invade North Africa. *Novella 36*

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<sup>98</sup> P. Heather, *op. cit.* (n.67) p. 117.

<sup>99</sup> Just. Nov. 37. 3-8; W. E. Kaegi, *art. cit.* (n.63) p. 40; A.H. Merrills and R. Miles, *op. cit.* (n.57), pp. 239-241; D. Mirsanu, *art. cit.* (n.63) p. 481; R. Whelan, *op. cit.* (n.97), p. 219.

<sup>100</sup> G. Greatrex, "Justin I and the Arians", *Studia Patristica*, 34, ed. M.F. Wiles. E.J. Yarnold (Louvain, 2001) p. 80; Just. Nov. 37. 5-8.

allowed for former Romano-African landowners to reclaim what they had lost under Vandal rule but only those that were held by their father or grandfather.<sup>101</sup> This could also be the reason that Pseudo-Zachariah included African nobles in the discussion about whether to invade North Africa.

Nevertheless, whether reconquering the west was his ultimate goal or one that came from circumstances, Justinian did conquer North Africa and so he needed laws to govern the new province. The earliest direct witness to the text of the Africa constitutions in the Justinianic Codex is found in the Würzburg manuscript from the late eleventh century. These constitutions were sent to two different people. The first was sent to the praetorian prefect, Archelaus, on what the organization of the civil administration should look like with his position and provincial governors. The second was addressed to Belisarius, concerning the disposition of the frontier *duces* and their forces.<sup>102</sup> These ones look to be provisional as, anything could happen when more territory was captured until all the former territory was recaptured.

The first constitution outlines that “Carthage will be the city where the praetorian prefect resides, how many people will be a part of bureaucracy, salaries of different people, who collects taxes and that Africa will be divided into seven provinces; four consular: Tingi, Carthago, Byzacium, Tripolis and three garrison: Numidia, Mauretania and Sardinia.”<sup>103</sup> However, a well-known ancient legal historian named Kruger in the fourth edition of the *editio minor* adopted a new reading of the seven provinces which became very influential in later editions of *editio*

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<sup>101</sup> M.E. Williams, *The African Policy of Justinian I* (Oxford DPhil Thesis, 2015) pp. 102-4.

<sup>102</sup> S. Corcoran, *art. cit.* (n.55), pp. 98-99.

<sup>103</sup> *CJ.* 1. 27. 2.

*minor* and in scholarship on Roman Africa.<sup>104</sup> Instead of the four consular provinces and three garrison provinces, he reversed them and said there were three consular: Zeugi-Carthago, Byzacium and Tripolis, and four garrison; Numidia, the Mauretianas, and Sardinia. Two manuscripts he was using included a word with a 'z' which favours Zeugi over Tingi. There is some slight support for Zeugi-Carthago in Victor of Vita. However, because he combined two consular provinces mentioned by Justinian, he had to create a pluralized Mauretania which is doubtful.<sup>105</sup>

The second constitution mentions all the provinces except Zeugitana and Carthago that would also contain a residence of a *dux*. Zeugitana and Carthago do not have a *dux* because they "already contain the praetorian prefect like Carthago or does not adjoin a frontier region, requiring no *dux limitis*."<sup>106</sup> There is only one other military command mentioned at Septa which had a small detachment of troops to "guard the strait and give information of everything that occurs in Spain, Gaul or the country of the Franks to the *dux* of Mauretania."<sup>107</sup> Most scholars would not adhere to the reading of the province as Tingi, as two Mauretianas is favoured. Which one is the truth, we probably never really know but what matters is that it shows that this blueprint of the administration is theoretical as not all of the former Roman territories by this time had yet to be recovered. For example, if he did mean Tingi, it could have stood for Tingitana, which would refer to modern Morocco which was a distant and isolated toe-hold. Even during the High Empire direct Roman control was limited to the triangle formed by Tangier, Sala and

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<sup>104</sup> Av. Cameron, "Vandal and Byzantine Africa" *The Cambridge Ancient History vol. 14*, ed. M. Whitby, B. Ward-Perkins, (Cambridge, 2001) p. 565; S. Corcoran, *art. cit.* (n.55) p. 100; A.H.M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire 284-602: A social, Economic and Administrative Survey*, (Oxford, 1964) pp. 273-274.

<sup>105</sup> J. Conant, *op. cit.* (n.97) p. 197; S. Corcoran, *art. cit.* (n.55) pp. 100-101.

<sup>106</sup> J. Conant, *op. cit.* (n.97) 439-700, p. 198; S. Corcoran, *art. cit.* (n.55) p. 101.

<sup>107</sup> *CJ.* 1. 27. 2. 2.

Volubilis. Therefore, these constitutions are an outline of what Justinian was trying to accomplish but could only come true when all Roman territories were recovered.

After conquering North Africa, in addition to the basilicas that were mentioned in section 1(b) there is documentary evidence to suggest that the building of these churches were part of a grand religious legislative agenda. In *Novella 67* the emperor ordered potential benefactors to focus on repairing decaying churches of Constantinople and the Provinces rather than endowing yet more small churches.<sup>108</sup> This is exactly what can be seen with the examples presented above, as the basilicas structure was already built but an addition was added to accommodate the higher foot traffic from Nicene Christians.

In conclusion, the documentary sources show that there was a re-conquest of Africa. There was legislation as how to deal with the population and how administratively to divide North Africa into provinces. However, these sources do not show how tough it was to regain North Africa, and they might mislead someone to think that it went more smoothly than it actually did according to Procopius' account. Also *Codex Justinianus* 1.27, without another source to put it into context, might also make one believe that Justinian took over more territory than he really did.

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<sup>108</sup> Just. Nov. 67.

## 2. Italy

### *2(a): Italy—Literature*

In this section, we will be continuing the narrative that we had started in section 1(a) with literary sources excluding Procopius about the wars of Justinian. However, this section will be concerned with the invasion of Italy. The sources that we will be relying on for this section are both works by Jordanes, Marcellinus *Comes*, Victor of Tonnuna and the *Book of Pontiffs*.

In 526, Theoderic knew he was going to die, so he called together the Gothic counts and chieftains of his people and appointed Athalaric as king. Athalaric was the son of Theoderic's daughter Amalasantha and was only ten years old when he came to the throne. When Athalaric was appointed to the throne, Theoderic in his last will and testament asked his kin to “honor their king, to love the Senate and Roman People and to make sure of the peace and good will of the Emperor of the East, as next after God.”<sup>109</sup> Amalasantha was regent as Athalaric was still a young child. This may seem odd but there have been successful royal mothers and sisters in the fourth and fifth centuries that show that by working with trusted generals they could have stable regimes in the name of child emperors.<sup>110</sup> An example of this would be the emperor Theodosius II who had only turned seven after his father died in 408 but reigned for forty-two years. Athalaric and his mother ruled in peace for a brief period of time until their joint rule caused the Goths to have contempt and lack of confidence in the rule of a child. The contempt and lack of confidence according to Jordanes was brought about by the Franks. He states that the “Franks

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<sup>109</sup> Jord. *Get.*, 304.

<sup>110</sup> M. McEvoy, *Child Emperor Rule in the Late Roman West, AD 367-455* (Oxford, 2013); K. Cooper, “The Heroine and the Historian: Procopius of Caesarea on the Troubled Reign of Queen Amalasuētha” *A Companion to Ostrogothic Italy*, ed. J.J. Arnold et al. (Leiden, 2016) p. 300

were plotting war with the Goths, and instead of fighting them, he gave them parts of Gaul that his father and grandfather had seized.”<sup>111</sup>

Jordanes in the *Getica* states when Athalaric came of age Amalasantha looked to the Emperor Justinian and entrusted him with both Athalaric's youth and their reign. Although Jordanes does not say when Amalasantha put herself and her son under the protection of Emperor Justinian, neither in the *Getica* nor the *Romana*, it is reasonable to infer from Jordanes' *Getica* that she probably did it after Athalaric had given away the Gallic lands to the Franks in 527 causing the Goths to lose confidence in the current regime.

After they entrusted their reign to Justinian, Athalaric died an untimely death. According to Jordanes, Amalasantha feared that without the presence of her son, “she might be despised by the Goths on account of the weakness of her sex.”<sup>112</sup> She therefore decided to summon her cousin Theodahad from Tuscany to establish him on the throne and to share power with her. Theodahad was a man of mature years, and he led a retired life at home in Tuscany before being elevated to the throne. Once Theodahad was named to the throne to share the power with his cousin Amalasantha, he became greedy. He wanted the throne all to himself. Jordanes gives no reason for Theodahad's betrayal of his cousin's kindness noting only that he was unmindful of their kinship.

To rule alone, Theodahad expelled queen Amalasantha from her kingdom to an island on Lake Bolsena and killed her. After several days of being a prisoner on the island Amalasantha was strangled to death in the bath.<sup>113</sup> These people who killed her were hired by Theodahad but

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<sup>111</sup> Jord. *Get.*, 305; PLRE II, Amalasantha, p.65; PLRE II, Athalaric, pp. 175-176.

<sup>112</sup> Jord. *Get.* 306.

<sup>113</sup> Share the throne with Theodahad: Jord. *Rom.*, 368; Theodahad's betrayal: Jord. *Get.*, 306; *Lib. Pont.* 59.2; Marcell. com. *addit.* 534. Her imprisonment happened in 534 according to PLRE II, Amalasuinha, p. 65.

we have no indication outside of Procopius as to what caused the change in how to deal with Amalasantha. Whether the reason is the one in Procopius, where the family of the people she had slain convinced Theodahad that “neither his life nor theirs would be secure unless Amalasantha was put out the way as quickly as possible”<sup>114</sup> or another reason we do not know. Either way, it was done by his hirelings on his orders. However, Marcellinus *Comes* does not give any indication that there was a shift in thinking on what to do with her and instead states that she was sent to an island then killed.

Once Emperor Justinian received word that Amalasantha was killed, he immediately prepared for war to “avenge her death”<sup>115</sup>. Marcellinus and Jordanes along with Procopius state that this was Justinian's reason for going to war with Theodahad, but there is evidence that there might have been another reason: religion. As with North Africa and the Vandals, religion may have played a role in the invasion of Italy against the Goths. In Cassiodorus' *Variae* Theodahad sent Justinian a letter in 535 criticizing Justinian for not being ‘tolerant’ of other religions and explains how a ruler should behave regarding religious differences as he (Justinian) is going against God as he allows more than one religion to exist.<sup>116</sup> Also another letter from the senate was addressed to Justinian. The wording of the letter make it seem that Rome sympathizes with Justinian about Arianism, clearly indicating that destroying Arianism had been employed as a reason for attacking Italy. While indicating this, the letter goes on to state that while imperial intervention was necessary for the situation in Africa, it is not for Italy.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Procopius 5.4.26.

<sup>115</sup> Jord. *Rom.*, 368; Marcell. com. *addit.* 534.

<sup>116</sup> Cass. *Var.* 2.27; D. Mirsanu, *art. cit.* (n.63) pp. 489-490.

<sup>117</sup> Cass. *Var.* 11.13.3; D. Mirsanu, *art. cit.* (n.63) 490.

So he sent his most trusted Patrician Belisarius who had just triumphed over the Vandals in North Africa. Jordanes makes it sound as though Justinian wasted no time in preparation as he says that he sent his army under this leader against the Goths at the “very time when his arms were yet dripping with the blood of the Vandals”<sup>118</sup>. Thus, a Roman army under the supreme command of Belisarius was sailing towards Italy. Belisarius believed, according to Jordanes, that he could not defeat the Gothic nation, unless he first seized Sicily, their nursing-mother.<sup>119</sup> Not only was seizing Sicily important to defeating the Goths but it is also part of Justinian's overall military strategy in the Mediterranean.<sup>120</sup>

By all accounts Sicily was easy to capture. As soon as he landed, he invaded “Catania, Syracuse and indeed the whole of Trinacria”<sup>121</sup> without any bloodshed. Jordanes says that the Goths, who were besieging the town of Syracuse, found that they were not succeeding and surrendered of their own accord, with their general Sinderith.<sup>122</sup> Marcellinus *Comes* states that Theodahad sent Agapitus, the bishop of Rome, on an embassy to Constantinople after Belisarius had captured Sicily. Agapitus was originally going to Constantinople because a pro-monophysite named Anthimus of Trebizond was elected as patriarch of Constantinople, which seriously alarmed Palestinian and Syrian monks<sup>123</sup> and reached out to Rome to help with this problem. Theodahad used this as the backdrop to have Agapitus convince Emperor Justinian to “withdraw his armies and cancel the planned invasion”<sup>124</sup> in addition to his main goal. However, Agapitus

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<sup>118</sup> Jord. *Get.* 30.

<sup>119</sup> No time wasted: Jord. *Get.*, 307-8; Sicily: Jord. *Get.* 308; Jord. *Rom.* 369; Marcell. com. *addit* 534.1.

<sup>120</sup> C. Lillington-Martin, “Procopius, πάρεδρος/ *quaestor*, *Codex Justinianus*, 1.27 and Belisarius' strategy in the Mediterranean,” *Procopius of Caesarea: Literary and Historical Interpretations* ed. C. Lillington-Martin and Elodie Turquois (New York, 2018) pp. 169-179.

<sup>121</sup> Marcell. com. *addit.* 534.1.

<sup>122</sup> Sinderith: Jord. *Get.* 308; Jord. *Rom.* 369; PLRE III, Sinderith, p.1154.

<sup>123</sup> *Lib. Pont.* 59.2; J. Richards, *The Popes and the Papacy in the Early Middle Ages 476-752*. (London, 2014), p. 127.

<sup>124</sup> Marcell. com. *addit.* 536.4; J. Moorhead, *op. cit.* (n.58), p. 77; J. Richards, *op. cit.* (n.123) p. 128.

upon his arrival in Constantinople turned his attention to the religious problem at hand and never even attempted to convince Justinian to cancel his planned invasion, which was practically already too far advanced to stop.

While Belisarius had just subjected Sicily to the rule of the emperor and was planning the rest of the campaign against the Goths, a civil war was brewing. As stated before, Belisarius had gotten word that Africa was being ravaged by civil war and internal battles. A low-ranking soldier by the name of Stotzas usurped power and became the leader of the rebels according to Jordanes and Victor of Tonnuna.<sup>125</sup> Belisarius, in order to maintain control of Sicily, took a handful of his army across the sea to Africa, to destroy this rebellion and to reinstate General Solomon in Carthage. Belisarius with his “usual success, chased the rebels, freed the province, and reinstated Solomon”<sup>126</sup> and then sailed back to Sicily when things in Africa were back to normal according to Jordanes. Jordanes is the only source outside Procopius that states that Belisarius interrupts his campaign in Italy to go to North Africa and defeat a revolt. The others talk about Stotzas' revolt but Belisarius is not mentioned in helping to try and defeat the usurpers in North Africa.

Once Belisarius is back in Sicily, Theodahad sends his son-in-law Evermund to guard “the strait which lies between Campania and Sicily and sweeps from the bend of the Tyrrhenian Sea into the vast tide of the Adriatic.”<sup>127</sup> His camp was set up near the town of Rhegium. Before any fighting took place between the two, Evermund along with some of his closest companions changed allegiances to Belisarius according to Jordanes and Marcellinus *Comes*. Jordanes gives

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<sup>125</sup> Vict. Tonn. 129 a. 542; Jord. *Rom.* 369.

<sup>126</sup> Jord. *Rom.* 370. *solita felicitate, rebelles fugat, provinciam liberat Solomonemque rursus Chartagine conlocans Siciliam redit.*

<sup>127</sup> Jord. *Get.* 308. *quod inter Campaniam Siciliamque interiacet et de Tyrreni maris sinu vastissimum Adriaticus aestus evolvitur, custodiendum direxit.* trans. C.C Mierow, *The Gothic History of Jordanes.*

two reasons for this: the first is that he saw "his side as weaker."<sup>128</sup> The second reason is that Evermund was informed of Belisarius' success and chose to "surrender to the side of the victor on his own initiative."<sup>129</sup>

This is the part of the narrative where the sources start to differ from one another in meaningful ways. In the *Romana*, Jordanes states that after Evermund changed sides, Belisarius prepared his army, crossed the strait and besieged the city of Naples. After a few days of besieging Naples, Belisarius was able to enter the city through an aqueduct and killed both the Goths who were there and the Romano-Italians who were revolting and plundered the city completely.<sup>130</sup> Theodahad, after hearing about the capture of Naples by Belisarius, sent Vitigis as one commander amongst many against Belisarius. When Vitigis entered Campania, the army proclaimed him king saying "May that man [Theodahad] be removed from amongst us who seeks to have his crimes excused by the blood and death of the Goths"<sup>131</sup> because they harbored suspicions against Theodahad. Once they named him king, which he always desired, on his way back to Ravenna he sent some of his allies ahead to kill Theodahad.<sup>132</sup>

The *Getica's* sequence of events is quite different. After Evermund deserted the Goths for Belisarius, the Goths distrusted Theodahad and wanted him expelled from their kingdom. They appointed Vitigis as their leader, and since he was already in Campania, he entered Rome and sent on to Ravenna the men most faithful to him to demand the death of Theodahad. While this was happening, the Romans were crossing the strait, marched towards Campania and captured

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<sup>128</sup> Jord. *Get.* 309. *Nec mora deterioratam causam cernens suorum ad partes.*

<sup>129</sup> Jord. *Rom.* 370. *ultra se ad partes dedit victoris hortaturque.*

<sup>130</sup> Jord. *Rom.* 370; *Lib. Pont.* 60.3; Marcell. *com. addit.* 536.1.

<sup>131</sup> Jord. *Rom.* 372. *de medio, qui cum sanguine Gothorum et interitu sua cupit scelera excusari.*

<sup>132</sup> Jord. *Rom.* 370-372.

Naples.<sup>133</sup> Marcellinus *Comes* has a different sequence and additional information as to how Vitigis became king. After Evermund allied himself with Belisarius, Belisarius and his army crossed to Campania and laid waste to Naples. Vitigis was already stationed in the Barbarian Plains when the Gothic army proclaimed him king. King Vitigis then arrived in Rome and while living there he gained control of Ravenna, which was the seat of power in Ostrogothic Italy. He then marched on Ravenna, but before he got there, he killed Theodahad in a place called Quintus beside the river Santurnus. He advanced through and plundered Tuscany himself, taking the wealth that Theodahad had gathered in *Insula* and *Urbs Vetus*.<sup>134</sup> Moorhead in his book *Justinian*, seems to prefer the narrative outlined in Marcellinus *Comes* because it resembles closely the narrative that Procopius gives in his work.

Now that Vitigis was king, he wanted to strengthen his rule. The best way to do that was to marry into the family of a strong ruler. In this case he would need to marry into the family of King Theoderic. Vitigis was already married so he decided to repudiate his wife and then he married Matasuntha out of force more than love, who was the daughter of Amalasantha, and therefore the grand-daughter of Theoderic<sup>135</sup> according to Marcellinus *Comes* and Jordanes. While Vitigis and the Goths at Ravenna were celebrating this marriage, Belisarius was capturing more and more territory, including Rome.

In the *Getica, Romana* and the continuation of the chronicle of Marcellinus, Belisarius captured Rome without a battle. He was welcomed by the people because they were once Roman and by the senate, which had virtually buried its name together with its strength according to Jordanes. Once Rome was captured, Belisarius easily took over the defences of the surrounding

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<sup>133</sup> Jord. *Get.* 309-311.

<sup>134</sup> Marcell. *com. addit.* 535. 1-6.

<sup>135</sup> Jord. *Get.* 311; Jord. *Rom.* 373; *Lib. Pont.* 60.2.; Marcell. *com. addit.* 535. 7.

towns and cities, including Perusia. Once these towns and cities were repaired to be adequately defended, Belisarius left troops behind in each town to repel any attacks by the Goths but used Rome as his home base. He fixed up the fortification walls of Rome and prepared in case Vitigis decided to besiege the city.<sup>136</sup>

Jordanes goes on to say that at Perusia, Belisarius and the Roman army participated in their first battle since Vitigis had become king. Based on the translations by van Nuffelen and Mierow it seems that Jordanes may even mean that it was the first battle of the entire invasion of Italy. When Belisarius came to Sicily, in the *Getica* Sinderith was besieging Syracuse and decided to surrender because it was not working. Evermund surrendered because he saw that his side was weaker but in his narrative he gives no indication the surrender was because they were losing a battle. When the Romans captured Naples, Jordanes phrases it in such a way that it makes it sound like more of a slaughter than an actual battle.<sup>137</sup> Lastly, Belisarius entered Rome because he was welcomed by the people that was once Roman and by the senate<sup>138</sup> which also indicates that there was no battle. Nevertheless, Vitigis had sent a Gothic force under Hunila to attack and besiege Perusia because it was only being guarded by Count Magnus and a small force. Hunila was unable to penetrate the walls and therefore resorted to besieging the town. The siege amounted to nothing because the siege lasted long enough for the Roman army to come upon Hunila and his army and drive them away and utterly exterminated them.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> Jord. *Get.* 311; Jord. *Rom.* 373; Marcell. com. *addit.* 535. 8; cf. Proc. *BG.* 1.14.14.

<sup>137</sup> Jord. *Rom.* 370 *et tam Gothis qui aderant quam Romanis rebellantibus interfectis urbem pleuissime spoliavit.*

<sup>138</sup> Jord. *Rom.* 373.

<sup>139</sup> Jord. *Get.* 312 *superveniente Romano exercitu ipsi evulsi et omnino extincti sunt*"; Jord. *Rom.* 374. "*Hunnula ductante Perusinum ad oppidum superat et plus quam septem milibus trucidatis reliquos Ravennam usque proturbat.*

Outraged that Belisarius was defeating Gothic armies, Vitigis raged like a lion according to Jordanes and assembled all the Goths. He took his army and marched on Rome in February 537, determined to catch Belisarius and the Roman army in Rome instead of Belisarius fleeing. Vitigis' army camped by the Milvian Bridge and started to besiege and build walls around the Roman defences. Vitigis did not have enough men to surround the entirety of Rome and had to settle for surrounding only about half. The siege by Vitigis was very troubling for Belisarius. Not only did he have to deal with several instances of Vitigis attempting to breach Rome's walls, (he destroyed the machines and towers each time with fire), but he also had to deal with alleged treachery inside the city.<sup>140</sup>

The new pope, Silverius was a Roman born in Campania, and, as the result of bribes of Theodahad to the church, ordained pope after Agapitus' death in June 536. He was consecrated on 8 June 536. Silverius was the son of an earlier pontiff, pope Hormisdas, who had a cordial relationship with Theoderic; Theodahad was hoping he could have a similar relationship with Silverius. However, this did not happen because Theodahad ignored papal electoral procedure and used fear to have Silverius elected as Pope, and because Silverius was staunchly pro-Goth, he supported Vitigis after Theodahad did nothing to help Naples.<sup>141</sup>

Before Belisarius created this possibly false narrative of treason against Pope Silverius, he was convinced by Silverius to repopulate Naples after Belisarius and his army decimated the population when they captured the city. According to Landolfus Sagax Belisarius resettled

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<sup>140</sup> Siege of Rome: Jord. *Get.* 312; Jord. *Rom.* 374; Marcell. com. *addit.* 536.1.

<sup>141</sup> Silverius' background: *Lib. Pont.* 60.1; Silverius becoming Pope: *Lib. Pont.* 60.1. Silverius being pro-Goth: Marcell. com. *addit.* 536.1.; J. Richards, *op. cit.* (n.123) p. 128.

people from Cumae, Puteoli and Troccla as well as other villages around the city of Naples.<sup>142</sup>

After this, Belisarius charged the Pope with writing treasonable letters to the Goths, promising to admit them into Rome and exiled him to Patara in Lycia. However, John Moorhead points out that Silverius was one of the main Romans who urged Belisarius to come to Rome and so these accusations against him may be fabricated.<sup>143</sup>

Belisarius organized the ordaining of the deacon Vigilius as pope after Silverius was removed according to Marcellinus *Comes*. Vigilius, before being ordained as pope in Rome, had promised Empress Theodora that if he were to be made pope he would do away with Chalcedon, thus giving her a pro-Roman who recognizes Monophysitism and Silverius would not reinstate the bishop of Constantinople Anthimos who was renounced by Agapitus according to *Book of Pontiffs*. Also the *Book of Pontiffs* implicates Antonia, Belisarius' wife as being involved in the overthrow and exile of Silverius.<sup>144</sup> However, Silverius was allowed to return to Italy by Justinian to be properly tried but when he returned, Belisarius handed Silverius over to Vigilius, who had him live on the island of Palmaria, where he starved to death.<sup>145</sup> Also according to Marcellinus *Comes* and the *Book of Pontiffs*, Belisarius was dealing with hunger and food shortages because of the siege. The *Book of Pontiffs* says that the hunger was so bad that that even water would have had to be paid for had not springs provided relief.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> G. Del Mastro, "Belisarius' repopulation of Neapolis: Troccla in Landolfus Sagax' Roman History" *Apolline Project Vol. 1: Studies on Vesuvius' North Slope and the Bay of Naples*, ed. G.F. De Simone, R. T. Macfarlane (Provo, 2009) p. 254; Landolfus Sagax, *Rom. Hist.* 18.

<sup>143</sup> J. Moorhead, *op. cit.* (n.58) p. 81. cf. Proc. *BG.* 1.14.4.

<sup>144</sup> *Lib. Pont.* 60.6.

<sup>145</sup> Appointment of Deacon Vigilius: Marcell. com. *addit.* 536.1.; Reasons for appointment of Vigilius: *Lib. Pont.* 60.6, 61.3; J. Moorhead, *op. cit.* (n.58) p. 82; J. Richards, *op. cit.* (n.123) p. 130; Silverius returns to die: J. Richards, *op. cit.* (n.123) p. 131. *Lib. Pont.* 60.6-9, has this event happen after the Goths have retreated to Ravenna.

<sup>146</sup> *Lib. Pont.* 60.4.

This event involving Silverius and Vigilius in Rome and the hunger and food shortage is relevant because it shows that Belisarius not only had to defeat the Goths and Vitigis in battles. He also had to deal with treachery along the way from people who liked being quasi-independent and would commit treason to keep the status quo. It also shows that in North Africa it was relatively easy for Belisarius and his troops to capture it from the Vandals but with the Goths and Italy it was more difficult.

While Procopius does mention that Silverius was removed from the see and replaced by Vigilius, because of suspicion to allow the Goths into Rome in his *Wars* he does not mention any reasoning that was presented above. In his *Secret History*, he agrees with the *Book of Pontiffs*, that Belisarius' wife had a hand in getting rid of Silverius, but it was to please Theodora. He also states that he would give a full account of this event in a later book, but he never does. This is probably in reference to his unwritten *Ecclesiastical History*. This does seem to follow his prerogative in leaving God and religion out of his narrative in the *Wars* but to not give a full explanation in his *Secret History* where he accuses Theodora of other such misdeeds is odd.<sup>147</sup>

Unbeknownst to Vitigis and the Gothic army as Marcellinus reports, Belisarius had sent letters to Emperor Justinian asking for reinforcements. Justinian did send an army under the *magister militum* Martin and Valerian to help, but it did not put pressure on Vitigis to end the siege according to Marcellinus *Comes*. Almost at the end of the siege, while Vitigis was still lingering, Emperor Justinian had sent another army under the *magister militum* John along with other leaders like Batzas, Conon, Paul and Rema, pitched camp at Portus Romanus. This influx of soldiers scared Vitigis because he knew that with the influx of soldiers, the Romans now

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<sup>147</sup> Proc. *Anecd.* 1.14; Proc. *BG.* 1.25.13; Unwritten *Ecclesiastical History*: A. Kaldellis, "Footnote 13" *Procopius: The Secret History with related texts*, (Indianapolis, 2010) p. 6.

outnumbered them. In March 538, Vitigis proposed a three-month truce with Belisarius and sent his ambassadors to the emperor.<sup>148</sup>

A truce with Vitigis was recognized by both sides and during those three months Belisarius killed the Patrician Constantine, who was an opponent of his, and secured a supply line of corn to Rome. Although Vitigis recognized the truce, he continued to besiege Rome according to the continuation of Marcellinus. Belisarius and Vitigis may have recognized the three-month truce, but on the orders of Belisarius, John did not and continued to capture cities and towns. He first captured the Samnite region and the town of Aternum where he defeated Tremo the Gothic general. Then at the same time he captured Ortona, pillaged Picenum and occupied Ariminum. When Vitigis learned that John had taken over Ariminum he left the siege on Rome and marched towards Ariminum. Vitigis crossed the Apennines, over the rampart of Clodia and Tuscia Annonaria, pitched his camp on the Rubicon River and besieged Ariminum.<sup>149</sup> This is all reported in Marcellinus' chronicle who is well informed of the course of the campaign.

While Vitigis was besieging Ariminum, Justinian was upset that it was taking Belisarius so long to capture Italy, so he sent the general Narses to help speed up the process. Narses came from Constantinople with a fresh army and when Belisarius came up from Rome to help John at Ariminum, Vitigis decided to flee to Ravenna according to Marcellinus and Jordanes. After Ariminum and John were saved from the Gothic siege, divisions between the soldiers and the commanders Narses and Belisarius arose. Narses did not want to recognize Belisarius as supreme

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<sup>148</sup> Belisarius asking for help: Marcell. com. *addit.* 536.2, PLRE III, Belisarius I, p. 199; Second army under John and 3-month truce: Marcell. com. *addit.* 537.1; PLRE III, Belisarius I, pp. 201-202.

<sup>149</sup> Belisarius during 3-month truce: Marcell. com. *addit.* 537.2. John during 3-month truce: Marcell. Com. *addit.* 537.3; Vitigis during the 3-month truce: Marcell. com. *addit.* 537.1, 537.4.

commander and both claimed that the other was not working for the good of the state but for themselves. Narses was recalled to Constantinople.

Belisarius then had to deal with an incursion into Italy by King Theudebert of the Franks according to the continuation of Marcellinus *Comes*. According to Marcellinus, Theudebert captured Liguria, Aemilia and Genoa along the shore of the Tyrrhenian sea. Luckily for Belisarius, Theudebert's army was disease-stricken and therefore made an agreement and returned to Gaul according to the continuation of Marcellinus. In the *Romana*, Jordanes reports that Theudebert's army left Italy not because of disease in his army but because Belisarius did not wish to be tied down elsewhere and conceded peace with them even though he had triumphed over Theudebert's army.<sup>150</sup> Belisarius besieged Ravenna, and Vitigis surrendered to Belisarius and was taken to Constantinople along with all the wealth he had collected. Italy finally had peace and was restored to the Roman Empire. However, this peace did not last long as Justinian did not leave any one general in charge after he demanded Belisarius come back to Constantinople to serve in the war against the Persians. This emboldened the Goths that were not conquered.<sup>151</sup>

The next part of the war against the Goths is found in the *Romana*, the chronicle of Marcellinus and the *Book of Pontiffs*. These emboldened Goths were led by Ildibadus and fought the patrician Bessas at Placentia, and Justinian sent Constantine from Dalmatia to Rome to lead the army according to the continuation of Marcellinus *Comes*. Marcellinus does not state whether Bessas was successful against Ildibadus, but Jordanes states that Justinian sent several leaders

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<sup>150</sup> Jord. *Rom.* 375.

<sup>151</sup> Narses arrives/Vitigis retreats to Ravenna: Marcell. com. *addit.* 537.5; Narses returns to Constantinople: Marcell. com. *addit.* 538.1 Theudebert incursion and retreat: Marcell. com. *addit.* 538.4; Vitigis surrenders: Jord. *Get.* 313; Jord. *Rom.* 375; Marcell. com. *addit.* 538.3.

against Ildebadus and it was only after a year had passed that he was killed and replaced by Erarichus. These two leaders never crossed the Po river into Italy according to Jordanes and Marcellinus. It was only when Erarichus was killed and his successor Baduila or Totila gained the throne that these Goths moved south into Italy.

Totila immediately conquered Faventium, Caesena and Urbinum, Mons Feretris, Pertusa and Mucelli.<sup>152</sup> Eventually Belisarius was sent back to Italy to stop Totila from capturing more of Italy and seeing as there was no one in Ravenna to help him, he decided to set up camp at the port of Rome. Meanwhile, Totila was conquering more territory. He had made his way down to Rome which according to the continuation of Marcellinus, he entered through treachery by the Isaurians and ravaged by knocking down the walls setting houses on fire, taking the Romans' possessions and sent all the Romans as prisoners into Campania. Marcellinus notes that the destruction of Rome was so devastating that for forty days no man or beast stayed there.<sup>153</sup>

There is a discrepancy here between the *Romana* and the continuation of Marcellinus. Jordanes states that Totila conquered Rome before he moved to Campania. However, based on Marcellinus' description above about the destruction of Rome, Totila had already conquered Campania as he was willing to send the Roman prisoners to Campania. He would not send prisoners to a region that he had not controlled.<sup>154</sup> The reason Totila destroyed the city of Rome was that he did not have enough manpower to hold it even with handing over the Venetian provinces to Theudebert to free up more Goths. By the time, Belisarius got to Rome, Totila had conquered almost all of Italy except Ravenna and 4 cities,<sup>155</sup> but despite his successes Totila

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<sup>152</sup> Ildibadus: Jord. *Rom.* 378; Marcell. com. *addit.* 539.5; Erarichus: Jord. *Rom.* 378; Marcell. Com. *addit.* 540.2; Totila's Italy gains: Jord. *Rom.* 379. Marcell. com. *addit.* 541.2-3, 542.1.

<sup>153</sup> Marcell. com. *addit.* 547.5.

<sup>154</sup> Jord. *Rom.* 381; Marcell. com. *addit.* 547.5.

<sup>155</sup> Jord. *Rom.* 379; Marcell. com. *addit.* 547.5.

knew that his continued success depended on Justinian being preoccupied with the Persians. If the Romans ever got the upper hand, Justinian could reinforce the troops swinging the military balance back in his favour so Totila decided to negotiate for peace with Justinian. The fall of Rome was used by Totila to bring Justinian to the negotiating table.<sup>156</sup>

Belisarius finally got to Rome and, finding it desolate and barren, he started to rebuild the city. Totila heard of this and hurried back to Rome to attack before Belisarius could rebuild its walls according to the *Romana*.<sup>157</sup> Belisarius was recalled to Constantinople because the Empress Theodora died and Totila recaptured Rome again by the treachery of the Isaurian contingent and then sent troops to Sicily according to Jordanes in the *Romana*.<sup>158</sup> After hearing this Justinian sent his cousin Germanus but he died in Salona. Justinian then sent Narses with Lombard help. In 552 they finally defeated Totila. Teia, Totila's relative succeeded him but died at the Battle of Mons Lactarius.<sup>159</sup> Italy was so devastated by war and the war was so lengthy that normal life was impossible. This makes it impossible for historians and archaeologists of Italy to say with any certainty what archaeological or epigraphical evidence we have from Justinian's conquest of Italy.

### ***2(b): Italy-Archaeological and Epigraphical Evidence***

Material evidence that is linked to the Roman occupation of Italy is hard to uncover. This is probably a result of Justinian and the Romans never having had any peace to build or reconstruct anything significant. Belisarius' initial campaign lasted for 5 years until he ousted

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<sup>156</sup> P. Heather, *op. cit.* (n. 67) p. 261.

<sup>157</sup> Jord. *Rom.* 381; P.Z. *HE.* X.15.a.

<sup>158</sup> Jord. *Rom.* 382.

<sup>159</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> destruction of Rome: Jord. *Rom.* 380; Marcell. com. *addit.* 546.5. Belisarius rebuilds Rome: Jord. *Rom.* 380; Marcell. com. *addit.* 546.5. Death of Augusta Theodora: Jord. *Rom.* 382. 2<sup>nd</sup> destruction of Rome: Jord. *Rom.* 382. Defeat of Totila and Teia: *Lib. Pont.* 61.8; Marcell. com. *addit.* 550.3.

Vitigis from the throne. However, Italy was not completely recaptured, as two territories north of the Po river, Ticinum and Verona, were still under Gothic rule. This was due to several factors including indecisiveness and rivalry among the military leadership, inadequate resources to pay the army, and the fact that a new Persian war started. It took 18 years to fully recapture Italy.<sup>160</sup> A lot of what we know about the Roman material evidence found in Italy was started by Theoderic and completed or repurposed by Justinian. The following paragraphs will show that the reason Roman material evidence is limited is that all the buildings that they needed were already built before they arrived. All they did was change the mosaics or leave them intact when they took over Arian churches and made them into Nicaean churches.

Justinian was known to have a building programme for creating churches in cities and towns. However, in Italy Theoderic had already completed a church-building programme, mainly in Ravenna, the Ostrogothic capital city. There is mention of seven churches being built by Theoderic in literary sources. Amalasantha even asked Justinian for building materials from Constantinople for her to build a church. Now the churches that Theoderic built were not for Orthodox worship, but for Arian worship. The first church built is today known as Santo Spirito. Only the mosaics in the dome remain intact and everything else was rebuilt. The mosaics show the baptism of Christ, where Christ stands in the Jordan river flanked by John the Baptist with a dove of the Holy Spirit above Jesus' head. Around that scene there are depictions of the twelve apostles with halos around their heads. There is nothing in this description of the mosaic that

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<sup>160</sup> P. Heather, *The Goths* (Oxford, 1996) pp. 267-268; G. Heydemann, "The Ostrogothic Kingdom: Ideologies and Transitions" *A companion to Ostrogothic Italy* ed. J.J. Arnold, et al., (Leiden, 2016), pp. 37-38; H. Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, (Berkeley, 1988) p. 352.

suggests anything that is unique to the Arian form of Christianity, which is probably why it was allowed to remain intact when the church came under Orthodox control.<sup>161</sup>

Some mosaics were not so lucky when Italy or more specifically Ravenna came under Roman control. A mosaic on the floor at Theoderic's palace depicted hunting and mythological scenes as well as views of the circus and charioteers. These scenes must not have been suitable for the Roman governor because they were replaced, along with other mosaics from other buildings by simple geometric designs. In the basilica Sant'Apollinare Nuovo, several mosaics were added to cover up older mosaics. Several figures were obliterated except for their right arms that extended over columns, probably left on purpose to remind viewers of the *damnatio memoriae* of images of Theoderic and his court. On the south wall they added a procession of male saints heading toward an enthroned Christ with four angels as bodyguards.

On the west wall there was a mosaic of a middle-aged man from the waist up and elaborately dressed. This mosaic is supposed to make one believe that it is the Emperor Justinian. Excavation of the mortar revealed that the face of this man was set during the period of Theoderic and the crown and fibula were set during the Roman period. Scholars speculate that this was originally a depiction of Theoderic that was turned into one of Justinian but there is no basis to suppose that it represented Theoderic as opposed to another man. Above the head the name Justinian is spelt out, but that is a 19<sup>th</sup> century addition. Lastly in the Church of San Vitale, in Ravenna, Justinian and Theodora are depicted in mosaics.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Amalasantha asks for building materials: Cass. *Var.* 10.8; Description of the Mosaic: M.J. Johnson, "Art and Architecture" *A companion to Ostrogothic Italy* ed. J.J. Arnold, et al. (Leiden, 2016), p. 364; Remained intact: D.M. Deliyannis, *Ravenna in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, 2010), p. 125.

<sup>162</sup>Theoderic's Palace floor: M.J. Johnson, *art. cit.* (n.161), p. 368; Right arms left: A. Urbano, "Donation, Dedication, and Damnatio Memoriae: The Catholic Reconciliation of Ravenna and the Church of Sant'Apollinare Nuovo," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 13 (2005), p. 96; Justinian depiction: G. Bernardi, "Il ritratto musivo di

**2(c): Italy—Legal Sources**

Italy was not captured in about a year as North Africa was from the Vandals. Italy was not fully captured by Belisarius after the defeat of Vitigis. It was only captured after Narses defeated Totila and Teia in the 550s. Since not all Gothic territory was captured, it allowed Totila to come in and recapture most of Italy and Rome from the Romans. Justinian appointed his cousin Germanus as commander-in-chief in Italy according to Procopius. This could be Justinian reaching out to the Gothic landowners in Italy, showing that he was willing to make a compromise in combining Roman and Gothic traditions since Germanus was now married to Matasuentha the granddaughter of Theoderic. We can never know because Germanus died on the way to Italy and Narses replaced him. Eventually, Totila and his successor Teia were killed and the forces submitted to the emperor's authority.<sup>163</sup>

The end of the war was marked by the Pragmatic Sanction in 554. It was issued via the Praetorian Prefect of Italy to Pope Vigilius and the Senate by Justinian. Not only does it mark the end of the war and pacification of Italy, but it also puts an end to the Ostrogothic kingdom. However, even though this sanction states it puts an end to these things mentioned above, hostilities continued between Gothic and eastern Roman forces until Verona was captured in 562.<sup>164</sup> It first and foremost provides an imperialistic view of the Ostrogothic government. All the reigns of Theoderic, Athalaric, Amalasantha and even Theodahad were legal and allowed to

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Sant'Apollinare Nuovo: Teoderico o Giustiniano" *Rex Theodericvs. Il medaglione d'oro di Morro d'Alba*" ed. C. Barsanti et al. (Rome, 2008), p. 142.

<sup>163</sup> G. Heydemann, *art. cit.* (n.160) pp. 37-40.

<sup>164</sup> *Constitutio Pragmatica* VII; Malal. XVIII.140; J.J. Arnold et al. "Introduction" *A Companion to Ostrogothic Italy* (Leiden, 2016) p. 3; D. Mirsanu, *art. cit.* (n.63) pp. 481-482.

have the title of *rex*. However, Totila and Teia were not recognized as *rex* but instead were called most abominable tyrant.<sup>165</sup>

The Pragmatic Sanction, while putting an end to the Ostrogothic Kingdom and outlining which Ostrogothic rulers were legitimate, was meant to hurt the Arian Church in Italy. While the sanction targets the Arian church, its restrictions are not as harsh as *Novella 37* in North Africa. Catholic buildings, especially churches that were taken by the Ostrogothic kings, were to be returned. The nuns previously driven out were allowed to come back to their monasteries and allowed for the Catholic hierarchs a significant role in the administration of the provinces.<sup>166</sup>

The sanction also addresses the economic and social instabilities caused by war. These economic and social instabilities were supposed to be remedied by restoring slaves and estates to their aristocratic and institutional masters, seeking to revive and regulate the collection of taxes and attempting to ensure the writ of imperial law.<sup>167</sup> Theoderic's reign is seen by some to be a golden age in terms of society and the economy, as he maintained peaceful relations with Constantinople and a harmony among his own people and the native population of Italy while also keeping them wealthy. Theoderic's effect on Italy's prosperity is up for debate but whatever prosperity it did have was destroyed by the Gothic War.<sup>168</sup>

The devastation caused long-distance trade to dwindle, led to severe fiscal oppression, and a shortage of manpower that is shown in the weakness of the army and the low prices the land commanded according to the Ravenna Papyri. This was then compounded by floods,

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<sup>165</sup> *Constitutio Pragmatica* VII. 1-2; D. Mirsanu, *art. cit.* (n.63) p. 481.

<sup>166</sup> *Constitutio Pragmatica* VII. 1-12; D. Mirsanu, *art. cit.* (n.63) p. 482

<sup>167</sup> *Constitutio Pragmatica* VII.3-4; D. Mirsanu, *art. cit.* (n.63) p. 482

<sup>168</sup> T.S. Brown, *Gentleman and Officers: Imperial Administration and Aristocratic Power in Byzantine Italy A.D. 554-800*, (Rome, 1984) pp. 4-5.

plague, and famine.<sup>169</sup> However, it is hard to assess the success of the Pragmatic Sanction and how it wanted to fix what the Gothic War destroyed because there are conflicting statements in sources but archaeological evidence shows that this sanction was unsuccessful and there was more economic decline. The regulation of taxes was burdensome as the people were being overtaxed. This seems to increase as years go by; the imperial authority needs to compensate for the reduced income from areas that were conquered by the Lombards. If the Pragmatic Sanction was all we had it would seem that Italy under new rulers was thriving economically and socially but with other data, we can see that this is not the case.<sup>170</sup>

Not only was the Pragmatic Sanction supposed to reverse the economic and social decline of Italy brought on by the war, but it was also supposed to return the government in Italy back to civilian rule. However, the Pragmatic Sanction only has one clause that states that civilian cases should be tried by civilian judges.<sup>171</sup> Instead we see the combination of military functions and civil functions in the hands of the same individual. This is nothing new as they continually overlapped but this time it worked against Justinian's legislative power. In Italy, Bishops and local magnates were allowed to elect the provincial governor, which gave the impression that Justinian was willing to curb imperial administration power to placate citizens' grievances but the army was left unchecked because of its necessity for defence.<sup>172</sup>

Justinian and his Pragmatic Sanction did nothing to help reverse the economic decline in Italy. In fact one could argue that it hindered its growth for a long time. Also, the actions within Italy and the issuing of the Pragmatic Sanction made Italy different from every other province.

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<sup>169</sup> *P. Ital.*; T.S. Brown, *op. cit.* (n.168) pp. 4-6; E. Stein, *Histoire du Bas-Empire: De la Disparition de l'Empire d'Occident à la mort de Justinien (476-565)*, tome 2(Paris, 1949) p. 616.

<sup>170</sup> T.S. Brown, *op. cit.* (n.168) pp. 6-7

<sup>171</sup> *Constitutio Pragmatica*, VII.23.

<sup>172</sup> T.S. Brown, *op. cit.* (n.168) pp. 8-10.

Italy no longer had a division between military and administrative functions. The military took priority over the civilian level and therefore Justinian promoted people to carry out both roles. It is no wonder that Italy was easily captured by the Lombards later because Italy could not keep its administrative and military arms separate.<sup>173</sup>

### 3. Spain

#### *3(a): Spain-Literary Sources*

Literary sources for Roman interaction with the Visigoths in Spain and the geographical extent of their occupation in Spain are very limited. For Justinian's campaign in Spain, Isidore is our main source despite mentioning the campaign in just one entry in his work *The History of the Goths*. However, even though Isidore can be considered our main source for this event, there is an entry in Jordanes that complicates Isidore's chronology about the Roman occupation. Our main source for the extent of the Roman province in Spain is John of Biclar's account of Gothic rulers going to war against Roman troops.

The campaign is believed by most scholars to have happened in 552, and after the campaigns in North Africa and Italy. Even though the campaign started around 552, the interactions between the Visigoths and the Romans started years earlier, before the Romans were asked to help in a dynastic struggle. This happened during the invasion of North Africa. The Romans had to expel a Visigothic garrison from Ceuta. We do not know when the garrison arrived there, but it had probably been sent by King Theudis in 533, not in order to divert the Roman away from taking over North Africa but instead to safeguard Spain from invasion by the new rulers of North Africa. King Theudis sent another garrison in 547 to recapture Ceuta from

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<sup>173</sup> T.S. Brown, *op. cit.* (n.168) pp.4-10.

the Romans but they could not regain control.<sup>174</sup> This shows that Visigothic rulers were afraid that Justinian might attack Spain and that they were well aware what was going on in the world around them.

When King Theudis died, the throne went to Theudisclus because he commanded the army that defeated a Frankish raid into the province of Tarraconensis, which was the first major victory in several wars with the Franks after 507. However, after a year he was killed at a party in Seville because according to Isidore he publicly defiled the marriages of a great many magnates and because of this decided to kill many of them.<sup>175</sup> Next on the throne was Agila. His reign marks a transition in Visigothic policy. Instead of the old conception in which the Visigoths ruled over 'the Gauls' he decided to just concentrate on Spain. He moved his capital to Mérida on the Guadiana instead of Narbonne, Toulouse or Barcelona, where kings resided and kept the provinces under only nominal rule. By moving his capital, he set about subduing the provincials of the old province of Baetica.<sup>176</sup>

In 549, Agila experienced his first real test as king when the citizens of Cordoba revolted. Unfortunately the reasons why the citizens of Cordoba revolted is unknown. It could be that they were revolting against a Visigothic government seeing as Agila was the first ruler whose lineage could only be traced to Visigothic people since Alaric II. A second explanation is that Agila was an Arian and persecuted Catholics, who were predominant in the city of Cordoba. Isidore seems to be inclined toward a religious explanation for the uprising because "this profane man polluted

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<sup>174</sup> First Ceuta garrison in North Africa in 533 and its reason: Isid. *Hist. Goth.* 42; R. Collins, *Early Medieval Spain: Unity in Diversity 400-1000*, (New York, 1995) p. 37; E.A. Thompson, *The Goths in Spain*, (Oxford, 1969) pp. 15-16. Second Ceuta garrison in 547: R. Collins, *op. cit.* p. 37; M. Deanesley, *op. cit.* (n.58) p. 98; Isid. *Hist. Goth.* 42; E.A. Thompson, *op. cit.* pp. 15, 325.

<sup>175</sup> Isid. *Hist. Goth.* 44.

<sup>176</sup> Theudisclus and death: Isid. *Hist. Goth.* 44; policy of Agila: M. Deanesley, *op. cit.* (n.58), p. 98.

the sacred site of Acisclus' tomb with the remains of his enemies and their horses. He thus deserved the punishments unleashed by the saints."<sup>177</sup> The third reason is one that would only be feasible if the chronology of the events were different from what Isidore lays out. The reason would be the Roman presence.

Whether inside or outside Cordoba, the Romans tried to convince the people of Cordoba to become a part of Roman territory or agree to an alliance with the Roman Empire. When Cordoba was presented with this opportunity they revolted. While Isidore's timeline is debated, there is no indication that the Romans were present in Spain during the revolt in Cordoba. The fourth and final reason, which is put forth by Roger Collins along with the other possible reasons, is that there was a local regime established that wanted to be independent of Visigothic or even Roman rule. This theory has some precedent with the usurpers Burdunellus in 496 and Peter in 506 in Spain, so it is a possibility, but we probably will never really know.<sup>178</sup> Whatever the reason, Agila was defeated, lost his son and had to retreat to Mérida. It most certainly helped Justinian in ruining the strength of the Visigoths, allowing the emperor to send the little armed force he could spare.

After the revolt in Cordoba, according to Isidore of Seville, a usurper arose a period of time later when Agila was at his weakest. This usurper named Athanagild made his base in Seville and tried to dethrone Agila. It is possible that Athanagild's usurpation could have been coordinated with the revolt at Cordoba, which might have still been going on at the time. Isidore never mentions it again and Agila did not put an end to the revolt, but instead was defeated. While we cannot rule out that Athanagild's usurpation occurred in collusion with the revolt in

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<sup>177</sup> Isid. *Hist. Goth.*, 45.

<sup>178</sup> Reason one: E.A. Thompson, *op. cit.* (n.174) p. 16. Reason three: R. Collins, *Visigothic Spain 409-711*, (Oxford, 2004), pp. 48-49; E.A. Thompson, *op. cit.* (n.174) p. 324.

Cordoba, there is no evidence to suggest that this is true; therefore it is easier to conclude that these events are not connected.

Both men's armies were evenly matched with the result that neither one could break through and eliminate the other. Athanagild decided to look beyond Spain for help according to Isidore. He asked the emperor Justinian for an army. However, Justinian's army was not helpful. We know this because many years later Athanagild and Agila were still evenly matched with no one gaining the upper hand according to Isidore. The Visigoths of the armies realized that they were destroying themselves. They decided to assassinate Agila and raise Athanagild to the throne according to Isidore. Since Athanagild was on the throne, and the Roman army had fulfilled its purpose, Athanagild hoped that the Romans would leave Spain, but instead they created a Roman province along the coast. Athanagild fought them in many battles, and even defeated them a few times but the Romans would not be removed from Spain for another three quarters of a century.<sup>179</sup>

This is the chronology of how Justinian came to occupy territory in Spain according to Isidore of Seville. However, his chronology is challenged by a single entry in Jordanes' *Getica*. Jordanes, who was a contemporary of the period in question, states in the *Getica* that an imperial expedition under the patrician Liberius was on its way to assist Agila against Athanagild.<sup>180</sup> Jordanes did not precisely date his writing, but the general consensus is that he wrote in 550 or 551.<sup>181</sup> Firstly, if this date is correct than an appeal for help to Justinian could not have happened after 550. Therefore, it does not give the sequence of events in Isidore sufficient time

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<sup>179</sup> Isid. *Hist. Goth.* 46-47.

<sup>180</sup> Jord. *Get.* 303.

<sup>181</sup> B. Croke, art. cit. (n.8) p. 473; C.C Mierow, *op. cit.* (n. 4) p. 12; PLRE III, Jordanes 1, p. 713; L. Van Hoof. P. Van Nuffelen, *art. cit.* (n.7) p. 275.

to unfold the way he reports. This would mean that Isidore got the date of his catalyst, the revolt in Cordoba wrong. Secondly, the entry in the *Getica* calls into question the identity of the person whom Justinian sent an army to help. Jordanes says Justinian sent the army to help Agila and Isidore says he sent the army to help Athanagild. We can never know who is correct, but there is enough reason for scholars to at least acknowledge that what Jordanes states could be possible and that Isidore gives the wrong information.

For the evidence we must look back at Justinian's reasoning to send invading forces to both North Africa and Italy. In North Africa, the catalyst for invasion was that Gelimer, a usurper, had won the throne by overthrowing the rightful dynasty. In Italy, Theodahad had usurped the throne from Amalasantha who was part of the rightful dynasty. In both of these instances Justinian interfered against a usurper. Why would he change his approach in this dynastic struggle? It is more plausible that Isidore got it wrong and Justinian sent his troops to help Agila. However, it is also possible that Isidore had gotten it right because Justinian might have supported the civil war not in view of switching leaders but for its own sake, so that the empire could gather more force in the Iberian peninsula and eventually recover Hispania.<sup>182</sup> Lastly, if the dating of the revolt in Cordoba is wrong, then when did the revolt take place? As I have stated before, one theory about why the revolt happened was that there was Roman influence either in the city or near it. For there to be a Roman influence, the Roman province in Spain must have already been established and maybe already a few years earlier, but definitely before 572 when King Leovigild recaptured the city. Also the revolt either means that the city was included in the Roman territory or was an independent state under a third party regime.<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> D. Mirsanu, *art. cit.* (n.63) p. 496; E.A. Thompson, *op. cit.* (n.174) pp.324-326.

<sup>183</sup> R. Collins, *op. cit.* (n.178), pp. 48-49; E.A. Thompson, *op. cit.* (n.174) pp. 323-325.

While an entry in Jordanes puts the start date for the chronology of events before 550, Jason Fossella argues that the date of the invasion should be pushed back to 554 instead of 552. The reasons for the date of the invasion is 552 is based on the date that Jordanes is believed to have written the *Getica* and a line in *Historia* by Isidore of Seville that says Athanagild won the battle of Seville by the virtue of the Roman soldiers. Fossella says there are problems with basing the date on these two sources. With Jordanes there are two problems. The first is that Liberius could not have been the commander. In 553 he was in Constantinople for the Second Council of Constantinople and then died in 554 at his estate in Italy. He was also very old, not very loyal to Justinian and he had lost the command of the army in Italy twice before. It does not disqualify him but it puts his command in doubt. The second and last problem with Jordanes is that if Liberius was not the commander, he only provides a *terminus ante quem non* for the invasion.<sup>184</sup>

Isidore's entry also has two problems. The first is that Isidore records that the Romans arrived after the battle of Seville which means he is either contradicting himself or scholars to disregard his entire ordering of events. The second and last problem is that when translated the word Thompson uses is *miles* meaning soldier to reference Roman troops instead of *militaris*. Both words are related but not identical. Therefore, the line that was translated into by virtue of the [Roman] soldiers it should be translated as 'by [his] soldierly virtue' especially since it was paired with a noun.<sup>185</sup> Given all these problems all we can say about the invasion is that it happened between 552 and 555.

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<sup>184</sup> J. Fossella, "Waiting only for a Pretext: A New Chronology for the Sixth-Century Byzantine Invasion of Spain" *Estudios bizantinos 1* (2013) pp. 32-33.

<sup>185</sup> J. Fossella, *art. cit.* (n.184) pp. 33-34.

Fossella's evidence for the start of the invasion being 554 is based on three pieces of circumstantial evidence. The first is that Procopius does not mention anything about it. His final chapter ends in October of 552 and if his death was in 554 like scholars believe, then if the invasion started in 554, it would explain why he did not write about it. The second concerns troops. In 552 the Romans were fighting against the Persians which lasted until 557, and in Italy they would be finally eliminating the Ostrogoths but in 553 they had to deal with an invasion by the Franks. Therefore, Justinian would have to wait for troops to be free in Italy to send troops to Spain. The third and last piece of evidence is the extent of the Roman territory in Spain. It is debated as to what Justinian was able to conquer in Spain, but it can be agreed that the Romans held the coast between Cartagena and Malaga. If the invasion was in 552 the Romans should have gained more territory especially against a people who were in the midst of a civil war.<sup>186</sup>

Now that we have discussed the chronology and the date of the invasion and the problems with them, we can now try to reconstruct the extent of territory Justinian was able to conquer. As I have said above, two cities that scholars are certain were controlled by the Romans were Cartagena and Malaga. What is also certain is that the Romans also controlled Medina Sedonia or Asidona because king Leovigild recaptured it from them in 572 according to John of Biclaro. Isidore states that the Romans also held the city of Sagontia which is the first town north of Asidonia.<sup>187</sup> If the Romans held Cartagena, Malaga, Sagontia and Asidonia, "we may infer that they had seized the whole of the province of Baetica south of a line drawn from Cartagena to the mouth of the Guadalete."<sup>188</sup> Along with Cartagena, they also controlled Baza or Basti but it is debated whether John of Biclaro means that they controlled a portion of territory around Baza

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<sup>186</sup> J. Fossella, *art. cit.* (n.184) pp. 35-36.

<sup>187</sup> Isid. *Hist. Goth.* 49; Joh. Bicl. 19.

<sup>188</sup> E.A. Thompson, *op. cit.* (n.174) p. 321.

but never the city itself or everything including the city. We know they controlled the coastal cities but how far inland the province went is highly debateable.

The city of Cordoba is almost universally believed to have fallen into the hands of the Romans, which would mean they controlled cities in the triangle of Cartagena-Malaga-Cordoba. However, there is no evidence to show that the Romans ever controlled Cordoba and therefore they may not have controlled the cities in the triangle either. The amount of land occupied in Spain is limited by threats elsewhere to which Justinian had to pay attention. The Gothic war was expensive and destructive, and there were more serious threats in the east, so that Justinian did not want to provide additional resources to conquer more than the south-east coastline of Spain. Whatever Justinian's initial plans for Spain were, we will never really know but the amount of occupied territory in Spain was at least enough to protect the newly reconquered and wealthy North Africa from being invaded from Spain again, like the Vandals did back in 439.

### ***3(b): Spain-Archaeological and Epigraphical Evidence***

Unlike in Italy, we actually have material evidence of Roman occupation in south-east Spain from the sixth century. Even though we have this material, it is not extensive because several of the most informative sites are "either barely excavated or excavated very badly."<sup>189</sup> One such site in the presumed Roman occupation zone is the Alcudia of Elche, the acropolis in the city of Illici. It was heavily excavated because of the famous statue but unfortunately this did not bode well for the site. Although there are numismatic remains from the Justinianic period, there is no stratigraphy ever recorded, and few excavated remains have been published which were rigidly linked to chronology provided by literary sources. Therefore, unfortunately we

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<sup>189</sup> M. Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain and its Cities*, (Baltimore, 2004), p. 277.

cannot be sure to whom the “fortress [At Illici] pertained or how the political vicissitudes of the period affected the lives of the inhabitants.”<sup>190</sup>

This is how most of the sites in the presumed Roman occupation zone have been left for us to deal with. We do have two sites that have added knowledge to our understanding of this period. The first site is a minor Roman *municipium*, its name unknown, but it resides on a site called El Tolmo de Minateda. The site was not known to have any Roman material until heavy rains in 1988 exposed it. While we know in the sixth century the walls were repaired, residential buildings and an industrial section with warehouses and an olive press, the city's main purpose was defensive. Its geographic location no doubt controlled access from the coastal region around Cartagena to both the southern Meseta and upper Andalucia. With the development of the city in the sixth century and it controlling the access around Cartagena, it may show that the city probably fell under the Roman province in Spain. However, according to Kulikowski, unfortunately we cannot make this conclusion with any sort of certainty. The defensible aspect of the city and the increasing of the population in the city can simply be a “reaction to the political instability that came with the Roman conquest and not[indicate] that it was in the Roman province.”<sup>191</sup> We also cannot say that the city was under the rule of a Visigothic king either, since a third party entity controlling the city, however unlikely the scenario is, is also a possibility.

Whatever doubts we have for the site of El Tolmo de Minateda being in the Roman province, there are no doubts with the second site. The second site is Cartagena, which was the biggest city in Roman Spain, but not necessarily the capital. However, given that its location has

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<sup>190</sup> M. Kulikowski, *op. cit.* (n.189) p. 277.

<sup>191</sup> M. Kulikowski, *op. cit.* (n.189) p. 278.

been strategically important into the modern day, and therefore “part of the ancient city is off limits to archeologists because of the present day military establishments.”<sup>192</sup> This city has Roman remains going back before the Augustan era but it seems that it never received an influx of wealth or people until the Roman occupation of the 550s to make Cartagena grow into a grand city. This shows that Cartagena prospered under Justinian's control. A new wall was built near the port of the city, new residential buildings that did not follow the old street plan were built, and a new residential neighborhood of one-room houses were built over the seats or *cavea* of a theatre linked to the Augustan era, and the houses even kept the shape of the *cavea*. Also there is evidence that small bronze casting molds with Greek value marks used for coinage were minted in the city. One thing that differentiated Cartagena from most if not all of the coastal towns that were under Roman influence was that intraregional trade declined dramatically in these places and they experienced a degradation of trading capacity, whereas Cartagena did not. This would explain why Roman imports that arrived “did not travel very far inland.”<sup>193</sup> Therefore based on this material the Roman province in Spain could only have occupied the cities along the coastline no farther than Cartagena.

### ***3(c): Spain—Legal Sources***

Unlike the kingdoms of the Vandals and the Goths, the Visigoths were not completely wiped out by the Romans. The Romans only occupied a small piece of the coast of Spain as Athanagild was too strong for them to gain more ground. The invasion happened late in Justinian's reign as he could not fight on several fronts at once. However, there is evidence that

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<sup>192</sup> A. Ramallo, F. Sebastian, *La Ciudad de Carthago Nova: la documentacion arqueologica* (Salamanca, 1999) pp. 579-580.

<sup>193</sup> P. Reynolds, *Settlement and Pottery in the Vinalopo Valley A.D. 400-700* (Alicante, 1995), p.24

Justinian was worried about the Visigoths and perhaps even wanted to take over their kingdom at the beginning of his western expansion policy.

When Justinian wrote the two constitutions about how North Africa should be divided, places of the *duces*, and how many people are in the administration of Africa, he also put in a clause to gather information on the Visigothic kingdom. The passage reads:

We likewise order that Your Magnitude shall put at the straits opposite Spain at a place called Septem (Ceuta) such number of soldiers as seems proper to you, together with their tribune, a man of prudence and in all things devoted to the empire, who can guard both the crossing itself, and report to the worshipful duke all things that take place in Spain, in Gaul and among the Franks, so that the duke himself may report these things to Your Magnitude. You will also cause such number of swift cutters (*dromones*) to be stationed at this crossing as you may think proper.<sup>194</sup>

This shows two things about Justinian's policy when it comes to Spain. The first is that he feels threatened by the Visigothic kingdom being so close to Northern Africa. He is trying to prevent another incursion by a Germanic tribe into North Africa. Second, it shows that Justinian would never be satisfied with only reconquering North Africa and Italy. He did not want to stop until all or most of the former Roman territories like Spain were under his control. The only undeniable exception would be Gaul, as the Frankish Kingdom was too strong for the Romans to overthrow. He underestimated the Visigoths because if he was looking to control all of Spain, he never achieved it and had to settle for just a coast. This is all that would be needed to allow a buffer between the Visigoths and North Africa.

It also can be argued that the conquest of Spain, while useful as a buffer for the protection of North Africa from the straits of Gibraltar, was a complementary piece to a policy of

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<sup>194</sup> CJ 1.27.2.2.

protecting the newly conquered and economically highly profitable North Africa by controlling the maritime traffic in the Western Mediterranean. When the Vandals conquered the Balearic Islands, it was to “gain a military foothold in the Western Mediterranean which pre-empted any external threat from the south-eastern coasts of Spain.”<sup>195</sup> They also conquered the Pityussae Islands of Ibiza and Formentera and together these islands also could be viewed as providing stepping stones to move troops between Africa and Southern Europe especially Spain if there was no need for the conquest of Italy if the Gothic monarchy had given Italy to Justinian like Procopius states they were in talks to do<sup>196</sup>. Unfortunately, Italy was not handed over to Justinian and so therefore these islands became important to imperially tax trade.<sup>197</sup> Also Sardinia is agriculturally rich, and was conquered to secure maritime traffic in the western Mediterranean and to protect it from an independent ruler using its resources. So with the coast of Spain secured, Justinian has complete dominance over maritime traffic in the area and North Africa is protected from any invading force.

## Conclusion

Our sources besides Procopius for Justinian's invasions into North Africa and Italy give information to scholars with which they can recreate these invasions very broadly. There are hardly any details in these sources for scholars to get an in-depth understanding of what happened during these invasions. This is especially true for the invasion into North Africa and the struggles of the generals in charge. Italy as well - although there is more information from other literary sources – still cannot give scholars a complete detailed picture. Also at times, the

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<sup>195</sup> D. Donaldson, *Studies in the Material, Political and Cultural Impact of the Byzantine Presence in Early Medieval Spain c. 550-711*, (Cambridge, 2010), p. 30.

<sup>196</sup> C. Lillington-Martin, *art. cit.* (n.120) p. 175.

<sup>197</sup> C. Lillington-Martin, *art. cit.* (n.120) p. 176

information from these sources does not flow as smoothly when one reads them let alone when one attempts a continuous narrative by piecing the information together. The invasion of Spain has the least amount of information. This is probably because we only have Isidore that discusses it. This is why the narrative and information for the invasion of Spain is patchy at best.

Luckily, we have a complete detailed narrative of these invasions thanks to Procopius' work. In the next chapter we will discuss what Procopius adds and omits in his work to help us better understand these invasions by Justinian. Hopefully, his work will fill in the gaps, give more details and fix narrative deviations that were produced by the sources used in this chapter. This will be the case for the information of North Africa and Italy. Unfortunately, Procopius does not give any information about the invasion of Spain, therefore the patchy information that was provided above will be unaffected.

## Chapter 3: Narrative of Procopius of Caesarea

### Introduction

This chapter will focus on comparing Procopius' account of the wars with the narrative of the other sources outlined in chapter two. This will be done by presenting what details Procopius adds to our understanding of Justinian's invasions into North Africa and Italy and what he omits. This chapter will also investigate in greater depth why Procopius' narrative never discusses Justinian's invasion of Spain.

One thing that must be established before discussing what Procopius' work adds to and omits from the narrative of Justinian's invasions of North Africa and Italy is that the army that Justinian sends under general Belisarius contains more than just Roman soldiers from all parts of the empire like Armenia. It included the Huns as allies in the invasion. It also has various commanders in charge of different parts of the army, for example when the army left Constantinople the cavalry was commanded by Rufinus and Aigan.<sup>198</sup> This is important to note because all the authors we have discussed so far attribute almost everything to Belisarius or other leaders like Solomon as they are the leader from whom all the other commanders receive their orders or these authors attribute a victory to the Roman army as a whole. Procopius was able to provide specific names because he was an eyewitness to almost everything or at least a lot up until 540. Throughout this chapter while comparing Procopius' narrative to the narrative that was pieced together in chapter two, there will be instances where more specific names and ethnic groups are used to describe events that occurred during the invasions which authors such as Corippus, Jordanes and Marcellinus *Comes* previously attributed more generally to Belisarius.

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<sup>198</sup> Proc. *BV*. 1.11.7.

These authors were not incorrect in their telling of the events; Procopius is simply more precise and detailed in his descriptions.

Also, Spain is an anomaly when it comes to the conquests of Justinian. Procopius, who is considered to be our primary source on Justinian's reign and more specifically for his wars in the former western Roman provinces, never mentions anything about Justinian and his campaign into Spain. Some scholars believe that Procopius did not write anything about Justinian's campaign in Spain because he deemed it not worthy of being mentioned. Since he was following the style of classical writers, there were no heroic deeds of Romans to be mentioned and therefore it never made the cut. Others, like E.A. Thompson, believe that if the date for Procopius' *Wars* is accurate, which is the consensus among scholars, he and even Jordanes never wrote about the forces in Spain because they just simply stopped writing before Justinian's generals developed their campaign in Spain.<sup>199</sup>

## 1. North Africa

### *1(a) North Africa—Literary Sources*

As stated in the previous chapter Procopius states that Justinian invaded North Africa because Hilderic was his friend and the rightful ruler of the Vandal kingdom and Gelimer was a usurper. When Justinian was listening to arguments for and against the invasion into North Africa, Procopius never mentions African elites that tried to persuade Justinian to invade like Pseudo-Zachariah who states they persuaded Justinian by saying that the Vandals had valuables

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<sup>199</sup> E.A. Thompson, *op. cit.* (n.174) p.7; cf. J. Fossella, "Waiting only for a Pretext: A New Chronology for the Sixth-Century Byzantine Invasion of Spain" *Estudios bizantinos 1* (2013) pp. 32-33. who argues the date should be pushed back to 554.

that were taken away from Rome.<sup>200</sup> Nor does Procopius mention the North African martyr Laetus like Victor of Tonnuna states in persuading Justinian to go on the expedition by the North African by appearing in a dream.<sup>201</sup> Procopius reports that most of Justinian's inner-circle were terrified about the expedition and referred back to the failed attempts of previous emperors and the only person to tell him their fears was John the Cappadocian.<sup>202</sup> Justinian was eventually convinced by a bishop, according to Procopius, who told Justinian:

God had visited him in a dream and told him to go to the emperor and rebuke him because, after undertaking the task of protecting the Christians in Libya from tyrants, he had for no good reason become afraid. And yet, I will myself join with him in waging war and make him the master of Libya.<sup>203</sup>

The other sources do not mention this bishop at all. According to Kaegi, the reason for the discrepancy between Victor of Tonnuna and Procopius was the role of Roman propaganda in both of these works. Victor of Tonnuna was writing his chronicle for the African population so what better way to get the African population to support the invasion than to report that an African martyr (whom the Vandals killed) convinced Justinian to liberate them. On the other hand, Procopius had access to high officials such as Belisarius who would understand that the real pressures were being exerted by the clergy and the reports of an African martyr's visit to Justinian would not make an impression on the Greek population of the East.<sup>204</sup> Also no other sources states that when Justinian decided that he was going to invade North Africa in the summer of 532, he provoked revolts by Pudentius and Goda in Tripolis and Sardinia

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<sup>200</sup> PZ IX.17.b.

<sup>201</sup> Vict. Tonn. 118 a. 534.

<sup>202</sup> J.A.S Evans, *The Age of Justinian: The Circumstances of Imperial Power*, (London, 1996) p. 127. Proc. *BV*. 1.10.1-7.

<sup>203</sup> Proc. *BV*. 1.10.19-20.

<sup>204</sup> W. E. Kaegi, *art. cit.* (n.63) p. 26; D. Mirsanu, *art. cit.* (n.63) pp.486-487.

respectively<sup>205</sup>, because they opposed Gelimer and wanted Justinian to have an easier time in defeating the usurper according to Procopius.

After learning of the two revolts that were taking place Justinian sent out his army under Belisarius to invade North Africa around the spring equinox of 533 according to Procopius. Procopius mentions several places the fleet landed before they land at Caput Vada, as reported also by Corippus. None is as important as their stop in Sicily. When Belisarius landed in Sicily, he was unsure about what he was to expect from the Vandals. According to Procopius, Belisarius sent him to the city of Syracuse under the pretense of picking up provisions, to learn of any ambushes or traps that were set up against him, where it would be best to anchor the fleet in Libya and where would be the most advantageous place to set up his base of operations against the Vandals. In Syracuse, Procopius learned that the Vandal fleet and most of the army was in Sardinia dealing with Goda's revolt and Gelimer was not in Carthage and instead in a city called Hermione, so there was no ambush to fear.<sup>206</sup> Only then do they travel to Caput Vada and then to Carthage as Corippus states.

This stop in Sicily seems to be very important to the narrative of the invasion of North Africa. It shows that Belisarius gathered valuable intelligence that can be viewed as important to defeating the Vandals. This, along with the reasons for the Vandal's decline in political and military prowess, is essential to our understanding of how Justinian, through Belisarius, was able to defeat the Vandals this time, unlike in earlier expeditions. During Belisarius and the army's stop in Sicily, Procopius also gives another reason as to why the Vandals' decline in power on the world stage allowed Justinian to eliminate them altogether. King Hilderic during his reign,

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<sup>205</sup> Proc. *BV*. 1.10.22-34.

<sup>206</sup> Procopius to Syracuse: Proc. *BV*. 1.14.1-6.; Procopius learns about the Vandal Fleet: Proc. *BV*. 1.14.7-15. J.A.S Evans, *op. cit.* (n.202) p. 128.

while shifting his kingdom to be closer to the Romans and making an enemy of his own people, also made enemies of Theoderic and the Goths. According to Procopius Hilderic, after his nephew Hoamer was defeated by Antalas and the Moors in Byzacium in 530, decided to put Amalafrika, the sister of Theoderic, in prison and killed her entire Gothic entourage "because he accused them of subversive designs against the Vandals and Hilderic."<sup>207</sup>

Theoderic never retaliated for this injustice because he was afraid that he could not gather enough troops and build enough ships to campaign in North Africa, but also because Hilderic was such good friends with Justinian that he would have persuaded Emperor Justin to send troops to help Hilderic against Theoderic's army. This allowed Belisarius to land at Sicily and prevented Gelimer from reaching out to Amalasantha and the Goths for help.<sup>208</sup>

This defeat of Hilderic by Antalas also shows that Malalas' account of how Gelimer came to the throne is the outlier in accounts. Malalas reports that Gelimer and Hilderic were victorious against Antalas, then Gelimer joined Antalas to overthrow Hilderic. However, Corippus and Jordanes state that Hilderic was defeated by Antalas. Since Procopius' account corroborates Corippus and Jordanes, and scholars look at Procopius as our main source, it is probably correct that Hilderic was defeated and Malalas' account is probably wrong, as he was not well informed on the West.

Continuing with the narrative of the Vandal war with the help of Procopius, after landing at Caput Vada, Belisarius had finally reached North Africa and set up camp along the coast in the region of Byzacium. Belisarius wasted no time in marching towards Carthage because of the information he received in Sicily. Gelimer, upon hearing of Belisarius' arrival, sends orders to

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<sup>207</sup> Proc. *BV*. 1.9.4.

<sup>208</sup> Proc. *BV*. 1.9.5.

his brother Ammata to kill Hilderic as, Victor of Tonnuna states. He then makes decisions on how to attack and defeat Belisarius. Gelimer's plan for defeating Belisarius was to have his brother Ammata and the army in Carthage attack Belisarius from the front. His nephew Gibamund would attack the left side of Belisarius' army and he and with his troops would attack the rear of the emperor's army to encircle them and make it harder for them to fight and eventually retreat. This plan did not go as Gelimer drew it up.<sup>209</sup>

The armies met at a place called Ad Decimum, as it is known because it is the tenth milestone from Carthage. Gelimer's plan might have worked if the individual armies had met at the same time, according to Procopius. But Ammata got there first and was destroyed by a part of the army commanded by John which Belisarius had sent ahead of the main army. Procopius then adds to our narrative where Gibamund was defeated by Belisarius. Victor of Tonnuna says that Gibamund was defeated by Belisarius but did not describe the battle in which he was defeated. On his way to Decimum he was met by the Massagetai contingent of Belisarius' army and was killed along with most of his troops upon their retreat. Gelimer and his army attacked but were repelled and forced into retreat by the army of Belisarius. After this battle Belisarius did not enter Carthage until his ships were able to dock at Carthage's harbor Mandracium.<sup>210</sup> Belisarius entered Carthage on September 15, 533.<sup>211</sup>

While Belisarius was in Carthage, the army that was sent to Sardinia under the command of Gelimer's brother Tzazo returned to North Africa in November of 533 and rejoined Gelimer and the rest of the army. With the Vandal army at full strength, Gelimer marched to attack

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<sup>209</sup> Proc. *BV*. 1.18.1..

<sup>210</sup> Defeat of Ammata: Proc. *BV*. 1.18.5-11; Defeat of Gibamund: Proc. *BV*. 1.18.12-19; Defeat and Retreat of Gelimer: Proc. *BV*. 1.19.18-33; J.A.S Evans, *op. cit.* (n.202) pp. 129-130.

<sup>211</sup> PLRE III, Belisarius 1, p. 190; J.A.S Evans, *op. cit.* (n.202) p. 130.

Carthage. According to Procopius, Gelimer even tried to convince Belisarius' Hunnic allies to switch sides, but because both sides were courting them they decided to wait out the fighting and join the side that was winning. The armies clashed at Tricamarum (site unknown but probably it commanded the main road in Numidia),<sup>212</sup> and after a skirmish between John and Tzazo, in which Tzazo was killed, the entire Roman army marched on the Vandal camp and defeated the army, but Gelimer escaped.<sup>213</sup>

We know that Gelimer was pursued by Belisarius before he was captured. Victor of Tonnuna does not go into detail as to how it happened whereas Procopius gives us the details of the pursuit and how Gelimer was captured. Belisarius pursued Gelimer to the mountain Papua in Numidia, but he did not climb it because it was winter and he had to settle his affairs in Carthage; so he departed and left soldiers there to guard the mountain. Gelimer could not escape nor could he get supplies. The siege of the mountain of Papua lasted three months according to Procopius. Gelimer was scared that the besiegers would eventually climb the mountain and kill him and all of those that followed him. He agreed that if Belisarius upheld his promise that he would not kill him or any of the Vandals with him, he would surrender and be sent to the emperor. Belisarius accepted, Gelimer surrendered and is brought to Constantinople like Jordanes states. The Vandalic war ended in late March early April of 534.<sup>214</sup>

Procopius' account of how Gelimer surrendered to Belisarius is strikingly similar to Xenophon's account of how King Agesilaus of Sparta attempted to separate Pharnabazus, the satrap of Phrygia, from King Artaxerxes II of Persia in his work *Hellenica*. While there is a

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<sup>212</sup> J.A.S Evans, *op. cit.* (n.202) p. 130.

<sup>213</sup> Bribing the Huns: Proc. *BV.* 2.1.1-25 - 2.2.1-3; Battle of Tricamarum: Proc. *BV.* 2.2.4-28. Escape of Gelimer: Proc. *BV.* 2.2.20-22.

<sup>214</sup> J.A.S Evans, *op. cit.* (n.202) p. 133; PLRE III, Belisarius 1, p. 192.

plausible relationship between these two texts, it is difficult to say that Procopius is quoting Xenophon, directly several versions of Agesilaus' encounter with Pharnabazus are known and could have been available to Procopius.<sup>215</sup> It is also clear that the circumstances are different as Pharnabazus is urged to abandon his allegiance to a king while Gelimer is urged to submit to a Emperor. Both authors state that their 'hero' tries to convince his intended target to 'switch sides' but it is the decision of Gelimer and Pharnabazus that should be compared. Pharnabazus responds to Agesilaus' proposal by saying:

Well then," said he, "if the King sends another as general and makes me his subordinate, I shall choose to be your friend and ally; but if he assigns the command to me, —so strong, it seems, is the power of ambition—you may be well assured that I shall war upon you to the best of my ability."<sup>216</sup>

He would rather wait and see what happens, in essence embrace slavery rather than freedom, because his present situation is not so intolerable that he lacks prospects and if he remains loyal then he can move up in status. This happens because he marries the daughter of Artaxerxes. Gelimer does the same thing. When Belisarius through Pharas, a barbarian left behind to guard Mt. Papua, was convincing Gelimer to submit to Justinian he claimed that it was better to be poor and serve Justinian than have a specious rulership amid the horrifying conditions on Mt. Papua. Also he would not be of lesser status than Belisarius who was his conqueror. Pharas also explains that he too is a barbarian and boasts about his allegiance to Justinian.<sup>217</sup> Unfortunately, we do not know how much Procopius has made events conform to

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<sup>215</sup> C. Pazdernik, "Xenophon's *Hellenica* in Procopius' *Wars*: Pharnabazus and Belisarius" *Greek, Roman and Byzantine studies*, Vol.46-2 (2006), p. 180.

<sup>216</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 4.1.37.

<sup>217</sup> C. Pazdernik, *art. cit.* (n. 215) pp. 195-201. For the nuance for the term "barbarian" to refer to Pharas and all non-Romans see D. Parnell, "Barbarians and Brothers-in-Arms: Byzantines on Barbarian Soldiers in the Sixth Century" *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 108-2 (2015).

Xenophon's work because we do not have any other accounts of this. All this considered, Gelimer decides to serve Justinian and was given land in Galatia to live with his family because of it.<sup>218</sup>

Once Belisarius leaves North Africa, the Moors that were allied to the Romans decided to revolt against them. Corippus tells us about a revolt by Iaudas and the Moors in the Aurès. However, according to Procopius this revolt was not the only one that Solomon had to deal with. The Moors, according to Procopius were pillaging and plundering and defeated the garrison in the province of Byzacium in the spring of 535. Solomon took the entire army and attacked the Moors and killed most of them, but others ran to the mountains nearby. The revolt was not over as the Moors attacked Byzacium again but Solomon defeated most of them and the Moorish leaders travelled to Iaudas in Aurès. Then Solomon marches his army against Iaudas in the summer of 535. In addition to wanting to stop Iaudas, Procopius mentions that Solomon was urged to act because of the Moorish leader Ortaias who held a grudge against Iaudas from a land dispute. However, unlike Corippus, Procopius states that Solomon could not defeat Iaudas because Iaudas and his army would not come down from a treacherous mountain. Additionally, Solomon thought he was going to encounter an ambush as the result of betrayal from his Moorish allies. Solomon retreated to Carthage but left behind part of the army in Numidia.<sup>219</sup>

According to Miranda Williams, Procopius attempts to present the actions of Solomon against the Moors in Byzacium and Iaudas as having ended the raids. However, while Solomon defeated the Moors in Byzacium, they returned to raiding and the Romans failed to capitalize on their victories in order to improve their own territorial position by returning to Carthage. Against

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<sup>218</sup> PLRE III, Gelimer, p. 508; Proc. BV. 2.9.13-14.

<sup>219</sup> Revolt by the Byzacium Moors: Proc. BV. 2.8.9-25, 2.10.1-11, 2.11-4.12; Revolt by Iaudas: Proc. BV. 2.13 PLRE III, Iaudas, pp. 610-611; J.A.S Evans, *op. cit.* (n.202) p. 134; M.E. Williams, *art. cit.* (n.101) pp. 192-196.

Iaudas, Procopius presents Solomon's retreat as a strategy so that Solomon could come back the following spring in 536 with a larger force and without Moorish allies, as they were clearly the scapegoat for the failure of the campaign. However, this attack on Iaudas in 536 never happens. As we shall see momentarily, the mutiny would last for another three years before Iaudas is defeated.<sup>220</sup>

According to Victor of Tonnuna and Jordanes a Roman soldier named Stotzas had usurped power and was destroying North Africa in a tyrannical manner.<sup>221</sup> Procopius gives us details about how he became a tyrant. There was a mutiny by the soldiers during Easter in 536. The two reasons will be discussed in a later section. The leaders of the mutiny planned to kill Solomon but could not kill him so they left Carthage and started to plunder the land around it. Solomon sent men to try and persuade the mutineers left in the city to be loyal to the emperor but they would not listen, and so they started to plunder Carthage. When everyone was asleep, Solomon along with Procopius set sail for Syracuse to report to Belisarius what was happening. The mutineers then made Stotzas tyrant over them.<sup>222</sup>

While Stotzas was in Carthage, Belisarius came with some soldiers along with Solomon to North Africa. As Corippus stated Stotzas flees from Belisarius after being defeated at Membressa and retreats to Numidia and Belisarius sails back to Sicily. After Belisarius leaves for Sicily, Justinian sent Germanus to be the general in North Africa. In addition to the battle at Scalae Veteres fought by Germanus against Stotzas and the rebels as Corippus states in 537, Procopius also mentions another attempted revolt in 537 that Germanus had to end. A spearman

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<sup>220</sup> M.E. Williams, "The Establishment of Roman Authority in Africa: Romans and Berbers in Procopius' Vandalic War" *The World of Procopius* (Paris, 2018) pp. 387-389.

<sup>221</sup> Vict. Tonn., 118 a. 534; Jord. *Rom.*, 369.

<sup>222</sup> J.A.S Evans, *op. cit.* (n.202) p. 135; Proc. *BV.* 2.14.22-42.

named Maximinos tried to set up a tyranny. However, according to Procopius he anticipated it and had soldiers waiting at the Hippodrome, which was the supposed meet up spot for the conspirators, and killed and captured most while some got away. Germanus then impaled Maximinos near the walls of Carthage in 539.<sup>223</sup> North Africa would be calm for almost two years.

Germanus was later summoned back to Constantinople leaving Solomon again as general in North Africa. Before the revolt by the Laguantans or the Leuathai as Procopius calls them which is reported by Corippus, Procopius states that Solomon launched a campaign in 540 against Iaudas and the Moors of the Aurès to finally defeat them. He sent Guntarith ahead, but he was defeated and then was besieged by the Moors. Solomon kept pursuing them and eventually defeated them, but Iaudas got away. Iaudas was eventually subjugated in 550. When Solomon was fighting the Laguantans and was defeated and killed, Corippus states that Solomon lost and died because Guntarith pretended to flee causing a panic to go through the ranks and caused the army to flee.<sup>224</sup> However, Procopius claims the defeat on the soldiers that stayed behind instead of fighting because they did not receive their part of the plunder from a previous encounter. This allowed the Moors to overpower the Romans and caused soldiers to flee and Solomon to be killed.<sup>225</sup>

Unlike his descriptions of Solomon's interactions with the Moors before he sailed to Sicily to get Belisarius, Procopius, when discussing Solomon's renewed attempt to subjugate Iaudas, portrays Solomon's actions as confusing. Procopius says that Solomon was continuing his campaign against Iaudas. However, according to Miranda Williams, to "resume what was a

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<sup>223</sup> Battle at Scalae Veteres: Coripp. *Ioh.* 3.305-319; Proc. *BV.* 2.17.; Revolt of Maximinos: Proc. *BV.* 2.18.

<sup>224</sup> Coripp. *Ioh.*, 3.343-390.

<sup>225</sup> Proc. *BV.* 2.22.23-28.

punitive action some four years later, particularly given that Procopius provides no evidence for ongoing Moorish hostilities in the interim would seem unwarranted."<sup>226</sup> Also, after the defeat of Iaudas, Procopius declares that "the land of Zabe, which is beyond Mount Aurasium, and is called Mauritania Prima ... he [Solomon] added as a tributary to the Roman empire..."<sup>227</sup> and subsequently:

on account of this, all the Libyans, who were subjects of the Romans, having obtained a secure peace and the prudent and very wise rule of Solomon, and finally having no thought of hostility in their minds, seemed to be the most fortunate of all men.<sup>228</sup>

It can be inferred that the campaign in 540 against Iaudas completed the reconquest of North Africa but this cannot be supported by Procopius' account as there are still hostilities that the Romans have to deal with after this campaign. It does, however, mirror the objectives of the legislation establishing the military administration in Africa, and mirrors the claims of victory over the Moors disseminated by the Roman imperial government in the mid-530s. This could also mean that Procopius was not in Africa during this period and arranged the facts that were available to him before concluding with the imperial statement of victory.<sup>229</sup>

After Solomon died in 544, his nephew Sergius took over the government of North Africa. The other authors do not mention him at all. This is probably because he was an incompetent ruler. Sergius was not willing to do battle against the Moors but John, the son of Sisiniolos, who is mentioned by Corippus was willing. According to Corippus, the city of Hadrumetum was captured by the Moors because the people and the general Himerus were

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<sup>226</sup> M.E. Williams, *art. cit.* (n.101) p. 392.

<sup>227</sup> Proc. *BV.* 2.20.30.

<sup>228</sup> Proc. *BV.* 2. 8.33.

<sup>229</sup> M.E. Williams, *art. cit.* (n.101) p. 393.

deceived by a false letter from this John. However, Procopius states that Hadrumetum was lost not because of a false letter but because when Himerus was taking his garrison to meet up with John he was captured by the enemy.

They made Himerus tell the people that they had won a victory and that the Moors with him were slaves. The people believed him and let them come into the city and then allowed the entire Moorish army in. The Moors were eventually scared out of Hadrumetum when they realized that Sergius was going to send an army to recapture it.<sup>230</sup> Like Corippus, Procopius states that Justinian sent Areobindus to share the generalship of North Africa. Corippus never mentions his name but based on Procopius' account we assume that the other general he is referring to is Sergius. Corippus states that Areobindus has a quarrel with Sergius which leads to the battle, where John, son of Sisiniola and Stotzas are killed that Victor of Tonnuna and Corippus mention. Procopius claims that this battle takes place at Sicca Veneria and Sergius does not come to Areobindus' plea to unite armies to defeat Antalas and Stotzas. This would lead Justinian to recall Sergius and send him to Italy with an army.<sup>231</sup>

Two months after Sergius is sent to Italy, Gontharis sets up a tyranny in North Africa like Victor of Tonnuna and Corippus state. Procopius also corroborates that Gontharis killed Areobindus and was killed at a banquet by Artabanes. Artabanes was eventually called back to Constantinople and John is made sole general in North Africa in late 546 or early 547, the same John that most of Corippus' epic poem is about. He was able to defeat Antalas and the Moors like Corippus states even though Procopius mentions it in passing.

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<sup>230</sup> Proc. *BV*. 2.23.

<sup>231</sup> Proc. *BV*. 2.24.

*1(b) North Africa—Archaeological and Epigraphical Evidence*

As we have discussed in the previous chapter, all of the material evidence that we have seen in North Africa are forts created five years after Belisarius defeated the Vandals and leaves under the general Solomon. Procopius mentions in both *Wars* and *Buildings* that Justinian does build and repairs buildings in North Africa. Procopius dedicates these buildings and repairs to Justinian in his work *Buildings*, but in *The Wars* he attributes it to Solomon. Some of the buildings and repairs are not discussed in *The Wars* but we can attribute them to Solomon based on when the sections such as Byzacium and Numidia were captured. However, this assumption could be wrong for the buildings and repairs not discussed in *The Wars* because they were not discussed nor do we have exact dates for them.

According to Procopius, Justinian's building programme was extensive. Justinian not only rebuilt circuit walls around cities but he also built walls around cities that never had them before. He also built forts in certain places and built shrines and churches among other things in cities as well. The first thing we can say was built was done so by Belisarius. This would be the stockade that they built at Caput Vada to protect their base from the enemy when they first arrived in North Africa in 533. It is said that along with pointed sticks that surrounded the base, Belisarius had his soldiers build a trench as well. They dug so deep that they hit an underground spring that gushed water for them and their horses could drink.<sup>232</sup> This does not come down to us as it has been destroyed by the elements and time. We also know when the circuit walls of Carthage were repaired according to Procopius. They were repaired after Belisarius had entered the city at the end of 533.<sup>233</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> Proc. *Aed.* 6.6.8-13; Proc. *BV.* 1.15.31-36.

<sup>233</sup> Proc. *Aed.* 6.5.7-8; Proc. *BV.* 1.23.19-20.

One of the works that can be ascribed to Solomon based on cross referencing both works is the monastery at Carthage. This monastery was built inside the circuit walls close to the harbour with a wall surrounding it.<sup>234</sup> This enabled it to be used as a fortress if the enemy breached the walls around Carthage. Next, Solomon can be associated with building forts in Numidia around the Aurès mountain called Dabuisis and Gaeana as well as building the walls around the cities of Pentebague and Florentianae to name a few. We also know that Solomon conquered the city of Sitifis but we are not sure if he built the circuit walls.<sup>235</sup>

Now let us move on to the buildings and repairs that we assume to be built under Solomon but we cannot know to be sure. Starting with Carthage, Procopius states that Justinian built shrines to the Mother of God and Saint Prima, who is a local saint, and public baths for the people to use. In the region of Proconsularis, Justinian built circuit walls around the city of Vaga and built a fort called Tucca. In the region of Byzacium, he built walls around the cities of Adramytus, Mammes, Telepte, Cululis and the town of Caputvada. The walls according to Procopius turned Caputvada into a city. He also built a fort called Aumetra. In the region of Numidia, Justinian he walled cities like Tigisis and Medara and built forts called Scile and Foscala. Lastly, in Sardinia he walled the city of Sardo and in Gadira he rebuilt the fortress Septum and built a church to the Mother of God.<sup>236</sup>

However, Procopius' work *Buildings*, because of its formulaic nature causes scholars to disregard it when discussing Justinian's construction programme. In fact a recent survey of the epigraphic evidence during the reign of Justinian has "confirmed the difficulty of identifying

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<sup>234</sup> Proc. *Aed.* 6.5.11; Proc. *BV.* 2.26.17.

<sup>235</sup> Proc. *Aed.*: 6.7-10.

<sup>236</sup> Carthage: Proc. *Aed.* 6.5.9-10; Proconsularis: Proc. *Aed.* 6.5.12-15; Byzacium: Proc. *Aed.* 6.6; Numidia: Proc. *Aed.* 6.7.1-11; Sardinia and Gadira: Proc. *Aed.* 6.7.12-16.

building projects as part of a coherent imperial blueprint.”<sup>237</sup> In Carthage, for example they have excavated structures that are either not part of Procopius' list or they do not exactly follow Procopius' account. This is why many scholars believe that Procopius' account of Justinian's building programme is not an accurate picture of what took place but what Justinian aspired to happen.

### *1(c) North Africa-Legal Sources*

In the previous chapter, we looked at legal sources like Justinian's *Novellae* and *Codex* and addressed reasons for the invasion into the North Africa. The first reason discussed was to protect Nicene Christians in Africa from persecution but it seemed unlikely because of Hilderic's decision to align his kingdom closer to the Romans. However, based on *Novella 37* it was put forward that the Nicene Church influenced Justinian to invade North Africa. The last reason that was discussed was that Romano-African elites wanted the land that the Vandals had seized from them returned. *Novella 36* was looked at because it allowed them to reclaim their lost land.

Procopius does not attribute religion as a reason Justinian would go to war and simply states that he went to war because Gelimer usurped the throne from the rightful ruler of North Africa and his friend. Also despite what the official statement from Justinian - attacking North Africa because of Persecutions against Nicene Christians - it was up to Belisarius to decide how much the religious agenda affected his decisions.<sup>238</sup> Within Procopius' narrative we can point out three factors as to how Belisarius would handle this religious difference between the Romans and

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<sup>237</sup> A.H. Merrills, R. Miles, *op. cit.* (n.57) p. 234.

<sup>238</sup> W.E. Kaegi, *art. cit.* (n.63) p.27.

the Vandals. The first factor is the most obvious: Belisarius is a soldier. Though Belisarius seems to be a Catholic it appears that he is more interested in doing his military duty first.<sup>239</sup>

The second factor is that he has “no fewer than 1,000 soldiers of the Arian creed”<sup>240</sup> mostly *foederati* in the expeditionary force. Although Justinian had enacted legislation against Arians and other heresies, he had to limit the restrictions for Arians in the army because of their valuable military contribution in defence of the empire.<sup>241</sup> It may be a small contingent in Belisarius' army but as we shall see they could be very influential. The third factor is Justinian's hope to persuade the Vandals to ditch Gelimer. This was done by sending emissaries stating that he sent his army to free the Vandals from Gelimer's tyranny.<sup>242</sup> Belisarius does not mention the religious conflict in his speech to his troops when they were deciding where to land, nor when they plunder the Africans on the day after the landing. Also instead of asserting that the Africans ('Libyans') were fellow Catholics, Belisarius merely declared that he hoped for the Africans' support because they had formerly been Romans.<sup>243</sup>

Besides directly or indirectly (depending on how you read Procopius) pointing out that Belisarius did not push the supposed religious agenda of the campaign, he does not add anything new except giving an incident that was caused by *Novellae* 36 and 37. This incident is the revolt of the Roman soldiers against Solomon. The first cause of this incident concerns *Novel* 36. After the defeat of the Vandals, the Roman soldiers took Vandal wives and daughters as their own wives. The Vandal wives urged their new husbands to lay claim to land that they had previously

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<sup>239</sup> W. E. Kaegi, *art. cit.* (n.63) pp. 27-28; D. Mirsanu, *art. cit.* (n.63) p. 487; E. Stein, *op. cit.* (n. 169) p. 285.

<sup>240</sup> Proc. BV. 2.14.12.

<sup>241</sup> CJ. 1.5.12.17; Proc. BV. 2.14.12, 1.11.3-5; G. Greatrex, *art. cit.* (n.100) p. 78; W. E. Kaegi, *art. cit.* (n.63) p. 28; D. Mirsanu, *art. cit.* (n.63) p. 487.

<sup>242</sup> W. E. Kaegi, *art. cit.* (n.63) pp. 28, 30; Proc. BV. 1.16.13-14.

<sup>243</sup> W. E. Kaegi, *art. cit.* (n.63) pp.28-29; D. Mirsanu, *art. cit.* (n.63) p. 487. Proc. BV. 1.15.18-30; Proc. BV. 1.16.2-8.

owned under Vandal rule instead of allowing the land to belong to the emperor and the empire of the Romans.<sup>244</sup> With the enactment of *Novel* 36, Solomon must have interpreted it as confiscating all land that was owned or taken by the Vandals, returning what was taken from the Romano-Africans, and everything else was to belong to the emperor. What makes it worse is that there is no mention of imperial confiscation of Vandal lands in any extant law, just *Novel* 36. The soldiers had every right to be angry because they had fought to return this land to the empire, married the enemy's women, they should be able to own the land if it did not belong to a Romano-African that is still alive.

The second cause relates to *Novel* 37. This mutiny started around Easter. The Roman army in North Africa had soldiers, mostly barbarians and those from the Herul nation, who practiced the Arian faith of Christianity. In 527, Justinian exempted Gothic Arians in the Roman army from the penalties imposed on heretics with the *Codex* entry 1.5.12.17. However, there is no such exemption in the laws for Arians in North Africa. They could not worship their God in their accustomed way, could not baptize their children, could not perform any of their sacraments and sacred rites<sup>245</sup> and all the ecclesiastical properties that were owned by the Arian Church, had to be returned to the Catholic Church. This was decreed by *Novel* 37 in 535.

As should be evident from what has been discussed above, and other instances throughout Procopius' narrative, he tries to avoid the topic of religion whenever he can. He may mention God at different parts but does not use it as a reason for why Belisarius was able to defeat the Vandals at various stages of the campaign. This is probably because he was a skeptical Catholic who despised religious controversy or because religion does not fit with Procopius'

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<sup>244</sup> Proc. *BV*. 2.14.7-10.

<sup>245</sup> Proc. *BV*. 2.14.12-15.

genre so it would be inappropriate in the *Wars*. Some have tried to argue that Procopius was probably Arian and that is why he avoids this discussion of religion. However, this is certainly false because he had to flee Carthage with Solomon during the Arian-inspired mutiny described above.<sup>246</sup>

In addition, Procopius also confirms the division of North Africa outlined in the *Codex* entry 1.27.2 by listing the places Belisarius sent troops that was still controlled by the Vandals. He sent troops to the islands of Sardinia, Corsica, Ibiza, Majorca, and Minorca. He also sent troops to Caesarea in Mauretania and the city of Tripolis, to help Pudentius against the Moors and strengthen the Roman position there in the region. Lastly, he sent troops to Sicily to take the fortress of Lilybaeum, as according to him and emperor Justinian, it belonged to the Romans before it belonged to the Vandal kingdom. However, the force was repulsed by the Goths as they claimed it never belonged to the Vandals.<sup>247</sup>

## 2. Italy

### 2(a): *Italy—Literary: Beginning of the War to the Surrender of Vitigis*

Now let us move on to what Procopius adds to and omits from the narrative of Justinian's invasion in Italy. Procopius corroborates the other sources by saying that Athalaric was the heir to the throne. However, according to Peter Heather, the Goths had differing opinions on who should be their ruler after Theoderic died as they were divided on if a minor could rule the kingdom. Apparently, there were two other serious contenders for the throne: Theoderic's

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<sup>246</sup> W. E. Kaegi, *art. cit.* (n.63) p.30; E. Stein, *op. cit.* (n.169) p. 716; Proc. *BG.* 1.3.6-9; Proc. *BV.* 2.14.12-15, 2.14.21, 2.14.38-41; Procopius Arian: P. Bonfante 'Il Movimento Della Storia Arcana di Procopio,' *Bullettino del V Istituto di Diritto Romano* 41 (1933) pp. 283-287.

<sup>247</sup> Proc. *BV.* 1.4.5-25.

nephew Theodahad, and a distinguished general called Tuluin who married into the royal Amal dynasty. This caused great military unrest on Theoderic's death but eventually Theodahad and Tuluin were bought off. This however did not stop their ambitions for the throne, it just morphed into a struggle for control of the young king's regency council.<sup>248</sup>

Years after Athalaric came to the throne, Jordanes proclaims that the Goth's contempt for the rule of Athalaric stemmed from the decision to return the lands that Athalaric's father and grandfather had seized in Gaul back to the Franks. Procopius gives another reason, reporting that Amalasantha wanted her son to resemble the rulers of the Romans by attending a grammarian. The Gothic people wanted Athalaric to rule in more of a barbarian fashion because of their desire to punish the Roman population in Italy. They also claimed that Amalasantha wanted to kill Athalaric and marry a new husband so that they could rule together. She allowed her son to be raised in a more barbarian fashion but the Goths still wanted her to leave the palace. Athalaric did not even defend or support her against these claims. She was not afraid of them and sent those responsible for the slander against her to different parts of the Italian border. One of the ones she sent to the border was probably Tuluin.<sup>249</sup>

She was still in danger, so she contacted Justinian to help and protect her. Justinian agreed and Amalasantha had a plan in place to leave if her last ditch attempt to kill the Goths against her did not work. It worked and therefore she could stay in Italy.<sup>250</sup> According to Peter Heather, this reasoning for the resentment by the Goths against Amalasantha should not be taken at face value. Theoderic had clearly given his own children a classical education, as Amalasantha

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<sup>248</sup> P. Heather, *op. cit.* (n.67), p. 149-150.

<sup>249</sup> J.A.S Evans, *op. cit.* (n.202) p.136; Proc. *BG.* 1.2.1-21; M. Vitiello, *Amalasuintha: The Transformation of Queenship in the Post-Roman World* (Philadelphia, 2017) pp.78, 95-100; Possibility of Tuluin: P. Heather, *op. cit.* (n.67) p. 150.

<sup>250</sup> Proc. *BG.* 1.2.23-29

was very well versed in Greek and Latin. Theodahad as well was given a classical education, and that was not the reason for his overthrow. Even so, controlling the young king's upbringing would certainly have been the key to immediate political power.<sup>251</sup>

Athalaric eventually died and fearing for her life again Amalasantha decided that she was going to hand over all of Italy to Justinian. She changed her mind and as Jordanes states, asked Theodahad, Theoderic's nephew, to be joint rulers. Since we have now discussed Theodahad within all sources, it is time to try and examine motives for Amalasantha's choice of Theodahad. It is important to discuss this question because her motives for choosing Theodahad differ in the sources. Also, as we shall see, Theodahad seems like an odd choice. Firstly, Theoderic did not see Theodahad as a likely candidate to take the throne. He did not have the education (was not trained in combat) and his actions (abuses perpetrated against landowners) suggest Theodahad did not have what it takes to be king. In a letter, Theoderic has harsh words to say about Theodahad's abuses.<sup>252</sup> Even when Amalasantha became regent she had chastised him and made him return what he had taken even though neither Theoderic nor Amalasantha punished him with the penalty prescribed in the *Edict of Theoderic*.<sup>253</sup>

She could have certainly chosen marriage instead as it comes with a lot of benefits like inheriting allies. She also could have benefited from Theoderic's alliances that he had already cultivated. For example, her mother was the sister of Clovis I, so she could claim support from the Franks or her cousin Amalaberga, who was queen of Thuringia, even though after Theoderic's death his alliances started to crumble. Or she could have married her daughter to

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<sup>251</sup> P. Heather, *op. cit.* (n.67) p. 150.

<sup>252</sup> M. Vitiello, *op. cit.* (n.249) pp.119-121; M. Vitiello, *Theodahad: A Platonic King at the Collapse of Ostrogothic Italy* (Toronto, 2014) p. 56.

<sup>253</sup> Cass. *Var.* 1.5; *Edict of Theoderic* 47; Proc. *BG.* 1.4.2; M. Vitiello, *op. cit.* (n.252), pp. 56-57.

Vitigis (which eventually happened by force) as he was a prominent warrior in the army and she could therefore have the army's loyalty.<sup>254</sup> According to La Rocca Amalasantha chose Theodahad to avoid the loss of status that accompanies marriage and instead she and her cousin would rule together "not because they are married, with power descending from the man to the woman through their sexual intimacy, but because the woman already in power has chosen the man to become not her husband, but instead her political partner."<sup>255</sup>

However, according to Vitiello, it was because she could not rule alone and even though not many of her subjects especially in Tuscany would have been happy about his rise to the throne it would appease those that were hostile to her. Also, Theoderic set a precedent that his kingdom should remain in the Amal family when he brought Eutharic over from Spain to marry Amalasantha. To ensure that the family maintained control of the kingdom, Theodahad was the only other person who could claim to be a part of the Amal lineage even though this is muddied by Procopius stating that she had a plan to leave Italy.<sup>256</sup> Vitiello also states that bringing Theodahad to the throne was a solution to have Justinian's continued endorsement of the legitimacy of the Gothic kingdom. This would be preferred instead of Justinian dethroning a newly elected king, like he did in North Africa.<sup>257</sup>

Procopius saw Amalasantha as a wise and just ruler because of her respect for the classical tradition of learning. However, by contrast and in keeping with literary practice, Theodahad is portrayed as a weak man for ignoring military virtues and allowing his greed to

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<sup>254</sup> K. Cooper, *art. cit.* (n. 110) pp. 302-307.

<sup>255</sup> K. Cooper, *art. cit.* (n.110) p. 307; C. La Rocca, "Consorts Regni: A Problem of Gender? The Consortium between Amalasantha and Theodahad in 534" *Studies in the Earlier Middle Ages*, eds. P. Stafford, et al. (London, 2012) pp. 134-135.

<sup>256</sup> Proc. *BG.* 1.3.12; M. Vitiello, *op. cit.* (n.252) p. 61.

<sup>257</sup> M. Vitiello, *op. cit.* (n.252) p. 61.

show his incapacity for ruling, which reduces her from a historical actor to a literary heroine.<sup>258</sup> Frankforter suggests that Procopius achieves this by identifying empress Theodora as the culprit behind Amalasantha's murder, because Theodora was jealous that a Gothic queen might replace her as empress according to Procopius' *Secret History*. She convinced Theodahad to kill Amalasantha saying that Justinian would turn a blind eye if he did so.<sup>259</sup>

This suggestion in Procopius' history seems to have an element of truth when one looks at the letter-collection of Cassiodorus which shows that Theodora was in contact with Theodahad's wife Gudelina around the time of Amalasantha's murder but it was probably serving as a back channel for their husbands' efforts to second-guess one another's intentions.<sup>260</sup> If this is correct, then Procopius' portrayal of Amalasantha as an ally of Justinian, along with the event of her death, left no alternative other than to invade Italy. Therefore, Procopius' portrayal of her as a wise and just ruler could be a cover to hide the fact that Amalasantha died trying to defend Italy from Justinian's predatory interest in the western territories.<sup>261</sup>

Theodahad sent Amalasantha to an island in Lake Bolsena and then killed her but unlike Jordanes and Marcellinus *Comes*, Procopius provides a reason: she had found him guilty of violence against the people in the Tuscan region and made him return all the estates that he seized even though she eventually cleared his name.<sup>262</sup> The murder probably took place on April 30, 535.<sup>263</sup>

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<sup>258</sup> D. Frankforter, "Amalasantha, Procopius and a Woman's Place", *Journal of Women's History* 8 (1996) pp. 41-57; C. La Rocca, *art. cit.* (n.255) p. 140.

<sup>259</sup> A.D. Frankforter, *art. cit.* (n.258) pp. 49-50; Proc. *Anecd.* 16.1-4. trans. A. Kaldellis, *Prokopios: The Secret History with Related Texts*, (Indianapolis, 2010).

<sup>260</sup> K. Cooper, *art. cit.* (n.110) p. 309; J.A.S Evans, *The Empress Theodora: Partner of Justinian*, (Austin, 2002) pp. 63-66; A.D. Frankforter, *art. cit.* (n.258) p. 50; D. Potter, *Theodora: Actress, Empress, Saint* (Oxford, 2015) p. 139

<sup>261</sup> K. Cooper, *art. cit.* (n.110) p. 309.

<sup>262</sup> Proc. *BG.* 1.4.2. M. Vitiello, *op. cit.* (n.252) pp. 94-95.

<sup>263</sup> PLRE II, Amalasuinha, p. 65.

Procopius also states that in addition to sending Belisarius to Sicily, Justinian sent an army to Dalmatia, as it was subject to the Goths, under the general Mundo. Mundo was able to subject Dalmatia to the emperor. Procopius states that Sicily was not as easy to capture as Jordanes and Marcellinus *Comes* makes it out to be. The city of Palermo did not surrender until Belisarius sent his ships to attack it. According to Peter Heather, at this point Justinian was not committed to an outright conquest policy. This is based on Belisarius's orders and the composition of the forces sent as they did not have the extensive cavalry arm that destroyed the Vandal kingdom. It was to force Theodahad into abdicating to avoid total war.<sup>264</sup> The tactic worked as Theodahad sent a message to Justinian that he was willing to abdicate the throne to him, and therefore, Procopius does not mention the bishop of Rome Agapitus that Marcellinus *Comes* does. However, Mundo in Dalmatia was killed by a Gothic force and the rest of the Romans went home, changing Theodahad's mind about surrendering Italy.<sup>265</sup>

This according to Peter Heather marks the difference between the Invasion of North Africa and the invasion of Italy. The invasion of North Africa was the result of highly contingent and favorable circumstances. The invasion of Italy became the starting point of a fully fledged policy of western re-conquest. There was no abdication, and the Goths had already defeated the Romans in Dalmatia, and so they were ready to fight as they had new-found confidence. Justinian sent his troops in anyway because he was confident that they could topple the Gothic Kingdom.<sup>266</sup> Without Procopius we might not have been able to reach this conclusion, as the other sources make it seem like both invasions happened as a result of circumstance. Even though Theodahad was convinced that the Goths could win, he attempted to form alliances with

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<sup>264</sup> P. Heather, *op. cit.* (n.67) p. 153.

<sup>265</sup> Proc. *BG.* 1.7.11.

<sup>266</sup> P. Heather, *op. cit.* (n.67) pp. 153-154.

other Germanic nations even with Chlothar who four years prior attacked Thuringia the kingdom of Theodahad's own sister but these negotiations never amounted to anything under Theodahad.<sup>267</sup>

Procopius corroborates Jordanes and Marcellinus *Comes* that Ebrimuth came over to Belisarius but does not give a reason why. The reason could be that Ebrimuth as well as other Goths were in opposition to Theodahad because of the tax burden and fear of war meaning Ebrimuth was just one of many that supported Belisarius.<sup>268</sup> The timeline of events after the surrender of Ebrimuth to the overthrow of Theodahad is inconsistent in our sources. However, Procopius' narrative for this timeline matches that of Marcellinus *Comes*, with more detail for the siege of Naples, and adds that Theodahad was overthrown because of his inaction in helping Naples.<sup>269</sup>

However, Procopius in his description of the siege of Naples is slightly different from the other sources. As was outlined in the previous chapter (2.2a), Marcellinus, the *Romana* and the *Book of Pontiffs*, reports that, upon entering Naples, Belisarius' army killed Goths and revolting Romans and plundered the city completely.<sup>270</sup> In Procopius' narrative, the army does kill the men of Naples taking the women and children as slaves and plunders the city. Procopius blames most of this on the Massagetai in Belisarius' army. However, because of Procopius' pro-Roman rhetoric, he presents the taking of Naples as easy and bloodless by blaming it on the Massagetai (i.e. non-Romans) and Belisarius is said to have told his troops to use no violence

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<sup>267</sup> Jord. *Get.* 308-309; Jord. *Rom.* 370; Marcell. *Com. addit.* 536.1; M. Vitiello, *op. cit.* (n.252) p. 151.

<sup>268</sup> PLRE II, Chlothacharius, pp. 291-292; Proc. *BG.* 1.13.1; M. Vitiello, *op. cit.* (n.252) pp. 149-150.

<sup>269</sup> Marcell. *Com. addit.* 535.1-6.; Proc. *BG.* 5.8.5-45 – 5.11.1-9.

<sup>270</sup> Jord. *Rom.* 370; *Lib. Pont.* 60.1; Marcell. *Com. addit.* 536.1.

during the invasion and let the people free.<sup>271</sup> After this Vitigis is named king of the Goths and kills Theodahad, just like our other sources proclaim.

However, Procopius states that after learning of Theodahad's death, Vitigis arrests Theodegisclus, Theodahad's son, showing that Vitigis' ascension to the throne was not as clear-cut as the other sources make it out to be. With Theodegisclus' arrest, Vitigis' election might have been contested and that there was a faction of Goths that might not have accepted a royal claim that was not based on bloodline. Theodegisclus was the only living member of the Amal family and therefore could have had a legitimate claim to the throne and possibly overthrown Vitigis as Vitigis could have been seen as a usurper and an illegitimate ruler of the Amal kingdom. This is another example of the precedent set by Theoderic by making sure there was an Amal family member to succeed to the throne.<sup>272</sup> This was probably why Vitigis forced Matasuntha to marry him; in order to have some sort of connection to the Amal bloodline.

Vitigis' retreat to Ravenna can also be seen as cowardly as he was in Rome when Naples surrendered, and so he could have attacked Belisarius at Naples and possibly defeated him.<sup>273</sup> Procopius states that Vitigis retreated because he needed to complete his side of the deal with the Franks so that they could assist the Goths in defeating the Romans.<sup>274</sup> The deal was started by Theodahad, who offered the Franks the portion of Gaul that the Goths controlled and some gold. This is the same land that Jordanes in the *Getica* says that Athalaric gave to the Franks when they were threatening war. We cannot say for sure who is right. However, Theodahad was killed before he could deliver his side of the deal and so Vitigis had to go to Ravenna to complete the

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<sup>271</sup> G. Del Mastro, *art. cit.* (n.143) pp. 258-259; J.A.S. Evans "Procopius and the Emperor Justinian" *Canadian Historical Association, Historical Papers* 3 (1968) pp. 126-139; Proc. *BG.* 1.10.

<sup>272</sup> Proc. *BG.* 1. 11.10; M. Vitiello, *op. cit.* (n.252) pp. 158, 162.

<sup>273</sup> J. Moorhead, *op. cit.* (n. 58) p. 79.

<sup>274</sup> Proc. *BG.* 1.13.

deal. However, the Franks could not send Frankish troops as they had openly agreed to help the Romans but could send auxiliaries from their subject nations.<sup>275</sup>

Belisarius then moves into Rome without a battle like Jordanes and Marcellinus *Comes* state. In addition to marching on Rome, Vitigis sent a Gothic army to Dalmatia. Besides adding details to the siege of Rome like how the Goths dug trenches around their camp and cutting the aqueducts to Rome off, stating that there were sixty-seven battles but only the last two were worthy of being chronicled and that the siege lasted one year and nine days his account follows the one put together in chapter 2.<sup>276</sup> After the truce, Procopius' narrative follows the narrative the other sources put forward. John captures Ariminum and Vitigis leaves the siege of Rome and besieges Ariminum. Narses is sent and persuades Belisarius to send an army to John, which causes Vitigis to retreat to Ravenna. Narses is recalled and because of the plague Theudebert and the Franks retreat back to Gaul. After this, Belisarius captured more cities to make sure he could not be attacked from the rear he besieged Rome. Vitigis surrenders to Belisarius but before he does, he and the Goths offer Belisarius to rule Italy as his own according to Procopius. Belisarius declines and takes Vitigis to Constantinople.<sup>277</sup>

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<sup>275</sup> Proc. *BG.* 1.13.14-29.

<sup>276</sup> Proc. *BG.* 1.24.26-2.10.12.

<sup>277</sup> Narses arrives/Vitigis retreats to Ravenna: Marcell. *com. addit.* 537.5; Proc. *BG.* 2.18.19; Narses returns to Constantinople: Marcell. *com. addit.* 538.1; Theudebert incursion: Marcell. *com. addit.* 538.4; Proc. *BG.* 2.25.24, 6.26.1, 12; Vitigis surrenders: Jord. *Get.* 313; Jord. *Rom.* 375; Marcell. *com. addit.* 538.3; Proc. *BG.* 2.30.21.

***2(b) Italy-Literary: Rise and conquests of Totila***

When Belisarius leaves Italy, Procopius states that this emboldened the Goths that were not conquered north of the Po River, like Jordanes and Marcellinus does. Instead of going through each and every victory of Totila, since Procopius' narrative follows the one that was pieced together in the previous chapter, besides being more descriptive, it would be beneficial to discuss how Totila was able to defeat the Romans. Procopius' description of Totila and its affect in shaping scholar's view of him will also be discussed. Totila and his predecessors were able to defeat the Roman garrisons so easily because when Belisarius left, he had taken his *bucellarii* with him as Justinian was desperate for troops. Procopius states that the maximum number of troops left was seven thousand at its maximum but does not tell us when this was. Not only this but Roman morale had fallen rapidly. In the aftermath of Belisarius' conquest, Justinian had sent an administrator named Alexandros to get a sense of the Italian tax revenue to repay the costs of conquest and to make up for the horrifying financial losses and necessary military expansion happening during this new war with the Persians. Therefore, paying the Roman troops in Italy was a low priority causing the loyalty of the soldiers to be in question.<sup>278</sup>

Also, Totila was able to conquer the vast majority of Italy for several other reasons. The first is that the Roman field force was so spread out into garrison forces, Totila's vast army was able to defeat the Romans with ease. The second was Gothic morale increased with each victory that Totila's army grew with new recruits. The third reason is that Totila offered generous surrender terms to the Roman garrisons by offering them to join his army or allowing the Roman soldiers to leave Italy peacefully. The last reason was that with more and more territory Totila

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<sup>278</sup> P. Amory, *People and Identity in Ostrogothic Italy, 489-554* (Cambridge, 1997) p. 177. P. Heather, *op. cit.* (n.67) pp. 253-254; Proc. *BG.* 3. 1.28-33, 3.9.13; E.A. Thompson, *Barbarians and Romans: The Decline of the Western Empire* (Madison, 1982) p. 99.

conquered he also increased his tax revenue that could fund his war effort.<sup>279</sup> The reasoning for explaining how Totila and his predecessors were able to defeat the Romans so easily is to show that the leaving of Belisarius and not appointing a supreme commander emboldened the remaining Goths but there were other factors that allowed for this to happen. That Justinian's actions along with factors outside Justinian's control led to the Rise of Totila to be so devastating in Italy.

When Totila is declared king by the Goths, Procopius' account seems to praise him and not just for his military achievements. One such example is when Totila enters Rome. During his time in Rome Procopius says that Totila prayed in St. Peter's church, protected Boethius' widow (an act for which he won great renown for moderation) and went on to hold games in the city.<sup>280</sup> This may be a product of Procopius having turned against the war machine of Justinian and come to idealise a Gothic leader who would come to be defeated by said war machine.<sup>281</sup> However, this sort of praise from our main source inclines scholars to give credit to Totila for more than just military and personal qualities. Scholars see him as instigating something approaching an economic and social revolution. They argue that he welcomed large numbers of freed slaves and dispossessed owners of their land giving peasants control over the lands they worked. Some even portray Totila as a new Theoderic.<sup>282</sup> The evidence that scholars look to for slaves in the Gothic army of Totila can be found in Procopius. During Totila's first siege of Rome in 546, in a

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<sup>279</sup> P. Heather, *op. cit.* (n.67) pp. 256-257. Proc. *BG.* 3.13.1.

<sup>280</sup> Proc. *BG.* 3.20.22, 3.20.29-31, 3.37.4.

<sup>281</sup> J. Moorhead, "Totila the Revolutionary" *Historia* 49, (2000), p. 382.

<sup>282</sup> P. Amory, *op. cit.* (n.278) p. 176; A.H.M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire 284-602*, (Oxford, 1964), p. 288; J. Moorhead, *op. cit.* (n.281) p.382; M.M. Postan, *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Cambridge, 1966) p. 182; E. Stein, *op. cit.* (n.167) pp. 569-571; E.A. Thompson, *op. cit.* (n.278) p. 106.

negotiation with the deacon Pelagius, Totila wanted to discuss three things including slaves, who he describes as having put themselves under the protection of the Goths:

If, after they[slaves] have joined the ranks against our adversaries and have received from us the promise that we will never abandon them to their former masters, we now decide to put them into your hands, then we should not be trusted by you either.<sup>283</sup>

This is the only reference in Procopius to former slaves in the Gothic army because the Goths told them they would be free, a weak basis for this theory. It is more likely that slaves joined Totila all on their own.<sup>284</sup> In a papyrus of Ravenna, we learn that slaves of Gothic as well as Roman landowners took the opportunity to make themselves scarce during the war, so for those Roman slaves trying to cover their tracks during the reign of Totila it would make sense for them to seek refuge with the Gothic army.<sup>285</sup> However, according to Moorhead employing slaves as warriors does not make Totila a social revolutionary as Didymus and Verenianus armed slaves in 408-409, and Stotzas was joined by many slaves during his rebellion and they can hardly be seen as revolutionaries.<sup>286</sup>

The evidence scholars give to back up their economic revolutionary theory comes from several passages in Procopius. One such example is that during Totila's first siege of Rome:

He did not harm the farmers throughout all of Italy, but commanded them to continue tilling the soil without fear, just as they used to do, bringing to him the revenue that they had formerly brought to the public treasury and the owners of the land.<sup>287</sup>

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<sup>283</sup> Proc. *BG.* 3.16.25.

<sup>284</sup> P. Amory, *op. cit.* (n.278) pp. 179-180; E.A. Thompson, *op. cit.* (n.278) pp. 104-105.

<sup>285</sup> *P. Ital.*

<sup>286</sup> Didymus and Verenianus: Sozomen *Hist. Eccl.* 9.11.4; Stotzas: J. Moorhead, *op. cit.* (n.281), p. 383; Proc. *BV.* 2.15.4.

<sup>287</sup> Proc. *BG.* 3.13.1.

While this passage may indicate that landowners had been collecting money for the state, it does not prove that Totila had taken measures equivalent to the expropriation of the land as it could simply mean that the owners fled or because of Totila's victories the land was just in the hands of the enemy.<sup>288</sup> Scholars also look to the Pragmatic Sanction to try and prove this theory as part of it reveals concern about the regaining of property by a landowning class.<sup>289</sup> However, the Gothic war caused massive dislocation of landowners, most of whom ended up at Justinian's court. Thus, the landowners pleading their case to have their land returned to them was enough for Justinian to add this provision into his legislation. Lastly, these theories of Totila being an economic and social revolutionary are, for the most part, based solely on direct evidence taken from Procopius. There is nothing in Marcellinus *Comes* nor the *Romana* that suggests that Totila's actions make him a revolutionary, which implies this theory is weak.<sup>290</sup>

### ***2(c) Italy—Literary: Defeat of Totila***

With Totila still ravaging Italy, Procopius confirms that Justinian gave the command to Narses like the *Book of Pontiffs* and Marcellinus *Comes* state. It might seem odd that Justinian would give command to a seventy-five-year-old man who had not done well in his first command in Italy. However, Narses was in good health and with his political career, his generous nature and his devotion to Christianity the soldiers would be completely loyal to him.<sup>291</sup> The other sources end this chapter of the Gothic War by simply stating that Narses defeated Totila. They give no indication of how Totila was defeated. Therefore it is necessary to

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<sup>288</sup> J. Moorhead, *op. cit.* (n.281), p. 384; E. Stein, *op. cit.* (n.169) p. 570.

<sup>289</sup> *Constitutio Pragmatica* VII. 3-5, 15..

<sup>290</sup> J. Moorhead, *op. cit.* (n.281) pp. 385-386; Proc. *BG.* 4.22.4.

<sup>291</sup> J.A.S Evans, *op. cit.* (n.202) p. 177.

lay out the events that led to Totila's defeat. In describing Narses' defeat of Totila, Procopius provides two victories that happened simultaneously over Totila's forces. The first is undertaken by John who defeats Totila's navy at a battle off Sena Gallica. The other was undertaken by Artabanes who captured Sicily. With these two victories the Romans were once again the masters of the Adriatic Sea and could threaten the whole coast of Italy with their navy.

Also coupled with the fact that Totila had lost Northern Italy to the Franks, Totila's situation was becoming bleak.<sup>292</sup> Totila tried to appease Justinian by relinquishing his claim to Sicily and Dalmatia and was willing to pay tribute and become an ally of the empire, but Justinian was no longer willing to act diplomatically and wanted to destroy all remaining Goths. This must have been detrimental to the morale of the Goths as no matter how many times they defeated their enemy in battle they kept coming back. When Narses was marching to Italy with money to pay the soldiers and deserters as well as a vast army, the army were blocked by the Franks and Teias barred his entry into Italy.<sup>293</sup>

The army was so large that it could not be transported across the Adriatic but John was able to come up with a plan to transport the troops to Ravenna without a battle. He then was taunted into a battle with a Gothic garrison at Ariminum, which Narses was able to defeat them. Narses moved south and clashed with Totila's army close to a place called Busta Gallorum. After defeating Totila's cavalry for a strategic spot on a hill, the Goths morale was shaken even more than it had been previously but Totila inspired courage, and because he knew that Teias was on his way with two thousand more troops he delayed any attack. When Teias did arrive, the extra

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<sup>292</sup> Sena Gallica: Proc. *BG.* 3.8.22; Franks: Proc. *BG.* 3.24.27.

<sup>293</sup> Appease Justinian: Proc. *BG.* 3.24.4; Blocked Roads: J.A.S Evans, *op. cit.* (n.202) p. 177; Proc. *BG.* 3.26.21, 23, 24.

manpower did not matter as Narses was able to defeat Totila's army and Totila fled. Roman soldiers pursued him and killed him.<sup>294</sup>

Totila's reign was finally over. It could have been over a lot quicker if not for the inept Roman generals. Peace in Italy was not yet attained. Narses' army was made up of untrusting allies like the Lombards. He needed to pay them and make sure they promised to return to their own land. The Franks also stood in the Romans' way as they held the lands of Italy north of the Po river. The Romans were not strong enough to defeat the Franks and so left them alone. The Goths claimed Teias as king. While Teias was unable to cross the Po river, Narses captured Rome. Teias eventually crosses the Po river but was stopped at Mons Lactarius, where Teias was killed and the Gothic generals asked to be allowed to leave Italy but not fight for the empire. Narses accepted as long as they swore not to engage in war with the empire again. Some accepted Narses' terms while others did not march to Ticinum and Cumae which Narses would capture also. Now Italy finally had peace.<sup>295</sup>

## Conclusion

Procopius' narrative is much more detailed than the narrative that was constructed in chapter 2. He explains things a lot more to help scholars understand the intricacies of the wars except for Spain. His narrative fills in the gaps that are in the narratives of the other sources, providing answers to questions that would arise if scholars were without Procopius. Scholars would also be left without knowing lesser characters like the Massagetae or commanders and their feats of bravery and success. Although with Procopius scholars would have an abundant

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<sup>294</sup> J.A.S Evans, *op. cit.* (n.201) p. 178; Proc. BG. 3.29.1-3.32.31-32.

<sup>295</sup> J.A.S Evans, *op. cit.* (n.4) pp. 178-180; Proc. BG. 3.34.6, 3.34.9, 17; 3.34.21-3.35.20-29.

amount of information, there is a surprising conclusion that we can draw from our comparisons of the two narratives. This is that the information in these other sources sometimes challenges Procopius'. Sometimes they add information that is not presented by Procopius, like African members of the elite that were at the discussions to decide if Justinian should invade North Africa. Sometimes, the information presented challenges Procopius' timeline of events, like the *Romana's* and *Getica's* timeline between Evermund's switch or allegiance to the death of Theodahad. This shows us that, although Procopius' account is extensive because he was present in North Africa and Italy for most of the wars, making him our primary source for these events, we should not take everything that Procopius says at face value.

## General Conclusion

This thesis is modeled on Foss' article on the Roman empress Theodora. In his article he took the approach to look at the images of empress Theodora without including Procopius. He then examined these alternative sources and compared them to Procopius. This thesis has essentially done the same thing, but with sources that discussed Justinian's wars in Western Europe (Italy and Spain) and North Africa. Once these sources were identified (chapter 1), a narrative was created from the information from these sources (chapter 2). Lastly the narrative that was created by these sources were then compared to Procopius' narrative (chapter 3). This method was used to answer a simple question: what information about Justinian's wars in Europe and North Africa would scholars have if Procopius' narrative did not survive?

When comparing the two narratives several conclusions can be drawn to answer this question. The first we can draw is that without Procopius' narrative what information we would be left with would be minimal. They provide very basic information that lack any sort of details. For example, Victor of Tonnuna simply states that Belisarius defeated Gunthimer and Gebamund in battle. He does not give any information as to the battle in which they were defeated, or if they were defeated in the same battle.<sup>296</sup> Simple questions arise because of this bare information. Luckily, even though Gebamund is not mentioned, Procopius does give us the information that we need to answer these two questions. Another example is *Novellae* 36 and 37. They provide us with information that Justinian took these measures as an attempt limit Arianism. This is because they try to provide the ideal picture that the emperor wanted to convey. However by itself, these measures paint a picture that these measures did their job and Arianism was either completely

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<sup>296</sup> Vict. Tonn. 118 a. 534.

eradicated in North Africa or at the very least reduced to an inconsequential number of people. This was done, it seems, without any back-lash. However, thanks to Procopius' narrative we know that this is not the case. These measures actually caused a revolt by the soldiers. These sources even talk about this revolt. Stotzas was their leader who ruled tyrannically -i.e. as a usurper- but none of the sources explain how he was able to rule tyrannically. Procopius fortunately does, giving scholars more information about a character mentioned and why he was able to become a tyrant like these sources say he was.

The sources do not even explain some of the most important events that happen during the wars. For the surrender of Gelimer and the defeat of Totila, the sources just simply state that they surrendered or were defeated respectively. They do not give any sort of detail as to how or why these two figures surrendered or were defeated. They do not provide basic information that scholars need to fully grasp why a figure did what they did, and therefore they would not be able to fully grasp how the wars unfolded. Speaking of not knowing how things unfolded, without Procopius we would not understand why Theodahad imprisoned Amalasantha on the island in Lake Bolsena except for the greed attributed to him by Jordanes. Greed is a strong motivator for imprisoning someone and then killing them, but there must be an underlying reason. The sources do not provide that but Procopius does.

Another conclusion that we can take away from this thesis is that these sources sometimes leave out very important events of the narrative. At the beginning of the North African invasion, Corippus states that Belisarius landed at Caput Vada. This is important but that Belisarius and the army landing at Sicily before landing at Caput Vada is more so. According to Procopius, this is where Belisarius learns valuable information, like if he should expect an ambush, information he needs about the Vandals before he engages with them. Moreover, they

leave out the revolts that helped Belisarius, by diverting a vast amount of Vandal soldiers. The sources, by not mentioning this, leaves a huge gap in our knowledge. We are stuck guessing if Belisarius was able to defeat Gelimer and the Vandals by luck or for some other reason. We are not given the answers.

Also, the sources never mention any sort of military tactics or strategy. For North Africa especially, the sources do not mention any battle locations, strategies or tactics used in battles by either Belisarius or Gelimer. For Belisarius' campaign the sources do not even mention any battles. The only details they provide is that Gunthimer and Gebamund were defeated and that Gelimer surrenders and is taken to Constantinople. The sources make it seem like the campaign did not last that long but it lasted a year, there must have been several different battles between Belisarius and the Vandals before Gelimer surrenders. Luckily, Procopius does mention the battle of Ad Decimum and the battle at Tricamarum. None of the battles that the sources do mention contain any information as to what the troop formations are or about any strategic points that the combatants fight over. At Ad Decimum, we would not even know that there was a battle, let alone Gelimer's plan to defeat Belisarius -which might have worked if it happened the way he planned- without Procopius.

The final conclusion we can draw about what information we would have without Procopius is that we would have no knowledge about any commanders and their deeds during the wars. The sources (aside from Corippus at times) attribute every victory and defeat to the generals Belisarius and Solomon, to mention a few. We would not have known that the Massagetai contingent was the one who defeated Gunthimer. We would also not know that it was actually a commander named Pharas who convinced Gelimer to surrender to Belisarius and

Justinian. We would not know any of the commanders' names in charge of different parts of the army. These are small details, but they add to our complete understanding of Justinian's wars.

As one can see, our knowledge about the wars in North Africa and Italy would be limited to the very basics. The information we would have for these wars would leave scholars with an understanding like the one we have for the war in Spain. Procopius does not mention Justinian's actions in Spain at all. Therefore, we are left with a very imprecise account of what took place based on the account by Isidore of Seville and for the amount of territory constituted as Roman Spain we rely on John of Biclaro's account and the material evidence. Isidore's account becomes even more unreliable when one looks at Jordanes' very brief entry on the war.

It remains to sketch out what an account of the wars without Procopius would look like. Justinian sends Belisarius to North Africa to avenge the overthrow of Hilderic. Belisarius lands at Caput Vada and marches onto Carthage. Gunthimer and Gebimund is defeated and Gelimer flees. Eventually Gelimer surrenders and Belisarius takes him to Constantinople, where Belisarius is rewarded for his victory with a triumph. Solomon is in charge after Belisarius and deals with a Moorish revolt, and then the revolt of Stotzas forces him to flee to Belisarius in Sicily. Belisarius returns with Solomon and some troops and makes Stotzas flee and then Belisarius returns to Sicily. Justinian sends Germanus to be general in North Africa and he, along with John, fights Stotzas at Scalae Veteres and Autenti in 537 but their defeat is distorted by Corippus. Solomon is again in charge after Germanus is recalled to Constantinople. He is defeated and killed in battle against the revolting Lagutans because of the treachery of Guntarith. The city of Hadrumetum is captured by these rebels through a ruse, prompting Justinian to send general Areobindus. Areobindus is supposed to share governing North Africa with an unknown general, which causes a quarrel between them, resulting in a defeat in which John son of

Sisiniola is killed along with the rebel Stotzas. After this defeat Guntarith was able to set up a tyranny by killing Areobindus in the palace at Carthage but it only lasted thirty-six days as he was killed by Artabanes. John the hero of Corippus' epic poem then becomes general in North Africa.

In Italy, our narrative without Procopius would look something like this. Theoderic the Great dies and his daughter Amalasantha becomes regent for the reign of her son Athalaric. Their reign caused contempt and a lack of confidence in their Gothic subjects after they had given away lands in Gaul that Theoderic and Theoderic's father had seized. Athalaric died and Amalasantha summoned her cousin Theodahad to share the throne because she feared that the Goths would resent her on account of gender. Theodahad becomes greedy and decides he wants the throne for himself and so he sends Amalasantha to an island in Lake Bolsena, where he eventually has her killed. Marcellinus *Comes* does not indicate that there was a change in tactic as it was always Theodahad's intention to kill Amalasantha. Justinian sends Belisarius to avenge Amalasantha's death, and Belisarius lands in Sicily capturing it easily. Theodahad sends the bishop of Rome, Agapitus, to persuade Justinian to end his campaign after he learns of the capture of Sicily. However, Agapitus does not attempt to persuade the emperor.

Belisarius briefly puts his campaign on hold to help Solomon in North Africa. Once he returns to Sicily, Evermund the son-in-law of Theodahad switches sides. Belisarius then crosses into Campania and the timeline of our sources starts to differ. In the *Romana*, Belisarius besieges and enters Naples first, which prompts Theodahad to send Vitigis. When Vitigis entered Campania he was declared king amongst his soldiers, and then sent some of his allies to Ravenna

to kill Theodahad.<sup>297</sup> The *Getica* states that Vitigis was already in Campania, entered Rome and was declared king by his soldiers and sent his allies to kill Theodahad. While this was happening Belisarius crossed into Campania and besieged and entered Naples.<sup>298</sup> In addition to Marcellinus *Comes'* chronicle, the author states that Belisarius captures Naples. Vitigis was already stationed in Campania and was declared king, then he marched onto Ravenna but before he arrived, he killed Theodahad in a place called Quintus.<sup>299</sup>

Vitigis while in Ravenna strengthened his rule by marrying by force the daughter of Amalasantha, Matasantha. While Vitigis was in Ravenna, Belisarius captured Rome without a battle, prompting Vitigis to return and besiege Rome. During the siege, Belisarius dismissed the bishop of Rome, Silverius, based on accusations that he was attempting to let the Goths into Rome and replaced him with Vigilius. Vitigis then asks for a three-month truce. However, as reinforcements came to aid Belisarius, Vitigis continued to besiege Rome. Vitigis eventually ends the siege of Rome when he learns that John has taken over Ariminum, and so he leaves to attack Ariminum to protect Ravenna. Justinian sends Narses to help speed up the campaign and convinces Belisarius to send troops to help John in Ariminum. Vitigis hears this and retreats to Ravenna. Narses is recalled and Belisarius besieges Ravenna, forcing Vitigis to surrender.

However, this would not be the end of the Gothic war as Belisarius did not conquer all the Goths and allowed Totila to reverse Roman fortune in Italy. He was able to conquer most of Italy back and capture the city of Rome twice. Belisarius was sent back but he could not stop

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<sup>297</sup> Jord. *Rom.* 370-372, trans. P. van Nuffelen and L. van Hoof, *Jordanes, Getica and Romana: Introduction, Translation and Commentary*; cf. chapter 2, p. 54.

<sup>298</sup> Jord. *Get.* 309-311, trans. C.C Mierow, *The Gothic History of Jordanes*; cf. chapter 2, p. 55.

<sup>299</sup> Marcell. *com. addit.* 535. 1-6 trans. B. Croke, *The Chronicle of Marcellinus*; cf. chapter 2, p. 55.

him. Justinian sends Narses with lots of troops and money and he was able to kill Totila and his successor Teias. Italy finally had peace.

While Procopius' narrative does add an abundant amount of descriptive details to our understanding of Justinian's wars, some points can be challenged by the information provided in the other sources. For the war in North Africa, Pseudo-Zachariah and Victor of Tonnuna challenge Procopius' information as to how Justinian was persuaded to invade North Africa. The discrepancy between Victor of Tonnuna and Procopius can be explained by each author's use of propaganda for their intended audience<sup>300</sup> but it does not explain why Procopius does not mention African nobles mentioned by Pseudo-Zachariah.

After Solomon's death the Laguatans were able to capture Hadrumetum with a letter claiming to be from John, son of Sisiniola, stating that these rebels were captured in battle and should be brought into the city to be slaves according to the other sources. However, Procopius states that a certain Himerus was captured and was forced by the Moors to lie and say that the Moors with him were to be slaves in Hadrumetum allowing the Moors to capture the city.<sup>301</sup>

Also for the war in North Africa, religion is a reason Justinian gives to invade. In Justinian's legal measures it consistently appears. We can also clearly see it was a priority, when one looks at the amount and the design of churches built or reconstructed during Justinian's reign. However, Procopius does not mention anything about religion as a motivation or even as an explanation for a victory. This is probably because religion would not fit into his narrative because of his genre, even though he occasionally refers to God. The God he refers to is attributed to fortune instead of the Christian god because of his genre. Even though Procopius

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<sup>300</sup> W. E. Kaegi, art. cit. (n.63) p. 26.

<sup>301</sup> Coripp. *Ioh.* 4.1-70; Proc. BV. 2.23.11-15.

does not mention religion in his narrative this does not necessarily mean that religion was not one of the reasons that Justinian went to war against the Vandals. It is logical that religion would have been a factor, given that Justinian emphasizes religion heavily in his laws.

The reason for the contempt towards Athalaric and Amalasantha's reign is contested. According to Jordanes, the Goths felt contempt towards Athalaric and Amalasantha because, instead of fighting, they gave land in Gaul to the Franks which Theoderic and Theoderic's father had once seized. However, Procopius states that Vitigis gave these lands to the Franks in order to complete a deal for soldiers from the Franks.<sup>302</sup> Procopius explains that the contempt from the Gothic nobles was because they wanted Athalaric to be raised and taught in a more barbarian fashion instead of a Roman style upbringing and that Amalasantha wanted to kill Athalaric and rule by herself.

After the capture of Sicily, Theodahad sent the bishop Agapitus to try and persuade Justinian to cancel his planned invasion but he never followed through. Procopius never mentions Agapitus because he states that Theodahad was willing to give up Italy to Justinian in exchange for land. Theodahad changes his mind after he learns of Mundo's defeat in Dalmatia. When Belisarius crosses into Campania, the timeline of events are inconsistent in our sources up until Theodahad is killed. While Procopius' and Marcellinus Comes' timeline of events are consistent with each other, except Procopius having more details about the siege of Naples and explaining why Theodahad was killed, but the variations in the *Romana* and the *Getica*, potentially put Procopius' sequence of events in doubt. Lastly, the description of the siege of Naples is portrayed differently in the sources than it is in Procopius. The sources portray

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<sup>302</sup> Jord. *Get.* 305; Proc. BG. 1.13.14-29.

Belisarius' entry into Naples as a slaughter of all Goths and revolting Romans. Procopius however, blames this slaughter on the Massagetai (who are not Roman) and claims that Belisarius told his troops not to use violence against the people.

All of this shows that historians and scholars rely heavily on Procopius' account of Justinian's wars in North Africa and Italy and Justinian's reign in general. If he had written about Spain we would not have this extreme lack of knowledge about the events that took place in the campaign against the Visigoths. Even though Jordanes does give a sort of narrative for the wars in North Africa and Italy with the information we would have without Procopius would be very limited. The sources do provide very broad information about these wars but they would not provide enough detail on their own to answer the most basic of questions like why? or how? And would lack explanation to the question who? This is especially true for the deeds of commanders and individual soldiers to whom Procopius attributes certain successes to, which the other sources ascribe to generals like Belisarius and Narses. However, some of the information in these sources do provide historians with a different account of certain events. These differences allow scholars to look and analyze Procopius, and conclude that he might nevertheless not always provide the answers to some questions as accurately as might be expected. Nevertheless, Procopius' wealth of information allows historians and scholars to have a far better idea of what happened during these wars of Justinian.

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