

The Romans Demilitarised: The Evidence of Procopius

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The classical Romans had a powerful sense of the meaning of Roman citizenship and the obligations it imposed on the men privileged to utter the proud boast: *civis Romanus sum*.¹ Of these perhaps the most important was readiness to fight, and if necessary to die for the *res publica*. It was this aspect of the Roman character which made it possible in time of war to call up for service in the army an extraordinarily high proportion of available manpower, and to raise the vast armies and to replace the very heavy losses of the Hannibalic war.² Subsequently the same qualities won the Roman Empire.

In time the Romans granted their citizenship to more and more of the subjects of the Empire until in 212 AD the emperor Caracalla issued the *Constitutio Antoniniana* which conferred Roman citizenship on all inhabitants of the empire (except the *dediticii*).³ The expansion of Roman citizenship was however paralleled by a progressive demilitarisation of the core provinces of the Empire. Under the emperors fighting ceased to be a duty of the citizens and the Empire came to be defended by professional soldiers, who had been recruited in frontier provinces, if they were not the sons of veterans.⁴ The development stretched over centuries, but the outcome was that when the existence of the Empire came to be at risk in the late fourth and early fifth century its defence was entirely in the hands of mercenaries, some natives of the Empire, others recruited among barbarians, settled within the Empire or even outside its frontiers.⁵ The citizen-soldier could not be brought back, not even in the face of the most frightening danger.

As Livy and Polybius in their histories of the Hannibalic war enable us to study the military qualities of the Roman citizen in his finest hour, Procopius' history of Justinian's Gothic wars enables us to examine the response of the inhabitants of Italy to the hardships and calamities of 16 years of war from 536 to 552, at the very end of the classical period. Procopius' history has been criticised.⁶ It is at least in part a panegyric turning into an *apologia* of the author's patron, the Byzantine commander Belisarius. This certainly slants the presenta-

¹ A.N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Citizenship*², 1973.

² P.A. Brunt, *Italian Manpower 225 BC-AD 14*, 1971, 645-657. K. Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves*, 1978, 31-35.

³ Sherwin-White (n. 1), 380-94.

⁴ J.C. Mann, *Legionary Recruitment and Veteran Settlement during the Principate*, University of London Institute of Archaeology Occasional Publications 7, 1983.

⁵ W. Liebeschuetz, *Barbarians and Bishops*, 1990, 7-47.

⁶ Averil Cameron, *Procopius*, 1985, esp. 137-51.

tion. It is also true that the history is very narrowly military. There is very little information about the economy and the social organisation of Italy. We learn little about the political institutions of the cities and their politics, and religious conflicts certainly receive very much less attention than their importance in public affairs of the time would require. Procopius has little to say about the relations of Goths and Romans in civil life. Procopius has taken Thucydides as a model but he has not tried to compare the society and customs of the combatants in the way Thucydides has managed to do, using speeches of the historical characters in his own, often imitated, but in the last resort inimitable way.⁷ Procopius has speeches too, and his speeches also illumine the narrative, but they do so much more narrowly than the speeches of Thucydides. Nevertheless as a historian of military operations Procopius ranks high among ancient writers of history. First of all he accompanied Belisarius to Italy and could therefore describe long stretches of the campaign as an eye-witness, displaying the qualities of a perceptive and thoughtful journalist. But that is not all. Although the Gothic war involved simultaneous operations in different parts of Italy, Procopius did see the war as a whole, and conveys an explanation why the war lasted so long, and why the imperial armies came so close to being defeated by the Goths.

Procopius' *History* does not have chapters analysing why the war took the course it did. Following the example of Thucydides, he has so composed his narrative that the reader was almost bound to find the explanation which Procopius wanted him to find. In fact the answer emerges absolutely clearly: the imperial army was much too small for the task attempted by it. In the sixteen years, from 536 when Belisarius invaded Italy to spring 552, there were only two periods when imperial forces could face the Goths in pitched battle with a reasonable chance of success. The first was 538-40, when successive reinforcements, culminating in the arrival of a large force led by Narses,⁸ made possible the offensive which culminated in the short-lived peace of 540. The second started in 552, when for a second time the arrival of Narses with an unprecedentedly large army enabled the imperial forces to win decisive victories.⁹ But even so, the imperial successes in the first phase of the war (538-40) were won with numerically inferior forces.¹⁰ Belisarius negotiated the surrender of the Goths by clever and deceitful diplomacy, without having to fight the decisive battle. So it was only after 552 that the imperial armies in Italy proved themselves strong enough to win a decisive victory.

The chronic weakness of the imperial army was revealed very clearly by the rapid Gothic recovery from 540 onwards. After poor generals led a field army, stated to have been 12,000¹¹ strong, to defeat in battle, the army dispersed into

⁷ On the speeches J. de Romilly, *Histoire et Raison chez Thucydide*, 1956, is still unsurpassed. I owe what understanding and appreciation I have of Thucydides to Addi Wasserstein who made me, a historian pure and simple, teach a course on Thucydides at Leicester in my first year of university teaching.

⁸ *Proc.* VI.13.16.

⁹ VIII.26,5-17

¹⁰ VI.29.33,37.

¹¹ VII.3.4.

fortified cities. This left the Goths free to manoeuvre all over Italy and to besiege and capture the imperially held fortresses, including Rome itself, one by one and at their leisure.¹² From this time until the arrival of Narses in Picenum in spring 552 there was no imperial field army capable of challenging the main Gothic force in Italy. This means that the Gothic army must have been sufficiently powerful to carry on siege operations in one part of Italy, while yet remaining strong enough elsewhere to keep the imperial detachments inside the cities which they were guarding, and to discourage them from coming out to unite in a single striking force.

Procopius' numbers are incomplete and in part certainly unreliable. It is therefore not possible to make more than very approximate estimates of the numerical strength of either side. But we can reach orders of magnitude.¹³ Belisarius landed in Italy with 8000-9000 men.¹⁴ Casualties and detachments on garrison duty reduced the effective field army at the beginning of the siege of Rome to 5000 — surely a reliable statistic.¹⁵ With these Belisarius sustained a desperate defence for just over a year (AD 537-8). At last c. 5600 reinforcements¹⁶ enabled him to take the initiative, not to challenge Vittigis' siege-army, but to launch diversionary attacks threatening Gothic areas of settlement in Picenum and the north.¹⁷ Finally Narses, with a further 7000 soldiers, enabled him to threaten Ravenna, and to face the risk of confronting Vittigis' main force, which an attack on the Gothic capital inevitably involved.¹⁸ But even at this point Belisarius' field force of at least 14,000¹⁹ was still significantly outnumbered by the Gothic army.²⁰

Subsequent years of Gothic recovery under Totilla must have seen a steady decline of the imperial army, the losses through battle, desertion and natural

¹² VII.6.4-8. This is an important and perceptive observation, which accounts not only for Totilla's successes, but if applied to the Gothic invasion of the early 5th century might well explain why Alaric was able to manoeuvre without hindrance in Italy.

¹³ What follows is based with modifications on K. Hannestad, "Les forces militaires d'après la guerre Gothique de Procope", *Classica et Mediaevalia* 21, 1960, 136-83.

¹⁴ V.5.4: 7500 soldiers plus "many and famous" *bucellarii*. Belisarius was able to equip 7000 cavalry from his household (VII.1.19-20), but Hannestad deduces from the fact that during the siege of Rome Belisarius had no more than 5000 troops, which included a significant proportion of infantry, that the *bucellari* on this expedition cannot have been more than, say, 1500, making a total of around 9000 soldiers.

¹⁵ V.22.7.

¹⁶ V.27.1; VI.4.19; VI.5.1-2.

¹⁷ VI.7.28; VI.10.1.

¹⁸ VI.28.

¹⁹ VI.23.6: 11,000 plus the units of Cyprian and Justin to besiege Fusala, and those of Martin and John and those of John the Glutton who were to ward off the army of the Goth Uraias, *ibid* 2-4. Uraias' army was strong (VI.12.37-8), and he had besieged and captured Milan (VI.21.38-9), so the forces sent to contain him must have been considerable, say 2000 or 3000? or more?

²⁰ VI.29.33, 37.

causes not being compensated by several batches of reinforcements. Between 543 and 550 these amounted to something like 10,000 men,²¹ that is almost the strength of the field force available at the start of the second phase of the war. But reinforcements did not have the slightest effect on the overall strategic situation. Belisarius held the Italian command for a second time from 544-549, but he did not once challenge Totilla's main force to pitched battle. Meanwhile the Goths continued to reduce the imperially held fortresses. What transformed the situation was the arrival in 552 of Narses with 20,000-25,000 men.²² With these Totilla could be challenged and defeated — but even then not without difficulty.

A striking feature of the Gothic war is that the numerical strength of the imperial field army depended entirely on reinforcements brought in from outside Italy. Evidently Belisarius and his successors made no attempt — or otherwise proved quite unable — to build up their armies with Italian recruits. This is all the more remarkable in that Italians regularly took part in the defence of their cities,²³ and were even on occasion ready to take part in a sally against the besiegers.²⁴ But Belisarius was quite determined that these auxiliaries must not fight in the ranks of his field army.²⁵ He rejected their help because without training or discipline they would do more harm than good in battle. That was reasonable enough. But it is also clear that, for whatever reason, neither Belisarius nor other Roman generals gave to significant numbers of Italian civilians the weapon-training, discipline and drill which would have turned them into soldiers. Perhaps Italians were unwilling to face the prospect of becoming part of an expeditionary force, which would have taken them away from their homes for an indefinite duration. Certainly they felt no duty to fight for the Roman Empire.

Procopius tells us quite a lot about the way city populations responded to the imperial army. Sometimes they welcomed it and opened the gates, sometimes not. There certainly does not seem to have been a general feeling among the Italian population that the imperial army was their army, and that it had come to liberate them from foreign tyranny. In general the attitude of the population seems to have depended on local conditions, and especially the military situation. Italians seem to have been motivated principally by anxiety for the safety of their city and their family.²⁶ They would help imperial forces to defend a be-

²¹ See Hannestad (n. 13), 149: VII.10.3; 13.20; 27.2-3; 30.1; 39.6.

²² VIII.26.6.

²³ V.18.34; 5.20; 25.11-12 (all at Rome); VI.12.41 (Milan); VII.10.19-20 (Tibur).

²⁴ V.28.18.

²⁵ V.29.25 disorder of civilian auxiliaries throws regulars into confusion; VI.3.23-29 Belisarius rejects help of the untrained.

²⁶ In this paper examples will have to take the place of analysis of the full evidence: V.8-10 (Naples), V.14.4, 18.40, 24.14 (Rome); V.15.3 (Apulia, Calabria); V.16.1-4 (Tuscans); VI.17.1-7 (Picenum); Agathias I.12ff (Lucca). It is a feature of the war that provincial areas that had favourably received the imperial forces just as quickly submitted later to Totilla and paid their taxes to him. VII.6.4 (Bruttii, Lucani, Calabria, Apulia). One wonders whether an organisation of the notables made the decision. VII.18.20 suggests that one notable, Tullianus, could determine the allegiance of the Lucani and Bruttii. But VII.22.20: senatorial landowners, under pressure

sieged city, because the consequences for themselves if the Goths stormed the city were likely to be appalling. For the same reason they might help Gothic defenders against imperial attackers. In terms of violence, plundering and enslavement of civilians it probably did not make much difference to the inhabitants whether a city was captured by Gothic or by imperial forces.²⁷ It was well worth fighting to prevent this. It was quite another thing to enrol as a soldier and to leave city and family in order to re-establish the emperor's rule in Italy. If this is what the Italians felt, the imperial generals respected their feelings, or at least gave way to them. At any rate they do not seem to have enrolled Italians to any significant extent in the campaign to liberate Italy. There could be no greater contrast than that between the almost unlimited access to Italian manpower enjoyed by the senate in the Hannibalic war, and the seemingly complete absence of Italians from the armies that eventually defeated Totilla.

While the imperial forces depended on reinforcements from outside, the Goths had to rely on their own resources in Italy. The course of the war showed that these were remarkably abundant, and what is more, resilient, so that the Gothic army in the field at the end of the war seems to have been scarcely smaller than at the beginning. This would be surprising if the Gothic armies consisted only of descendants of the 20,000-30,000 warriors who had entered Italy with Theoderic two generations before in 489.²⁸ One would expect a closed tribal group of that kind to have been greatly reduced by the casualties of 16 years of war fought with varying fortune, and great destruction and loss of life among the population.²⁹ But this does not seem to have happened, at least not until the very end of the war.³⁰

The history of the Gothic field army is difficult to quantify. Inevitably Procopius had less information about the numbers of the enemy than of his own side, and what evidence he had was necessarily less reliable. Procopius tells us that Vittigis started his siege of Rome with an army of 150,000,³¹ and his reports of Gothic casualties in the first phase of the war add up to 40,000.³² The two totals are consistent, but scholars are agreed that both are absurdly high. Other figures lead to a smaller but still considerable total. When Vittigis abandoned the siege of Rome and marched north to protect Ravenna, he left garrisons in a number of fortified cities on the way. The numbers given by Procopius add up to

from Totilla, persuade Tullianus' peasant auxiliaries to abandon the imperial cause and return to farm work.

27 V.10.28-9 (Naples captured by the Romans); VI.21.39 (Milan captured and destroyed by Goths and Burgundians) — the worst atrocities of the war?

28 T.S. Burns, *Acta Antiqua*, 26, 1978, 457-63: 35,000-40,000 immigrants which would mean c. 10,000 warriors; W. Ensslin, *Theoderich der Grosse*, 1947, 66: 20,000-25,000 warriors; H. Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, 1988, 279: 100,000 individuals, 20,000 warriors.

29 VI.20.15-33 (Picenum, Aemilia and Tuscany — only the first an area of Gothic settlement).

30 See the — *ex eventu?* — prophecy I.9.4-5.

31 V.16.11; V. 24.3 (letter of Belisarius).

32 Hannestad (n. 13), 163.

9800.³³ When his army defended Ravenna, it was still considerably larger than the besieging force of Belisarius of c. 14,000,³⁴ and therefore presumably around 20,000 men strong. If we take into account that in a year's fighting around Rome the Goths must have suffered considerable casualties in battle and from disease³⁵ — if fewer than stated by Procopius — and that the Goths also had some, if not very heavy, losses in the south of Italy,³⁶ and that not the whole of Gothic manpower was shut up in Ravenna with Vittigis,³⁷ it follows that at the time of Belisarius' landing in Italy, Gothic military manpower cannot have been less than 40,000.

The evidence for the size of the Gothic army during the second half of the war is even scantier. Totilla operated in central Italy with a field army which we can deduce to have been over 10,000.³⁸ But the fact that he kept, without even being challenged, the strategic initiative against imperial forces divided between fortresses but in total amounting to something like 20,000, and led for five years by the very able Belisarius, suggests that besides the mobile striking force, he must have had under his command significant numbers of Gothic detachments on siege or garrison service, distributed all over Italy. In addition he was able to man a fleet said to have amounted to 400 ships. The crews cannot have numbered much less than 8000.³⁹ So the total number of Gothic troops involved in the campaign against the imperial troops in the second half of the war cannot have been much less than 20,000. In his last battle Totilla opposed Narses' army of 20,000-25,000⁴⁰ with a Gothic army that was significantly smaller though we are not given numbers.⁴¹ In their defeat the Goths lost 6000 dead and many prisoners.⁴² Nevertheless they were able to recover, to rebuild their army and to meet Narses in a second, and very hard-fought two-day battle later in the year.⁴³ The battle ended with the imperial forces victorious, but it was not a victory of annihilation. An agreement was reached, and the Goths were allowed to return to their areas of settlement in Tuscany, Liguria and Venetia, much as they had been allowed by Belisarius at the surrender of Ravenna in AD 540.⁴⁴ After the agree-

33 Hannestad (n. 13), 161. The figures could be based on those of captives when the garrisons eventually surrendered.

34 VI.29.33, 37, for Belisarius' force see n. 19 above.

35 II.4.17.

36 V.10.39: 800 prisoners at Naples; V.16.7: heavy casualties at Perugia.

37 Apart from the 4000 men of Uraias (n. 32 above) there were garrisons in some northern cities.

38 VII.26.20: a force, vaguely speaking ten times an imperial force of 1000, represented most (VII.26.15) of Totilla's army besieging Rome. See Hannestad 164-68.

39 VII.37, cf. III.11.15.

40 VIII.26.8-13.

41 VIII.30.17,36.

42 VIII.32.20.

43 VIII.35.31-33.

44 Agathias I.1.6, cf. Proc.VI.29.35-7 on surrender of Ravenna in AD 540. Procopius VIII.35.36 stating that in AD 552 the Goths agreed to leave Italy is clearly wrong.

ment of AD 552 there were still Gothic garrisons resisting in fortresses in Campania, Tuscany and northern Italy.⁴⁵ Within a short time the Goths resumed war in alliance with Franks, who invaded Italy with a massive army. The war did not even end in spring AD 555 when the fortress of Campsa surrendered to Narses together with a garrison of no fewer than 7000 Goths. Verona and Brixia were only recovered in 562.⁴⁶ The resilience of Gothic manpower through more than twenty years of war, and at times facing the Franks⁴⁷ as well as the Empire, is remarkable.

I would suggest that the Goths would not have been able wage war on this scale, and for so long, if the armies of Vittigis and Totilla had been made up exclusively of descendants of 25,000-30,000 warriors who had entered Italy with Theoderic in 489. The number of potential soldiers available at the beginning of the war, and the smaller but still very considerable forces at the disposal of Totilla right up to the battle of Busta Gallorum, imply a reservoir of military manpower greater than could have been produced simply by natural increase of Theoderic's followers.⁴⁸ The implication is that the Goths could do what the imperial government could not, that is draw on the population of Italy to man and replenish their field armies and garrisons. Elsewhere I have suggested that the Gothic institution of *commendatio* provided a means by which outsiders could enter into the Gothic ethnic community.⁴⁹ Unfortunately Procopius did not think it part of his duty as a historian of the Gothic War to explain the social organisation of the Goths. He does however mention one Velas, a Gepid, who served in the following of Ildibadus, uncle of Totilla and briefly king of the Goths.⁵⁰ He also relates that under Theoderic the Rugi and certain other tribes were singled

Evidently Procopius exaggerated the decisiveness of the imperial victory at Mons Lactarius.

⁴⁵ Cumae (Agathias I.8-11), Lucca (*ibid.* 12), Campsa (*ibid.* II.13-14).

⁴⁶ Agathias II.13.1-14.7. Malalas XVIII.492.

⁴⁷ The Franks played an important and ambiguous role throughout these events. Around 549 the Franks took control of large parts of Venetia (VII.33.7-8), and subsequently made parts of Liguria and the Cottian Alps and most of Venetia tributary (VIII.24.6) and came to some kind of agreement with the Goths to remain at peace as long as the Goths were at war with the Romans (*ibid.* 9-10). Hannestad argues that these happenings strengthened the Goths by enabling them to withdraw their fortress troops from the north and to engage them against the imperial forces (Hannestad [n. 13], 172). I think it more likely that the Goths will have kept significant numbers of warriors in their settlement areas to protect their families from the unpredictable and primarily self-seeking allies. The Franks in Venetia and Liguria are likely to have been a further handicap in the fight of the Goths against imperial forces.

⁴⁸ Possible rates of increase: E. Lo Cascio, "The size of the Roman population, Beloch and the Roman census figures", *JRS* 84, 1994, 23-40, esp. 34 n. 73 and 38.

⁴⁹ W. Liebeschuetz, *Barbarians and Bishops*, 1990, 17. It could be argued that at this time for the rural population geography and social situation mattered more than ethnic status. But then why did this not work in favour of the Romans?

⁵⁰ VII.1.43.

out and brought into the people of the Goths.⁵¹ The phrase does not really tell us very much about the status of these close allies of the Goths, but Procopius does tell us that Goths and Rugi did not intermarry. It is also clear that close relationship with Goths was not restricted to people of Germanic descent. Totilla regularly offered captured imperial soldiers the option of fighting in the Gothic army “on equal terms”.⁵² He does not explain the precise legal connotation of “equal terms”, but his narrative shows that the offer was evidently extremely attractive and often taken up.⁵³ Procopius’ wording also strongly suggests that the Goths enrolled Italian civilians, at least in the lands north of the river Po. In 540 the Goth Uraias led a force of 4000 Ligurians who would seem to have been recruited from both Goths and non-Goths.⁵⁴ Later in that year Ildibadus began the revival of Gothic fortunes by winning over little by little all the inhabitants of Liguria and Venetia to the Gothic side.⁵⁵ Liguria and Venetia included the two most important areas of Gothic settlement. It may well be that in this part of Italy a new Italo-Gothic nation was already coming into existence.

It is significant and interesting that while the Goths seem to have been able to militarise the population in Italy, as the Visigoths were able to do in Spain and the Franks in Gaul,⁵⁶ the Roman authorities were unable to do this. This was a basic weakness of the late Roman system, and one of the most important reasons why the Empire disintegrated, while the barbarians, or at least some of them, were able to build up new states. So it might perhaps be said that the Gothic war was fought between the imperial Gothic army and an emerging north-Italian, Italo-Gothic nation. But this would not be an adequate description of what was happening. From another point of view the Gothic War resembled a civil war fought out within the imperial army — as more than 600 years earlier the Social War had been a war fought between different parts of the army of the Roman Republic. It was a terribly destructive war, but battle casualties apart, those who really suffered were the Italian population. The huge city of Rome was for a time entirely depopulated.⁵⁷ Milan, then as now the capital of the north, was destroyed and its population massacred.⁵⁸ Imperial federates going home from the

51 VII.2.1-3. Θεουδέρικου δὲ αὐτοὺς τὸ κατ’ ἀρχὰς ἔταιρισαμένους σὺν ἄλλοις τισὶν ἔθνεσιν ἔς τε τὸ Γόθων ἀπεκέκριντο γένος. Cf. Thuc. I.3 διὰ τὸ μηδὲ “Ἕλληνας ... ἔς ἓν ὄνομα ἀποκεκρίσθαι.

52 VII.30.21; 36.28: ἐπὶ τῇ ἴσῃ καὶ ὁμοίᾳ Γόθοις ξυντάξονται. According to Belisarius a majority of the imperial army in Italy had deserted to the Goths (VII.12.8-9).

53 Romans in Gothic army: VII.11.11: neither Goths nor Romans answer appeal to desert Goths. VII.8.26; VII.30.8: Romans threaten to join Goths unless paid. VIII.26.6: Narses has money to attract deserters back from Goths. VIII.32.20: Narses executes Romans fighting with Goths. Such treatment of military prisoners was exceptional. See also n. 61 below.

54 VI.28.31,34-5.

55 VII.1.25, 27.

56 But the Vandals in Africa seem to have been unable to call on the general population, to judge by their defeat in a single battle.

57 VII.20.19.

58 VI.21.38.

war sold their captives to the Goths:⁵⁹ evidently not a few Italians “liberated” from the Goths found themselves literally enslaved. When a city was captured, civilians frequently, but not always, endured murder and rapine,⁶⁰ the garrison was usually given a chance to join the army of the victor.⁶¹ As we have seen very many Roman soldiers joined the Goths, but the reverse happened also, if perhaps on a smaller scale.⁶²

Moreover, while the Goths were clearly the enemy, the imperial commanders and the imperial government did not wage war on the Gothic people as such. The war was fought for the limited aim of ending the *de facto* independence of the Gothic kingdom and to bring it back under the administration of the emperor at Constantinople.⁶³ It was not a war-aim to expel the Goths from Italy, or even to restore lands now in Gothic hands to their former Roman owners. The various agreements reached, or proposed — with possibly one exception⁶⁴ — assume that the Italian Goths will keep their land.

It is in fact likely that Procopius’ account, particularly the narrative of the last stages of the war with its focus on battles and massacres, gives an exaggerated impression of the antagonism to the Goths as a people. Among the Ravenna papyri there are a few land transactions between Goths and Italians from before, during and after the Gothic war.⁶⁵ It would seem that Goths and Italians continued to interact quite normally throughout this period. One would not notice that these agreements were made in the middle or the aftermath of a bitterly contested war.

To conclude: the fact of citizenship did not give the inhabitants of Italy a sense of allegiance to the emperor at Constantinople, neither did they show any sign of desiring the return of a Roman emperor to Italy. Certainly the Italians did not feel that as Roman citizens they were under an obligation to fight in the army of the emperor of the East, or to help him to enforce his authority over the Goths. Within the imperial system the Goths occupied a regular and accepted place, that of settled federates. In the conditions of the Late Empire belonging to a formally recognised professional or occupational status group was of greater practical importance than the possession of citizenship or the lack of it. But the Ostrogoths like the Visigoths and the Vandals were not content to be settled fed-

⁵⁹ VI.22.6, see also Agathias I.14.3.

⁶⁰ V.10.29 (Naples), VI.21.39 (Milan), 50,000 peasants said to have died in Picenum (VI.20.15), cf. eye-witness description (VI.20.21).

⁶¹ VII.8.9 (Naples, but Totilla was generous to civilians too); VII.30.21 (Rusciane, but civilians deprived of property); VII.35.23 (a *bucellarius* of Belisarius); VII.36.28-9 (defenders of mausoleum of Hadrian — who had not been paid).

⁶² VI.11.20 “led them away on terms of complete equality with themselves” cf. n. 52 above; VI.19.17; VI.28.35.

⁶³ The *Pragmatic Sanction*, Just. Nov. App. VII. (554) did not restore the Italian court offices, a blow to the senatorial order, and in a sense confirmation that the reconquest was not a liberation but the establishment of a “colonial” regime.

⁶⁴ VIII.35.36, almost certainly wrong, cf. Agathias I.1.

⁶⁵ *P.Marini* 85 (523); *P.Ital.* (Tjäder) 30 (539); *P.Ital.* 33 (541); *P.Ital.* 34 (551); *P.Ital.* 13 (553); *P.Ital.* 28 (613).

erates within the Roman system. Whether aware of it or not — and they probably were aware — these groups were engaged in state-building. This was more than an imperial government, long used to command, was willing to tolerate, and in the case of the Ostrogoths and Vandals it succeeded in aborting the development.

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