"The Goths Drew their Swords Together"
Individual and Collective Acts of Violence by Gothic Warlords and their War Bands*

Guido M. Berndt

Introduction

In Germany and other German-speaking countries, there is a long tradition of dealing with the history of the Goths. Since the end of the 19th century, there has been intense academic research, and some of these early scholarly publications are still worth reading.[1] One can find an

1 In the first half of the 20th century, one of the most important works (in German) concerning Gothic history was *Geschichte der deutschen Stämme bis zum Ausgange der Völkerwanderung* by Ludwig Schmidt, that had been published between 1934 and 1941. The history of the Ostrogoths is

unpretentious explanation for the admiration of the Goths: Up to the middle of the 20th century, they have been considered a "Germanic tribe" and have been declared ancestors of the Germanic people.[2] Gothic history was German history. The traditional *Meistererzählung* ("master-narrative") told it roughly like this: Once upon a time, the Gothic people emerged somewhere in the far North (Scandza[3]/Scandinavia). From there, the Goths repeatedly launched vast migrations. After centuries of living on the frontiers and the hinterland of the Roman Empire, a powerful group of Gothic warriors reached Italy at the end of the fifth century. Here, a war-hero named Theoderic – the famous Dietrich of Bern of legendary epics[4] – founded a splendid kingdom on former Roman soil.

In the 19th century, there was a common belief that each *Volk* (people) has its own characteristic *Volksgeist* (literally meaning "spirit of the people" or "national character"), and there was a need for a unique identity based on national and cultural idiosyncrasies. The Goths were considered an especially unique, heroic and most noble nation. Many Germans were proud when considering the deeds of the Goths.[5] These notions finally led to an idea of an incessant continuation of history from the early Germans up to the German Reich.[6] Because the migrations of the Goths had once led them to the Crimean peninsula,[7] the Goths were used to legitimise the war of conquest ordered by Adolf Hitler during the Third Reich.[8] In the course of the planned re-Germanisation of Eastern

---

described in the first part, second book. Still, in 1970 this work has been reprinted.

2   For the modern history of reception: HELBLING, 1954, pp. 53-95; PIZZI, 1994/95.

3   The name appears in the *Getica* of Jordanes.

4   ZIMMERMANN, 1972.

5   The historical novel *Ein Kampf um Rom* ("A Struggle for Rome") of Felix Dahn (1834-1912), first published in 1876, was very popular and surely contributed to the widespread veneration of the Goths as ancestors of the modern German people. There are a couple of modern studies on the influence of Dahn's work, e.g. FRECH 1996; KIPPER 2002. Besides his many historical novels Dahn has also written a comprehensive history of the early medieval kingdoms in 12 volumes (*Die Könige der Germanen*, published 1861-1911).

6   BLECKMANN, 2009, pp. 38f.; VON SEE, 1972; VON SEE 1994.

7   VASILIEV, 1936; for a modern view see WOLFRAM, 2009, pp. 52-62.

8   KLETZIN, 2002.

Europe, Gdynia (Germ. Gdingen) – a seaport in Poland – was given the name Gotenhafen in 1939. Following the conquest of the Crimea by the Wehrmacht, the city Simferopol was renamed Gotenburg and Sewastopol Theoderichshafen.[9] This blatant misuse[10] of history resulted in the decline of research on Germanic peoples in Germany and Austria after World War II. Consequently, Herwig Wolfram appropriately described Gothic history as a "topic [with a] burden".[11]

Today, historians look at the history of the Goths from another perspective, in particular due to the internationalisation of scientific research.[12] Many older views and ideas that were based on exaggerated national or even nationalistic convictions have now been largely deconstructed: Germanic loyalty, Germanic sacral kingship and the *Gefolgschaftswesen* (the mode of organising the following).[13] Furthermore, the idea that the *gentes* of the migration period were homogeneous and cohesive groups, but rather heterogeneous with ephemeral characteristics, has generally gained acceptance.[14] These groups did not share a single biological origin. Rather, it is a belief in common history that gave these groups a collective identity. Such

---

9   GRUCHMANN, 1962.
10 For different forms of misuses of medieval history see BAK et al., 2009; GOFFART, 1995 focuses on Germanic history.
11 WOLFRAM, 1997, p. 194. "The topic and its burden" is a subtitle of the chapter concerning Theoderic the Amal.
12 E.g. WOLFRAM, 2009; HEATHER, 1996; GIESE, 2004.
13 Walter Schlesinger once defined "Gefolgschaft" as follows (SCHLESINGER, 1953, S. 235): "Unter Gefolgschaft wird [...] ein Verhältnis zwischen Herrn und Mann verstanden, das freiwillig eingegangen wird, auf Treue gegründet ist und den Mann zu Rat und (kriegerischer) Hilfe, den Herrn zu Schutz und 'Milde' verpflichtet." For Schlesinger these forms of loyalty already existed very early in Germanic history making references to the *Germania* of Tacitus (cap. 14). This conception was criticised by GRAUS, 1959, especially the idea of a specific Germanic element in the oath of allegiance and its sacral implications. Reinhard Wenskus has pointed out that "Gefolgschaft" is an overloaded term that does not occur in our sources and should only be used by historians when considering all the implications and traditions it transports. WENSKUS, 1992; Stefanie Dick has thoroughly analysed the whole controversy and pointed out that there never has been something specific Germanic in the mentioned fields, DICK, 2008, pp. 201-203.
14 E.g. POHL, 1998.

histories could be designed according to the current leader's will.[15] From time to time, these leaders ordered the creation of genealogical traditions for their communities.[16] Overall, the specific ethnic identities of these groups have proved to be almost entirely social constructs.[17] In Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages, ethnic identities often appear to be linked to warrior groups. So, if historians no longer consider Goths, Vandals or Lombards as Germanic tribes, what else may they have been?

Late Antique and Early Medieval War Bands as Communities of Violence

In Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages, there were social groups that mainly consisted of men who lived their lives as warriors. Their specific *Lebensform* (way of life) was violent and warlike.[18] The Goths had to have exceptional skills in this regard; otherwise, it would be difficult to explain how they managed to compete against numerous opponents throughout their history and even got Roman emperors into trouble. A research group, founded in 2009 at the University of Gießen, coined the term *Gewaltgemeinschaften* (communities of violence) for such units. These communities of violence include groups that formed, developed and became stabilised due to the use of violence within their socio-political environment. For them, physical violence determined a major, even fundamental, factor of their existence.[19] Thus, violence

---

15 WENSKUS, 1961. Wenskus ideas were accepted quite soon in German research and consequently built the starting point for the so-called Viennese School (lead by Herwig Wolfram and Walter Pohl), but it took a while since they were perceived in English speaking countries. Only in 2002 there has been published a volume that strongly criticised the book of Wenskus. GILLETT, 2002.

16 TÖNNIES, 1989; HEATHER, 1989; HEATHER, 1991, pp. 34-67; CHRISTENSEN, 2002, pp. 124-157.

17 GEARY, 1983.

18 There is an excellent study for Frankish warriors and warriorship: BODMER, 1957. No comparable work has been published for Gothic warriors so far.

19 The current bibliography on violence is vast. Important studies aiming at understanding the significance of violence include: POPITZ, 1986, pp. 43-66; VON TROTHA, 1997; VON TROTHA/RÖSEL, 2011. There are some recent general studies worth mentioning that deal with the role of violence in

existed in individual and collective forms, aided the construction of identity and was even integral to the group's self-perception. Particularly, these war bands could find extraordinary success in regions where there were power-vacuums and therefore no longer a monopoly on violence (*Gewaltmonopol des Staates* in the sense of Max Weber) by the 'state'.[20]

Currently, the term and its exact connotations have not been given precise definition in sociology, political science or historiography. In this regard, some remarks are necessary:

Violence is a resource at the hand of every single person, because human beings are fundamentally capable of violence due to their physicality. Humans are able to cause other humans or living beings pain with their bare hands: They are capable of breaking bones, strangling, drowning or beating to death. If several people come together to commit violence, the potential for injury and death increases. The use of weapons, again, increases the potential of violence. Social groups such as those described in this chapter generally make use of weapons to threaten or actually commit violence.[21]

The use of violence may form a sense of community, it may polarise and exclude, but it also determines their collective behaviour in all aspects of their lives. The success of a community of violence, as well as an individual's chances of survival, depends on one's ability to handle weapons. It is not the quality of the weapon itself, but rather the skill of the person who handles it that determines the efficacy of the weapon.

For this chapter, violence may be defined as intentional action, which aims to violate the physical integrity of at least one person. This narrow definition does not take into consideration forms of structural or cultural violence.

In Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages, there were a great many groups that could be classified as "communities of violence" according to the given criteria.[22] However, few of these groups aside from the Goths

---

different pre-modern epochs: DRAKE, 2006; HALSALL, 1998; BARAZ, 2003; BROWN, 2011.

20 SPEITKAMP, 2013. For the case of the Ostrogoths: WIEMER, 2013.

21 For the role of weapons and weaponry for Gothic warrior groups: WIEMER/BERNDT, 2016 (forthcoming).

22 WIEMER, 2013; BERNDT, 2013.

benefit from a sufficient written record. It is therefore possible to identify the activities of Gothic war bands from the third to seventh century.[23] These groups had been repeatedly taking advantage of the political and military weakness of the Imperium Romanum, then in the throes of crisis, to establish their own power by fighting and exercising violence. Their primary aim was to secure a sustainable livelihood, but they also aimed at institutionalising their gained position to enjoy economic advantages as well as gaining prestige and honour. Their actions had usually been violent conflicts with either competitive groups of warriors or, if still existing, with the imperial armed forces. Eventually, a great number of these groups were beaten, eliminated or integrated into new political systems that had been established by other, more successful groups.

The new kingdoms (*regna*), which arose on soil formerly belonging to the Western Roman Empire, were by no means the outcome of a peaceful process.[24] When written sources report on Gothic war bands, the violence collectively committed by these warriors very often takes centre stage. On the other hand, there are depictions of violence involving only a single person. These persons were frequently the leaders of a group or (at least) someone who aspired to a leading position.

Warlords

The leaders of war bands may be described as warlords.[25] Sources persistently emphasise their common individual willingness to use violence and their ability to kill foes even with their bare hands.[26] They proved themselves on the battlefield, took booty for themselves and their followers and thereby strengthened their outstanding social position within the group. Aside from their physical strength and military skills, they needed to possess some qualities of leadership. A warlord had a better chance of increasing his following as his success grew; the promise of gold and glory under his leadership could attract more warriors to his

---

23 BERNDT, 2013.
24 Overview: WOLFRAM, 1997, some case studies have been published in: GOETZ et al., 2003. More detailed on violence in the barbarian kingdoms: LIEBESCHUETZ, 2006.
25 WHITTACKER, 1993; MACGEORGE, 2002; LIEBESCHUETZ, 2007.
26 BERNDT, 2014.

20

band. Thus, the greater the number of warriors, the greater the group's collective potential for further success through violence. Solidarity within the group was based on mutual obligations. Individual warriors probably had to pledge allegiance to their leader, however, only few documents provide detailed information in this context. In this case, it may be useful to compare the ritual of how Roman commanders dealt with their soldiers in Late Antiquity.[27] In social groups, which do not have written rules or similar other stabilising institutions, trust-building measures are of great significance to strengthen personal relationships between the members of the group. To join a war band, men needed to possess exemplary physical skills and an unshakable willingness to affiliate themselves to the leader's plans. Indeed, Gothic warlords were more than leaders of brutal gangs of marauders. Even though clear political intentions are not discernible in every case, their actions were not conducted without awareness of their resulting political impact. They were neither paramilitaries nor rebels, because they usually showed willingness to cooperate with the institutions of the 'state' as long as it seemed useful to them.[28] Warlords had a much greater individual power of disposition over their hard-won loot than a Roman general, whose loot was normally considered to belong to the state. Ideally, a Roman soldier had a salary and therefore had no need to find remuneration in goods won in battle. Leaders used specific ways to distribute booty to create and perpetuate the aspired hierarchy within in the group.[29] From time to time, the "official leader" recognised a warlord's position, either on his own initiative or due to pressure, without fundamentally changing the warlord's position. This acceptance could be expressed by awarding an official military position, or by acknowledging a hard-earned lordship. A number of warlords managed to formalise their violently obtained

---

27 Roman soldiers had to swear an oath (*sacramentum militare*) when joining the army. Following Vegetius (*Epitoma rei militaris* 2,5) the wording was: *Iurant autem milites omnia se strenue facturos quae praeceperit imperator, numquam deserturos militiam nec mortem recusaturos pro Romana republica* ("The soldiers swear that they will strenuously do all that the Emperor may command, will never desert the service, nor refuse to die for the Roman state"). See BECHER, 2009, p. 169.

28 This is not the place to discuss the concept of "state" in the Early Middle Ages. A good starting point are the two volumes AIRLIE et al., 2006 and POHL/WIESNER, 2009.

29 BERNDT, 2011.

positions and to transform it into a kingdom, or at least into a position of similar status. A warlord had to be concerned about the group's social cohesion and his place at the head of the hierarchy in order to limit contests for leadership and ensure permanent stability. Only measures such as those could uphold the functionality of the community, which had to protect the position of the group and the individual against external threats. Gothic warlords constantly tried to expand their spheres of activity according to their prevailing economic and political interests. Particularly, expanded areas of operation based on high mobility[30] of the warrior communities made them dangerous players in the world of Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages. Warlords had to launch raids or wage war to become the head of their war bands – and such wars had to be conducted regularly. Not only to provide new goods to secure the provision of the group, but also to prove the legitimacy of their own pre-eminence – normally, this also included an open expression of the individual willingness to use violence. One well-studied example is the Amal Theoderic, who operated as a warlord in the east of the Roman Empire for several decades before he managed to become king of Italy in the 490s. Another warlord worthy of consideration is Fritigern who was the leader of a Gothic war band at the end of the fourth century.

Fritigern

Fritigern was a Gothic warlord, whose leading position within the Gothic-Tervingian society was most likely based on both his military competences and his family background. However, he was the leader of only one Gothic group and not king of the Goths overall. There are a number of different terms for his position: chief, chieftain or king.[31] He is one of the earliest Gothic warlords for whom there is reliable written source material; thus, it is possible to reconstruct at least some parts of his actions. He appears in at least six different late antique historical sources, largely due to the victory of his warrior group at the Battle of Adrianopel (Edirne) in 378. It is said that about 20,000 Roman soldiers

---

30 BERNDT, 2013.
31 PLRE I, p. 374.

and the Roman emperor Valens were killed in this battle.[32] Nothing can be said about Fritigern's date of birth his childhood or youth. His name seems to be a compound of the two words *fridu* and *gernus*, possibly from Gothic **Frithugairns* ("desiring peace").[33] When he appears in written sources for the first time – in the 31st book of Ammianus Marcellinus,[34] whom we have to thank for the majority of our information – he is already depicted as the established leader of his warrior community. However, he was in fact hierarchically below a man called Athanaric, referred to as *iudex* (judge) of the Goths.[35] On several occasions, this man was accepted by the Roman Emperor or by one of his delegates as partner in negotiations. Whatever the exact status of Athanaric, he did not manage to keep the Gothic-Tervingian association together.

Fritigern appears in the context of a quarrel among Tervingi and Romans, which started in 365. At that point in time, the Goths had given military support to a usurper called Procopius – which was ultimately unsuccessful – who rose in revolt against the Roman Emperor Valens. Therefore, in the Roman's view, the Goths had been in league with the enemy. Finally, Athanaric signed a peace treaty with the Romans in 369, in which the Gothic side was obviously disadvantaged, even though their military strength had not been entirely defeated.[36] They had to provide hostages and did not receive annuities, although the war band sorely needed them. This must have worsened an already difficult supply situation.

Additionally, conflicts within the Gothic community arose during the early 370s. One group, led by Fritigern together with another leader called Alaviv, consequently left the Gothic association.[37] Besides this instance, there are several historical examples of this dyarchic separation of rule within groups of warriors in Late Antiquity.[38] The two leaders,

---

32 Amm. 31,13,12.
33 His Gothic name is not sufficiently proven. In historical research he sometimes is equated with *Friþareiks,* named in a calendar fragment (in the *Codex Ambrosianus A*) in the early sixth century. SCHÄFERDIECK, 1998.
34 KULIKOWSKI, 2012 with some controversial ideas concerning the 31st book of Ammianus' Roman History.
35 PLRE I, pp. 120f.
36 The patterns of events are described in detail in WANKE, 1990.
37 WOLFRAM, 2009, p. 81.
38 Some examples are studied in CASTRITIUS, 2008.

acting independently of one another, together with their union of warriors soon aspired to an agreement with the Roman Emperor. This agreement should have guaranteed them their own area of settlement in *Thracia*, located on Roman soil. In return, they promised the Roman Emperor to behave peacefully in the future, to help the Romans with troops if required and, above all, to convert to Arian (better Homoean) Christianity, which was predominant in the eastern empire at this time.[39]

After long and difficult negotiations, the Goths of Fritigern and Alaviv were finally allowed to cross the Danube in summer of 376, which consequently made entering the Roman Empire possible.[40] However, the Goths soon fell victim to the common Roman anti-Barbarian policies and particularly to those of certain Roman officials described by Ammianus as being incompetent and corrupt. Those politicians took advantage of the Goth's existential hardship. They allowed the Goths to cross the border river (nearby Durostorum = Silistra, Bulgaria) as *dediticii* (the subjugated); however, due to heavy rainfall, the Danube had been in full spate resulting in many Goths drowning while trying to reach the opposite bank of the river.

In 377, the Gothic warrior group moved up to the city Marcianopolis, which was the capital of the province *Moesia inferior*. However, the Roman commander Lupicinus did not want the Goths to enter the city under any circumstances. He evidently feared the Goths would attack the city's population as they had already run out of food. Nevertheless, Lupicinus invited both Gothic leaders to a feast, most likely discuss the delicate situation. In the meantime, outside the city gates, considerable unrest was brewing amongst the people, leading to Roman soldiers capturing a number of Goths. When Lupicinus got word of this, he ordered the Gothic delegation to be killed, which broke with every prevailing law. Several men fell victim to this attack, probably including Alaviv, whereas Fritigern managed to escape.[41] He consequently became sole leader of the group and started to plunder the area around Marcianopolis together with his warriors. Lupicinus wanted to stop the Goths' actions as quickly as possible and sent out his soldiers. In the end, he lost the battle, apparently because his attack had been unsystematic

---

39 BRENNECKE, 2014.
40 HEATHER, 1986.
41 Amm. 31,5,4.

and overly hasty. Numerous Roman soldiers died and – which was especially shameful – the *signa* (banners of arms) fell into the hands of the enemy. As the Goths' problem of supply had not yet been solved, further raids and plundering followed.[42] This time, Fritigern chose the Thracian province as their next target, exactly the region that the emperor had supposedly previously granted to the Goths. There they freed many Goths, which had been forced into Roman slavery. In addition, a considerable number of Romans joined Fritigern's group of warriors. Henceforth, Ammianus no longer referred to these groups as *Tervingi*, but only as the Goths. By examining the emperor's reaction, the perceived threat of these actions becomes clear: On the one hand, he sent troops normally stationed in Armenia (due to the ongoing conflict with the Persians) to Thracia. On the other hand, he called his co-emperor in the West for help. Because of this massive deployment of troops – Gratian had sent several units to the crisis zone – Fritigern's Goths were forced on the defensive. Nevertheless, the battle, in which both sides suffered heavy losses, did not lead to a final decision in late summer of 377 (*Ad Salices*).[43] It must have been evident to Fritigern that he would not be able to keep up his war band without food and an influx of additional warriors. Consequently, he sought and gained the support of Alanic and Hunnic warriors who were attracted by his promise to reward them richly. This meant that Fritigern's retinue once again underwent fundamental changes concerning its compositions and military force. Fritigern immediately took the offensive and managed to escape the Roman stranglehold. The Goths once again invaded Thracia and took the necessary supplies by force. In response, and in an attempt to put an end to this "Gothic" problem, the Romans raised all available troops. The decisive battle, which could not be avoided despite the efforts of mediating legates, took place in August 378.[44] It ended in the destruction of huge swathes of Roman legions, possibly one third of the total armed forces Valens had been able to mobilise.

The *History* of Ammianus not only reflects his great dismay over the massacre on the battlefield and the battle's catastrophic ending, but also his indignation at the incompetence of the emperor and his strategists.

---

42   BERNDT, 2011.
43   Amm. 31,7.
44   BRODKA, 2009.

The historian acknowledges that Fritigern's warriors had a numerical advantage, but – contrary to other battle-descriptions – Ammianus does not praise the warlord's skills in tactics and strategy. However, although Fritigern was then at the height of his career, he was not able to establish a stable and permanent livelihood for his warrior group. They were neither able to capture the city of Adrianopel, where they suspected the emperor's treasure and war chest to be, nor take steps against Constantinople itself. Still far from the city gates, they had to evade some Saracene warrior groups, which were in the service of the Romans.[45] Up to the year 380, the sources describe Fritigern's Goths raiding and plundering at *Thessaly, Epirus* and *Achaia.* However, Fritigern probably did not live to see the *foedus* of the year 382. Their warlord managed to neither transform his military success into a stable or institutionalised position, nor win territories for a permanent settlement of his followers. At the end of the fourth century, Roman power was still strong enough to limit the influence of a Gothic warlord.

Theoderic the Amal

During the second half of the fifth century, the conflicts between the Western and Eastern part of the Roman Empire had taken a turn for the worse, making military cooperation difficult. At increasing intervals, ambitious military men were able to take advantage of the weakness of the Empire in regions where a 'state' monopoly on violence was no longer maintained. The second example for this chapter is the Amal-Gothic leader Theoderic.[46] His Gothic name is a compound of the Germanic words *þiudô* (people) and *rîkja* (mighty, rich), which could be understood as "ruler of the people".[47]

After the fall of Attila and the breakup of the Hunnic realm at the middle of the fifth century, fundamental changes took place at the north-eastern frontiers of the Roman world.[48] The Ostrogoths, who had been

---

45   Amm. 31,16,3.
46   For biographical approaches, see ENSSLIN, 1959; MOORHEAD, 1992; HEATHER, 1995.
47   On the name, see SCHÖNFELD, 1911, pp. 232-234.
48   HEATHER, 1996, pp. 151-154.

under the dominion of the Huns for several decades, seized this opportunity to reorganise themselves as an independent group of warriors. At the age of eight (or a little older) Theoderic was given by his father, the Gothic leader Thiudimir, as a hostage in the context of a peace treaty to Constantinople.[49] It is possible that he grew up in the imperial palace, or at least in close proximity.[50] Around the age of 18, he was released from custody and able to return to his people, who dwelt in *Pannonia* at that time.

Shortly after his return, most likely in the year 471, Theoderic organised a raid against a group of Sarmatians led by a certain Babai, who – it is said – was killed by Theoderic himself.[51] This raid, involving no less than 6,000 Gothic warriors, is best interpreted as a serious attempt by Theoderic to be accepted by the Gothic war band. In particular, the fact that Theoderic had killed their enemy's leader himself might have demonstrated Theoderic's undeniable right to the leadership. The chronicler Jordanes strongly emphasised that Theoderic remained in control over the occupied territory around Singidunum (Belgrade), which was a border town of the eastern Roman Empire located on the Danube.[52] Thiudimir led the Goths out of the frontier area and further into the Empire, firstly to Greece, where they plundered in Macedonia. During these campaigns, his son Theoderic again distinguished himself as a brave and competent leader, although it must be noted that he had been supported by the leaders Astat and Invilia during the attack on the city of Stobi, capital of the province of *Macedonia Salutaris*. The Goths captured Ulpiana, Heraclea Lyncestis, Larissa and other cities that were plundered afterwards.[53]

Following a number of additional raids, the Goths settled in and around Kyrrhos, where the Amal died in 474. Now Theoderic was seemingly able to claim the leadership position within the group without causing internal conflict. There is nothing to indicate a competition for the leadership, even though it is evident that Theoderic had a brother

---

49 Jordanes, *Getica* 269; Theophanes, *Chron.* 5977.
50 Ennodius, *Panegyricus* 11; John Malalas, *Chron.* 383; SHEPARD, 2006. Theoderic obviously was able to communicate in Greek and Latin, besides his mother tongue Gothic.
51 Jordanes, *Getica* 281-282.
52 IBID., 282.
53 IBID., 285-286.

called Theodimund[54], who had also been entitled to claim this position. Theoderic was evidently unwilling to share his leading position, as had been common practice in his father's time. He needed this unchallenged position within the Gothic warrior community in order to counter his strongest competitor, a man also named Theoderic who went by the cognomen Strabon.[55] At the peak of his power, Strabon was the leader of the so-called Thracian Goths and commander of 30,000 men. The Roman emperor Leo I accepted Strabon as Gothic supreme authority and granted him 2,000 pounds of gold a year. This was a considerable amount compared to the 300 pounds previously received by the Amals.

Emperor Zenon, who ascended the throne in Constantinople in 474, devoted himself to dealing with the Goths in a different manner. He tried to take advantage of the Goth's difficulties in securing a stable livelihood and tried to play them off against each other. In the beginning, the Amals had enjoyed his favour. He made Theoderic "Waffensohn" and appointed him *magister militum*. The *adoptio per arma* was an act that established artificial kinship through the donation of weapons.[56] Connected to this honour was the granting of new subsidies to the Goths. Consequently, Strabon lost considerable prestige in the capital as well as within his own retinue. This was further compounded by Zenon declaring him enemy of the state (*hostis publicus*) and ordering his allies out of the city. However, through military strength and his negotiating skills, Strabon soon revived his influence at the imperial court. As early as in the autumn of 478, he had won back his position as *magister militum*, received salaries for his 13,000 warriors, was in supreme command of two units of the palace and eventually was able to collect the subsidies and supplies, which had been due since 476.[57] Those who suffered from these intrigues were the civilian population as well as the Amal Goths, who now no longer received supplies from the Romans. To help his warriors and their families through the cold season, Theoderic again started to plunder. Malchus states that farmers in Thracia were particularly affected. The Goths, under attack by imperial troops, moved to Stobi and devastated the city – all soldiers stationed there were apparently killed during this

---

54 PLRE II, p. 1084.

55 Ibid., pp. 1073-1076.

56 Wolfram, 2006 with further examples and Kiss, 2015.

57 Malchus, *fr.* 14 (Blockley).

attack. Subsequently, Theoderic led his warriors to Thessaloniki, where the urban population remembered the Goths all too well and went into a panic. Unrest spread, statues of the Emperors were torn down and the official seat of the prefect was stormed by the crowd. In the end, the conflict was settled by diplomatic negotiations. Theoderic had again managed to force the Emperor into reacting by exercising his military power. During new negotiations with a Roman envoy, Theoderic announced that he planned to take action against the Thracian Goths with a troop of only 6,000 men. Evidently, the size of his war band had decreased considerably. Many had fallen into Roman captivity after general Sabinianus attacked the Gothic warriors in the Epirotic Mountains and Theudimund, Theoderic's brother, had abandoned his people. Thus, Theoderic's position was by no means permanently secured. This tenuous position is made clear by the consequences of a direct confrontation with Theoderic Strabon at the foot of the mountain Sondis (its precise location cannot be identified) in the border region between *Moesia* and *Thracia* in 478. Here, Theoderic's warriors, who had intended to fight Strabon alongside Roman troops, came across the enemy unexpectedly. The Roman soldiers were yet to arrive and Theoderic felt betrayed by the Emperor.[58] Perhaps due to the persistent supply difficulties and preceding defeats, many of Theodoric's warriors were discouraged and very likely considered deserting to the enemy.[59] This constituted an immediate and serious threat to Theoderic's position as a warlord.

The rivalry between the two warlords only ended with the accidental death of Strabon in 481.[60] His group of warriors soon disbanded after his son, Recitach, was unable to win the loyalty of his father's men. Many of them then joined the Amal warlord. Now substantially strengthened, Theoderic restarted his policy of manipulating the Roman Emperor by threatening the use of violence. He let his men devastate Greece, which again resulted in raids on the population.

Violence only ended when the Emperor had given the promise to promote Theoderic to the office of *magister militum*, appointed him *patricius* and promised him the consulship for the year 484. Theodoric

---

58   IBID., *fr.* 16 (BLOCKLEY).
59   IBID., *fr.* 18 (BLOCKLEY).
60   Marcellinus Comes, *Chron.* a. 481.

received this extraordinary honour and it was openly displayed through the erecting of a statue at Constantinople. Only two years later, the Emperor and Theoderic were again engaged in open conflict. The Goths, as usual, reacted to this dispute with the exertion of excessive violence. In the meantime, the Goths had set up their base of operations in Novae. From there, Theoderic let his warriors plunder and prepared to launch an offensive against the capital itself. After the Goths occupied several suburbs and cut off one of the city's aqueducts, the Emperor realised the seriousness of the situation and was only able to induce the Goths to leave by endowing them richly.[61] The threats of Theoderic had once again been successful. The withdrawal of his warriors to Italy in 488 must have been a relief for Eastern Rome.

Together with a group of warriors, which was considered very large for the 5th century – estimates give a number of 20,000 battle-hardened men (plus dependents) – Theoderic moved to Italy to overturn the rule of Flavius Odoacer on behalf of the Emperor Zenon in 489.[62] At that time, Theoderic's positions as leader of his warriors was indisputable. Nevertheless, during the previous 15 years he repeatedly experienced how brittle the group's social cohesion could be if he was not able to satisfy the needs of his followers. Particularly, during periods when he was not able to achieve military success, the danger of internal disintegration increased. To prevent such situations in the future, he searched for and found an alternative concept of power in Italy. However, he first needed to get rid of Odoacer and his warriors, who had already been in power in Italy for more than a decade.[63]

The course of the four years of war cannot be reconstructed in detail, as coherent reports did not survive. The sources contain indications of two larger battles, namely the Battle of Verona in September 489 and the

---

61 John of Antioch, *fr.* 214,8-9; Marcellinus Comes, *Chron*. a. 487; *Anonymus Valesianus* 11,49: *cui Theodericus pactuatus es tut, si victus fuisset Odoacar, pro merito laborum suorum loco eius, dum adveniret, tantum praeregnaret.* Much ink has been spent on the meaning of these words. See the recent argument ARNOLD, 2014, pp. 66-68.

62 Jordanes, *Getica* 289-290; Jordanes, *Romana* 348; *Anonymus Valesianus* 11,49; Procopios, *BG* 1,1,9; Theophanes Confessor, *Chron*. A.M. 5977; Evagrius Scholasticus, *HE* 3,27.

63 In the year 476 Odoacer had dethroned the Roman Emperor Romulus (Augustulus) and set himself up as ruler of Italy.

Battle of the Adda (Addua) near Milan in August 490.[64] Although the Goths emerged as the victor in both battles, Odoacer's resistance had not yet been broken. Theoderic had to besiege the capital Ravenna, where his opponent had entrenched himself.[65] It was only in March 493 that the Gothic warriors were able to enter the city. Odoacer withdrew and peace negotiations commenced. After four years of violence, an agreement was concluded. Then, Odoacer fell victim to an assassination attempt at a banquet, which ostensibly had been organised to support the peacekeeping.[66] The early Byzantine historian John of Antioch, who wrote his work at the beginning of the 7th century, describes this in terms of blood feud:

> "Theoderic and Odoacar agreed in a treaty with each other that both should rule the Roman Empire, and thereafter they talked together and frequently went to see each other. But ten days had not passed when Odoacar was at Theoderic's headquarters and two of the latter's henchmen came forward as though suppliants and grasped Odoacar's hands. Therewith those hidden in ambush in the rooms on either side rushed out with their swords. They were panic-stricken at the sight of their victim, and when they did not attack Odoacar, Theoderic himself rushed forward and struck him with a sword on the collarbone. When he asked 'Where is God?' Theoderic answered, 'This is what you did to my friends.' The fatal blow pierced Odoacaer's body as far as the hip, and they say Theoderic explained, 'There certainly wasn't a bone in this wretched fellow.'"[67]

There is no additional evidence to verify the event taking place as Johannes von Antioch describes it; he wrote a century later and, besides, he used sources, which are no longer identifiable. It is also not clear which family members Theoderic meant here and how they had lost their lives, but another source[68] suggests that Odoacer is said to have killed relatives of the Amal. Theoderic also had Odoacer's family members

---

64   *Anonymus Valesianus* 11,53. Cassiodor, *Chron*. a. 490.
65   Jordanes, *Getica* 293; Procopius, *BG* 1,1,14-15; Marcellinus Comes, *Chron*. 489.
66   *Anonymus Valesianus* 11,55. The killing is mentioned in a couple of sources.
67   John of Antioch, *fr*. 307.
68   Ennodius, *Panegyricus* 25.

killed, including his wife Sunigild, his son Thela and some of his close followers. Whatever the precise details, it is evident that Theoderic carried out a bloody purge that destroyed both the family and the political support of Odoacer. Consequently, even Hunulf (Onoulphus[69]), Odoacer's brother, was killed by an arrow as he ran for shelter in a church in Ravenna.[70] Interestingly, the *Anonymus Valesianus*, two (now) fragmentary Latin chronicles compiled in the middle of the sixth century, tells us that Odoacer himself planned to eliminate Theoderic. The Amal, as on many previous occasions, committed a murder from which his men – if we believe the sources – had shied away at the last moment. By the means of a single sword stroke, Theoderic proved his personal ability to perform violence and (judging from a modern perspective) his cold-bloodedness. It is not clear if Theoderic also bore a sword in times of peace; however, the fact that he was repeatedly able to kill enemies with a surprise blow suggests that this was the case, at least at the beginning of his kingship in Italy.[71]

Individual violence of "ordinary" Gothic warriors rarely appears in the sources. Numerous examples illustrate that Gothic warriors did not hesitate to use their swords off the battlefield. One such incident took place in the city Arcadiopolis in Thracia in the course of the year 474. This episode is found in the historical work of Malchus of Philadelphia, written at the end of the 5th century, and of which only fragments are preserved. Malchus described in detail the competitive situation among the different Gothic war-bands in the Balkans and around Constantinople. The historian wrote that the Byzantine general and *magister militum per Thracias* Heraclius[72] had been ransomed from captivity of the Goth Theoderic Strabon. However, the Roman was not to enjoy his newly won freedom for long:

> "When he was making a public appearance at Arcadiopolis, some Goths rushed up to him, and one of them struck him hard on the shoulder as he was walking along. One of Heraclius' escorts rebuked the Goth, saying,

---

69 PLRE II, p. 806.
70 John of Antioch, *fr*. 214; *Chronica Gallica 511*, 670.
71 He had – for example – killed the son of Theoderic Strabon, Recitach, on the open road in a suburb of Constantinople (Bonophatianae) in 484. John of Antioch, *fr*. 214,3.
72 PRLE II, pp. 541f. (Heraclius 4).

'Don't you know who you are, man? Don't you know whom you struck?'
The other replied that he knew very well and was going to bring him to a
nasty end. The Goths drew their swords together and one cut of
Heraclius' head, another his hands. They say that Heraclius was killed in
revenge."[73]

This instance of violence was the outcome of a prolonged conflict and
took the form of a brutal act of revenge. Revenge appears as a recurring
motive for action in our sources, not only for the Goths but also for other
groups of warriors in early medieval times. Retribution without
boundaries and rules could set into motion a cycle of vengeance that
threatened the survival of the entire group.

To return to Theoderic: One might say that the killing of Odoacer
marks the end of Theoderic's warlord-career. He became king over the
Goths and Romans in Italy, thus marking a fundamental change to his
exercise of power.[74] Very little is known about the internal arrangement
of Gothic war-bands. Until the conquest of Italy, the warlord Theoderic
always acted as supreme commander who stood in the thick of the fight
and did not operate as a strategist in the background, as recommended by
eastern Roman military theorists. As far as is known, Theoderic no longer
personally participated in military campaigns as a king, but charged
experienced military men of the Gothic nobility with this task, making
them *ad hoc* leaders of his troops. His successors, Athalaric and
Theodahad, also retired from personal combat. Theoderic had
transformed the war band, which had been a mobile association for
decades, into a standing army and settled or trained these soldiers in
garrisons. He had an impregnable capital at his disposal and lived more
or less peacefully with the Italian population for most of the time.

Meanwhile, Anastasius I had ascended the throne in Constantinople.
During the following years, Theoderic worked to gain his recognition by
repeatedly sending ambassadors. Eventually, in an agreement in 497,[75]
the Emperor acknowledged Theoderic's position in Italy. This

---

73 Malchus, *fr.* 6,2 (Blockley).
74 Wiemer, 2013 with a detailed description of the transformation of the Gothic
     war-band into a regular standing army and Wiemer, 2014 with a profound
     comparison of the different concepts of power of Odoacer and Theoderic in
     Italy.
75 *Anonymus Valesianus* 12,64; Procopius, *BG* 1,1,26.

arrangement was clearly illustrated by the transfer of the *ornamenta palatii* to Theoderic. These symbols of power had been sent by Odoacer to Constantinople after the displacement of Emperor Romulus about 20 years earlier. By this act, Theoderic's rise from Gothic warlord to established king was formally concluded. He and his followers succeeded where Fritigern and his men had failed a century earlier.

Bibliography

Sources

Anonymus Valesianus, ed. by THEODOR MOMMSEN (MGH AA 9), Berlin 1892 (repr. Munich 1981), pp. 306-328.

Ammianus Marcellinus, ed. by WOLFGANG SEYFARTH, *Rerum gestarum libri qui supersunt*, Leipzig 1978; trans. by JOHN C. ROLFE (LCL), Cambridge 1935-1940.

Cassiodor, *Chronica*, ed. by THEODOR MOMMSEN (MGH AA 11), Berlin 1894 (repr. 1961), pp. 109-161.

Chronica Gallica, ed./trans. by RICHARD BURGESS, in: Society and Culture in Late Antique Gaul. Revisiting the Sources. ed. by RALPH W. MATHISEN/DANUTA SHANTZER, Aldershot 2001, pp. 85-100.

Ennodius, *Panegyricus*, ed./trans. by CHRISTIAN ROHR, Der Theoderich-Panegyricus des Ennodius (MGH Studien und Texte 12), Hannover 1995.

Evagrius Scholasticus, *The Ecclesiastical History*, trans. by MICHAEL WHITBY (Translated Texts for Historians 33), Liverpool 2000.

John of Antioch, *fr.*, ed. by UMBERTO ROBERTO, *Ioannis Antiocheni Fragmenta ex Historia chronica*, Berlin/New York 2005; trans. by COLIN D. GORDON, The Age of Attila. Fifth-Century Byzantium and the Barbarians, Michigan 1960.

Jordanes, *Getica*, ed. by THEODOR MOMMSEN, De origine actibusque Getarum (MGH AA 5/1), Berlin 1882 (repr. Munich 1982), pp. 53-183; trans. by CHARLES C. MIEROW, Princeton 1915.

Johannes Malalas, *Chronographia*, ed. by JOHANNES THURN (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 35), Berlin/New York 2000; trans. by

ELIZABETH JEFFREYS et al. (Byzantina Australiensia 4), Melbourne 1986.

Malchus, *fr.*, Malchus of Philadelphia, Fragments, ed./trans. by ROGER C. BLOCKLEY, The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire. Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus and Malchus (ARCA Classical and Medieval Texts, Papers and Monographs 10) Liverpool 1983, pp. 401-462.

Marcellinus Comes, *Chronicon*, ed. by THEODOR MOMMSEN (MHG AA 11), Berlin 1894 (repr.1961), pp. 37-108, trans. by BRIAN CROKE, The Chronicle of Marcellinus (Byzantina Australiensia 7), Sydney 1995.

Procopius, *BG*, ed. by JAKOB HAURY, Procopius Caesariensis, Opera omnia, Vol. II: De Bellis libris V-III, Leipzig 1905 (repr. 1963); trans. by ANTŌNIOS KALDELLĒS, The Wars of Justinian, translated by Henry B. Dewing, revised and modernized, with an introduction and notes, maps and genealogies by Ian Mladjov, Indianapolis 2014.

Theophanes, Confessor, *Chronicle*, trans. by CYRIL MANGO/ROGER SCOTT, The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor. Byzantine and Near Eastern History AD 284-813, Oxford 1997.

Vegetius, *Epitoma rei militaris*, trans. by NICHOLAS P. MILNER (Translated Texts for Historians 16), Liverpool 1993 (second revised edition 2011).

Literature

AIRLIE, STEWARD et al. (eds.), Staat im frühen Mittelalter (Forschungen zur Geschichte des Mittelalters 11), Vienna 2006.

ARNOLD, JONATHAN, Theoderic and the Roman Imperial Restoration, Cambridge 2014.

BAK, JÁNOS M. et al. (eds.), Gebrauch und Missbrauch des Mittelalters, 19.-21. Jahrhundert (MittelalterStudien 17), Munich 2009.

BARAZ, DANIEL, Medieval Cruelty. Changing Perceptions, Late Antiquity to the Early Modern Period, Ithaca/London 2003.

BECHER, MATTHIAS, 'Herrschaft' im Übergang von der Spätantike zum Frühmittelalter. Von Rom zu den Franken, in: Von der Spätantike zum Frühmittelalter. Konzeptionen und Befunde (Vorträge und Forschungen 70), ed. by THEO KÖLZER/RUDOLF SCHIEFFER, Ostfildern 2009, pp. 163-188.

BERNDT, GUIDO M., Murder in the Palace. Some Consideration on Assassinations in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages, in: Rules and Violence – Regeln und Gewalt. On the Cultural History of Collective Violence from Late Antiquity to the Confessional Age – Zur Kulturgeschichte der kollektiven Gewalt von der Spätantike bis zum konfessionellen Zeitalter, ed. by CORA DIETL/TITUS KNÄPPER, Berlin/Boston 2014, pp. 31-47.

ID., Aktionsradien gotischer Kriegergruppen, in: Frühmittelalterliche Studien 47 (2013), pp. 7-52.

ID., Beute, Schutzgeld und Subsidien. Formen der Aneignung materieller Güter in gotischen Kriegergruppen, in: Lohn der Gewalt. Beute-praktiken von der Antike bis zur Neuzeit (Krieg in der Geschichte 72), ed. by HORST CARL/HANS-JÜRGEN BÖMELBURG, Paderborn et al. 2011, pp. 121-147.

BLECKMANN, BRUNO, Die Germanen. Von Ariovist bis zu den Wikingern, Munich 2009.

BODMER, JEAN-PIERRE, Der Krieger der Merowingerzeit und seine Welt. Eine Studie über Kriegertum als Form menschlicher Existenz im Frühmittelalter, Zürich 1957.

BRENNECKE, HANNS CHRISTOF, Introduction. Framing the Historical and Theological Problems, in: Arianism. Roman Heresy and Barbarian Creed, ed. by GUIDO M. BERNDT/ROLAND STEINACHER, Farnham 2014, pp. 1-19.

BRODKA, DARIUSZ, Einige Bemerkungen zum Verlauf der Schlacht bei Adrianopel (9. August 378), in: Millennium 6 (2009), pp. 265-279.

BROWN, WARREN C., Violence in Medieval Europe, London 2011.

CASTRITIUS, HELMUT, Das vandalische Doppelkönigtum und seine ideell-religiösen Grundlagen, in: Das Reich der Vandalen und seine (Vor-)geschichten (Forschungen zur Geschichte des Mittelalters 13), ed. by GUIDO M. BERNDT/ROLAND STEINACHER, Vienna 2008, pp. 79-86.

CHRISTENSEN, ARNE SØBY, Cassiodorus, Jordanes and the History of the Goths. Studies in a Migration Myth, Kopenhagen 2002.

DAHN, FELIX, Die Könige der Germanen. Das Wesen des ältesten König-tums der germanischen Stämme (Teil 2: Die kleineren gotischen Völker – Die Ostgothen, München 1861; Teil 3: Verfassung des

ostgotischen Reiches in Italien, Würzburg 1866, Teil 4: Anhänge zur dritten Abtheilung, Würzburg 1866).

DICK, STEFANIE, Der Mythos vom "germanischen" Königtum. Studien zur Herrschaftsorganisation bei den germanischsprachigen Barbaren bis zum Beginn der Völkerwanderungszeit (RGA Ergänzungsbände 60) Berlin/New York 2008.

DRAKE, HAROLD A. (ed.), Violence in Late Antiquity. Perceptions and Practices, Aldershot 2006.

ENSSLIN, WILHELM, Theoderich der Große, Munich, 1947, 2nd ed.,1959.

FRECH, KURT, Felix Dahn. Die Verbreitung völkischen Gedankenguts durch den historischen Roman, in: Handbuch zur "Völkischen Bewegung" 1871–1918, ed. by UWE PUSCHNER et al., Munich et al. 1996, pp. 685-698.

GEARY, PATRICK J., Ethnic Identity as a Situational Construct in the Early Middle Ages, in: Mitteilungen der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien 113 (1983), pp. 15-26.

GIESE, WOLFGANG, Die Goten (Urban-Taschenbücher 597), Stuttgart 2004.

GILLETT, ANDREW (ed.), On Barbarian Identity: Critical Approaches to Ethnicity in the Early Middle Ages (Studies in the Early Middle Ages 4), Turnhout 2002.

GOETZ, HANS-WERNER et al. (eds.), Regna and Gentes. The Relationship between Late Antique and Early Medieval Peoples and Kingdoms in the Transformation of the Roman World (The Transformation of the Roman World 13), Leiden/Boston 2003.

GOFFART, WALTER, Two Notes on Germanic Antiquity Today, in: Traditio 50 (1995), pp. 9-30.

GRAUS, FRANTIŠEK, Über die sog. Germanische Treue, Historica I., Prag 1959.

GRUCHMANN, LOTHAR, Nationalsozialistische Großraumordnung (Schriftenreihe der Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte 4), Munich 1962.

HALSALL, GUY (ed.), Violence and Society in the Early Medieval West, Woodbridge 1998.

HEATHER, PETER, The Goths (The Peoples of Europe), Malden/MA 1996.

ID., Theoderic, King of the Goths, in: Early Medieval Europe 4 (1995), pp. 145-173.

ID., Goths and Romans 332-489, Oxford 1991.

ID., Cassiodorus and the Rise of the Amals. Genealogy and the Goths under Hun Domination, in: Journal of Roman Studies 79 (1989), pp. 103-128.

ID., The Crossing of the Danube and the Gothic Conversion, in: Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies 27/3 (1986), pp. 289-318.

HELBLING, HANNO, Goten und Vandalen. Wandlung der historischen Realität, Zürich 1954.

KIPPER, RAINER, Der völkische Mythos. "Ein Kampf um Rom" von Felix Dahn, in: Der Germanenmythos im deutschen Kaiserreich. Formen und Funktionen historischer Selbstthematisierung, ed. by ID., Göttingen 2002, pp. 118-150.

KISS, ATTILA, Per arma adoptio. Eine gotische in den früh-mittelalterlichen schriftlichen Quellen, in: Romania Gothica II. The Frontier World: Romans, Barbarians and Military Culture (Proceedings of the International Conference held at the Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, 1-2 October 2010), ed. by TIVADAR VIDA, Budapest 2015, pp. 95-108.

KLETZIN, BIRGIT, Europa aus Rasse und Raum. Die national-sozialistische Idee der Neuen Ordnung (Region – Nation – Europa 2), Münster et al., 2nd ed., 2002.

LIEBESCHUETZ, JOHN H. W. G., Warlords and Landlords, in: A Companion to the Roman Army, ed. by PAUL ERDKAMP, Malden/MA 2007, pp. 479-494.

ID., Violence in the Barbarian Successor Kingdoms, in: Violence in Late Antiquity. Perceptions and Practices, ed. by HAROLD A. DRAKE, Aldershot 2006, pp. 37-46.

MACGEORGE, PENNY, Late Roman Warlords, Oxford 2002.

MOORHEAD, JOHN, Theoderic in Italy, Oxford 1992.

NEUHAUS, STEFAN, 'Das Höchste ist das Volk, das Vaterland!'. Felix Dahns "Ein Kampf um Rom" (1876), in: ID., Literatur und nationale Einheit in Deutschland, Tübingen 2002, pp. 230-243.

PIZZI, ANTONIO, Teoderico nella grande storiografia europea, in: Romanobarbarica 13, (1994/95), pp. 259-282.

PLRE = MARTINDALE, JOHN R., The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire. Vol. I: A.D. 260-395, Cambridge 1971; Vol. II: 395-527, Cambridge 1980.

POHL, WALTER, Conceptions of Ethnicity in Early Medieval Studies, in: Debating the Middle Ages. Issues and Readings, ed. by LESTER K. LITTLE/BARBARA H. ROSENWEIN, Malden/MA. 1998, pp. 13-24.

POHL, WALTER/WIESNER, VERONIKA (eds.), Der Frühmittelalterliche Staat – Europäische Perspektiven (Forschungen zur Geschichte des Mittelalters 16), Vienna 2009.

POPITZ, HEINRICH, Phänomene der Macht, Tübingen, 2nd ed.,1986.

SCHÄFERDIEK, KNUT, Das gotische liturgische Kalenderfragment – Bruchstück eines Konstantinopeler Martyrologs, in: Zeitschrift für Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 79 (1988), pp. 116-137.

SCHLESINGER, WALTER, Herrschaft und Gefolgschaft in der germanisch-deutschen Verfassungsgeschichte, in: Historische Zeitschrift 176 (1953), pp. 225-275.

SCHMIDT, LUDWIG, Geschichte der deutschen Stämme bis zum Ausgang der Völkerwanderung, Berlin 1904-1918. Bd. 1: Die Ostgermanen, Munich, 2nd ed.,1941 (repr. 1970).

SCHÖNFELD, MORITZ, Wörterbuch der altgermanischen Personen- und Völkernamen nach der Überlieferung des klassischen Altertums, Heidelberg 1911.

VON SEE, KLAUS, Deutsche Germanen-Ideologie, Frankfurt a. M. 1972.

SHEPARD, JONATHAN, Manners maketh Romans? Young Barbarians at the Emperor's Court, in: Byzantine Style, Religion and Civilization, ed. by ELIZABETH M. JEFFREYS, Cambridge 2006, pp. 135-158.

SPEITKAMP, WINFRIED, Gewaltgemeinschaften, in: Gewalt. Ein interdisziplinäres Handbuch, ed. by CHRISTIAN GUDEHUS/MICHAELA CHRIST, Stuttgart 2013, pp. 184-190.

ID., Barbar, Germane, Arier. Die Suche nach der Identität der Deutschen, Heidelberg 1994.

TÖNNIES, BERNHARD, Die Amalertradition in den Quellen zur Geschichte der Ostgoten. Untersuchungen zu Cassiodor, Jordanes, Ennodius und den Excerpta Valesiana (Beiträge zur Altertums-wissenschaft 8), Hildesheim et al. 1989.

VON TROTHA, TRUTZ, Zur Soziologie der Gewalt, in: Soziologie der Gewalt (Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie. Sonderheft 37), ed. by ID., Opladen/Wiesbaden, 1997, pp. 9-56.

VON TROTHA, TRUTZ/RÖSEL, JAKOB (eds.), On Cruelty. Sur la cruauté. Über Grausamkeit, Cologne 2011.

VASILIEV, ALEXANDER, The Goths in the Crimea, Cambridge/MA 1936.

WANKE, ULRICH, Die Gotenkriege des Valens. Studien zu Topographie und Chronologie im unteren Donauraum von 366 bis 378 n. Chr. (Europäische Hochschulschriften, Reihe 3, Geschichte und ihre Hilfswissenschaften 142), Frankfurt a. M. et al. 1990.

WENSKUS, REINHARD, Die neuere Diskussion um Gefolgschaft und Herrschaft in Tacitus' Germania, in: Beiträge zum Verständnis der Germania des Tacitus, Teil II. (Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen. Phil.-hist. Klasse, 3. Folge 195), ed. by GÜNTER NEUMANN/HENNING SEEMANN, Göttingen 1992, p. 311-331.

ID., Stammesbildung und Verfassung. Das Werden der frühmittelalterlichen gentes, Köln/Graz 1961.

WHITTACKER, DICK, Landlords and Warlords in the Later Roman Empire, in: War and Society in the Roman World, ed. by JOHN RICH/GRAHAM SHIPLEY, London/New York 1993, pp. 277-302.

WIEMER, HANS-ULRICH, Odovakar und Theoderich. Herrschaftskonzepte nach dem Ende des Kaisertums im Westen, in: Chlodwigs Welt. Organisation von Herrschaft um 500 (Roma Aeterna. Beiträge zu Spätantike und Frühmittelalter 3), ed. by MISCHA MEIER/STEFFEN PATZOLD, Stuttgart 2014, pp. 293-338.

ID., Die Goten in Italien. Wandlungen und Zerfall einer Gewaltgemeinschaft, in: Historische Zeitschrift 296 (2013), pp. 593-628.

WIEMER, HANS-ULRICH/BERNDT, GUIDO M., Instrumente der Gewalt. Bewaffnung und Kampfesweise gotischer Kriegergruppen, in: Millennium 13 (2016) [forthcoming].

WOLFRAM, HERWIG, Die Goten. Von den Anfängen bis zur Mitte des sechsten Jahrhunderts. Entwurf einer historischen Ethnographie, Munich 1979 (5th ed. 2009).

ID., Waffensohn, in: Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde 33 (2006), pp. 49-51.

ID., The Roman Empire and its Germanic Peoples, transl. by Thomas Dunlap, Berkeley et al. 1997.

ZIMMERMANN, HEINRICH JOACHIM, Theoderich der Große – Dietrich von Bern. Die geschichtlichen und sagenhaften Quellen des Mittelalters (Diss.), Bonn 1972.

41