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**Reign of Heretics: Arianism and Political Power in the Vandal and Ostrogothic
Kingdoms**

By

Christopher James Nofziger

Accepted in Partial Completion
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

Kathleen L. Kitto, Dean of the Graduate School

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MASTER'S THESIS

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Christopher Nofziger

August 13th, 2012

**Reign of Heretics: Arianism and Political Power in the Vandal and Ostrogothic
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A Thesis

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Western Washington University

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Of the Requirements for the Degree
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August 2012

Abstract

The re-introduction of the so-called “Arian” heresy into the Roman Empire as an attribute of several Germanic Kingdoms of the fourth and fifth centuries requires an explanation of why, with the adoption of so many Roman ideological and administrative structures, Arianism remained fundamental to the ideological structure of these kingdoms. Previous studies have emphasized Arianism’s role as a marker of identity in the context of Roman and Gothic interaction, but have yet to expand upon its social and political relevancy. Utilizing the Ostrogothic and Vandal kingdoms as case studies, this thesis seeks to elaborate upon the ideological and political contributions of the Arian doctrine within each context. It will be argued that, for the Ostrogothic kingdom, Arianism was used to construct a sense of precedent and longevity for the Amal dynasty of Theoderic the Great and his successors. Within the Vandal kingdom, the local focus of the Arian ecclesiastical community allowed for greater monarchical control over doctrinal decisions. These attributes corresponded with the policy of political and ideological centralization pursued by Geiseric and his successors. It is hoped that this study will contribute to an understanding of the multiple applications that Arianism held within the social structure of the Late Antique period.

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Introduction

A significant number of the kingdoms that were established by the various Germanic “peoples” possessed a seemingly unique preference for the Arian doctrine. This thesis will seek to elaborate upon the significance of Arianism within the “Gothic” kingdoms of the fifth and sixth centuries; specifically its importance within the Ostrogothic kingdom in Italy and the Vandal kingdom in Africa. These two polities have served within the conventional narrative as the two extremes of Germanic-Roman interaction. The kingdom of the Ostrogoths maintained close political relations with the Imperial court in Constantinople, in addition to supporting collaboration between the Gothic federates and the local Italian population. This relatively complacent relationship is visibly at odds with the animosity that existed between Nicene Christians and the Vandals in North Africa. These significantly different scenarios lead us to question the role that Arianism adopted within each context. Previous studies have tended to assert its significance as being part of a broader exercise of Germanic cultural definition against the resident Roman population, however such a simplistic analysis fails to acknowledge the complex role that religion served at various levels in the social hierarchy. This thesis seeks to contribute to the discussion of Arianism’s significance within these two kingdoms by elaborating upon the social and administrative functions that the doctrine held within the Vandal and Ostrogothic kingdoms, stressing the unique nature of Arianism’s significance to each political structure. It will be argued that, for the Ostrogothic kingdom, Arianism served as a marker of tradition for the Amal dynasty of Theoderic, one that helped to associate long-established legitimacy for the newly established monarchy. Arianism within the Vandal kingdom however, proved conducive to Vandal

attempts to centralize civic administration, focusing political, economic and religious activity on the urban center of Carthage.

As its own area of study, the so-called “Arian heresy” has encouraged a significant body of scholarship. Historians have deconstructed the intricacies of the Christological debates, illuminating the ways in which the doctrinal altercations that dominated the fourth and fifth centuries developed in context of the politics and ideology of the Roman intellectual environment.¹ Indeed, the period between the Council of Nicaea in 325 and the edict of Thessalonica by Theodosius I in 380 has finally been explained beyond the archetypal divisions drawn by Nicene authors, who sought to simplify the disordered search for a consensus on the nature of Christ and the Trinity. Beyond this period of open religious altercation, scholarly interest has been limited when it comes to explaining the significance of the doctrine’s persistence within the regions of the empire in the wake of its political disenfranchisement.

The solidification of Nicene hegemony by Theodosius I and his immediate successors rendered “Arianism,” along with many other creeds, politically impotent within the empire. A prolonged period of clerical disestablishment, denial of funds and active persecution broke down the ecclesiastical structure of these sects and forced them from participation within the imperial political framework. Emphasis must be placed upon the fact that, despite these attempts to establish the Nicene church as the universal form of Christianity, “Arianism” did

¹ Elizabeth DePalma Digeser, *A Threat to Public Piety: Christians Platonists and the Great Persecution* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012), advocates a sense of toleration existed between polytheistic and Christian philosophers prior to the persecutions of Diocletian that assisted in the development of Christian theology within an imperial political and ideological framework. The eventual divide between polytheistic and Christian philosophy were therefore the result of political, rather than religious, factors.

not disappear from the Roman Empire. The doctrine retained a great deal of support in populations from Rome to Constantinople and North Africa, albeit as a minority influence.

Arianism's political relevancy re-emerged almost as soon as it had disappeared within the empire, finding support within the Germanic peoples, who beginning in 365 CE established themselves permanently within the empire. The result of missionary efforts in the late third and early fourth century, "Arianism" became the primary Christian doctrine among these "barbarian" factions. The difficulty for modern scholarship rests in the significance that Arianism held within these groups. The fifth century formed a period of transition between imperial power and the establishment of kingdoms under Vandal, Visigothic, Burgundian, Frankish, Anglo-Saxon and Ostrogothic control. Rather than subverting the Roman political and social framework, their integration into these structures resulted in slow and prolonged change. Symbols and cultural standards, commonly perceived of as Roman, formed the basis for the governance and social function of these polities.

Nicene Christianity, which during the fourth and fifth centuries gradually amalgamated with the concept of *Romanitas*, remained visibly absent in the social and political structure of many of these groups. Some Gothic leaders actively supported Arianism and refused to relinquish their doctrinal preference despite acceptance of other forms of elite Roman culture. The question regarding the retention of Arianism therefore emerges within the context of this debate between concepts of "Romanness" and "Gothicness." Its significance however, has not been comprehensively elaborated upon outside of the debate regarding Gothic identity.

Identity and Gothic Arianism

Assumptions regarding the nature of the “barbarian” peoples have plagued scholarship for at least two centuries.² Partly the by-product of accounts left by Roman elites and Nicene clergy, the notion of the Germanic-barbarian outsider has prevailed in the public psyche, creating the image of a bearded individual generally garbed in furs, possessing “Germanic” notions of masculinity and a penchant for destroying objects of classical significance. Nationalist ideologies and the search for European “roots” have not been conducive to this discussion with countries ranging from Spain, Poland and Germany claiming stock in the Gothic lineage. The mindset that accompanies the artificial creation of “belonging” that is the modern nation, calls for a binding sense of association that in many cases looks for commonality in linguistic, cultural and genetic origins. As a result of this modern framework, it remains a simple progression to identify distinct social or cultural forces that create an obvious “other” as an entrenched and unrelenting opposition, pitting the Roman against Goth. These modern assumptions regarding the formation of society, in addition to emphasis placed on attributes like “nation,” “ethnicity” or religion in the creation of a personal identity, remain exceedingly difficult to exorcise from scholarship. It is the result of such discourse that the issue of Gothic Arianism has until recently remained a peripheral topic, continually reverting back to established dichotomies that, while adopting different degrees of importance between historians, anthropologists and archaeologists, remain the focus of discussion.

² Attempts to connect with a Gothic origin have gone so far as to suggest, as a 1843 work by George Perkins Marsh entitled *The Goths in New England* does, that England, the Pilgrims and American Revolution were derivative of Gothic origins. For a detailed account of the historiography behind ethnicity and its ties to nationalism, see Herwig Wolfram, *History of the Goths* (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1988), 1-18.

Ethnicity in its colloquial sense remains a difficult concept for scholarship, as its modern connotations espouse an assumed continuity with previous generations in addition to a high personal and social significance. When viewed on a broad chronological scale, certain continuities have, most noticeably in early twentieth-century scholarship, led to claims of an essentialist quality to these concepts. The vast majority of recent scholarship has distanced itself from this concept however, acknowledging that the persistence of what we may refer to as “traditional” elements of society can in fact be passed from generation to generation, but only so long as they remain socially significant and applicable. As Jacques Ellul pointed out in 1962, ethnic association is the outgrowth of political motivation which, “not only seeks to change opinions but intensify existing trends.”³ Divisions are created based upon pre-existing conditions (social, economic, ideological etc.) and are exploited in accordance with social or political issues that present themselves as conducive to a given goal. In this regard, ethnicity becomes only a piece of identity, one that can receive a variety of importance for the individual based upon the value conferred upon it by the social and political environment. The modern consensus on identity as variable and hierarchical has formed basis for archaeological and anthropological work, thanks primarily to the efforts of Edward Schortmann. Schortmann describes the concept of salient identity as, “there usually is an affiliation or set of affiliations which are used more commonly than others and whose members, as a result, share a strong feeling of common purpose and support. These are an individual’s *salient identities*.”⁴ This concept of layered and interchangeable identities forms the basis for an individual’s interaction within society as a whole, placing different priority

³ Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda: The Formation of Men’s Attitudes*, trans. Konrad Kellen (New York, NY: Knopf, 1965), vi.

⁴ Edward Schortmann, “Interregional Interaction in Prehistory: The Need for a New Perspective,” *American Antiquity* 54, no. 1 (Jan., 1989): 54.

upon social, economic, political, religious or ethnic elements according to need and context. The moment an idea, belief or practice becomes socially unnecessary, it is either changed to remain relevant or is abandoned in favor of new “traditions” that serve the contemporary needs of the individual and society as a whole.⁵ The role of ethnicity and identity therefore becomes, within modern scholarship, a matter of identifying the significance of any perceived cultural or social differences within a given context. For the Gothic peoples, heated divides often exist between scholars regarding the significance of ethnicity, although such divisions must be acknowledged to be for the most part surrounding its utilitarian significance as opposed to a natural state of belonging.

Modern study concerning ethnicity during Late Antiquity was most effectively pioneered by Reinhard Wenskus in the 1960’s. Wenskus rebuked the static interpretation of the movement of Gothic tribes following the Hunnic invasion, emphasizing the extreme change that occurred in the political and cultural loyalties of any given Gothic group.⁶ This concept opened up several new questions regarding the consistency of Roman ethnographical labels that appeared to espouse continuity between generations of Goths. Subsequent scholarship went in several different directions in order to explain this phenomenon. Distancing itself from the earlier assumptions of essentialist differentiations between Romans and “barbarians,” Herwig Wolfram transferred the origin of these divisions to tradition, allowing for both malleability and continuity of cultural elements without the assumption of ethnicity. Wolfram believed that there was a disconnection between the earlier Gothic

⁵ Patrick Amory, *People and Identity in Ostrogothic Italy, 489-554* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 236-38; 272-76.

⁶ Peter Heather, “Merely an Ideology? – Gothic Identity in Ostrogothic Italy,” in *The Ostrogoths: From the Migration Period to the Sixth Century, an Ethnographic Perspective*, ed. Sam J. Barnish and Federico Marazzi (San Francisco, CA: The Boydell Press, 2007), 32-33.

kingdom that fell in the third century and that the cultural and political origins of a Gothic identity began in the kingdoms of the Tervingi and Greutungi. This identity was carried into Roman territory under Gothic leadership in the late fourth century and assisted in the creation and divisions found in the various kingdoms. Wolfram placed communal identity upon cultural preservation within political elites, who preserved a set of traditions during the migration into the empire and subsequent absorption into the Roman military and political structure. In his own words, “[the Goths] could maintain ethnic and political identity only when commanded by their own chieftains.”⁷ His assumptions of cultural continuity between generations of Goths were significantly influenced by his straightforward interpretation of the fifth sixth century, allegedly Gothic, account provided by Jordanes. The source itself is held as an embodiment of this *traditionskern* retained among the Gothic elite, creating a sense of identity based upon a perception of common origins, which, for historians can provide a semi-historical guide to the origins of the Gothic community. Many scholars have since criticized the use of the *Getica* as providing historical relevancy prior to the mid-fourth century as the result of its fragmented authorship and source material, both of which are decidedly Roman. The *Getica* does at least appear to produce the appearance of a unified Gothic tradition, transferring the question of identity to that of a specific political and social exercise of the fifth and sixth centuries rather than extended across generations.

Several other hypotheses relating to the identity question have been posited, with variability in interpretation ranging in intensity and duration of its applicability. Peter Heather has advocated a sense of “Gothicness” that differs from ethnicity and yet advocates a certain cohesive identity amongst land-owning Goths, especially within the context of

⁷ Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, 13.

Ostrogothic Italy. “It remains far from impossible, therefore, that this unity was Gothic because the majority of its several thousand strong inner elite thought of themselves as Goths for historic reasons and found it easier to work together because of this fact.”⁸ Heather acknowledges, in a manner that is particularly conducive to distancing identity scholarship from ethnicity, that there is no need to draw from a deep past in order to assert a cohesive identity; that cohesion can be drawn from a relatively succinct period of time based upon political and social goals. The remaining question of course concerns the extent to which any sense of identity could be cultivated within these Gothic groups, a conjecture that is extremely difficult to quantify given the sparse nature of primary source material and danger of projecting modern values and equivalencies upon ancient notions of belonging.

An interpretation of Gothic cohesion similar to that of Heather has been advocated by Thomas Burns, who acknowledges the earlier lack of cohesion experienced among the Goths as confederates rather than groups defined along any “ethnic” lines.⁹ Simultaneously however, Burns asserts that tradition acted as an element of continuity that assisted in differentiating Roman from Goth stating, “The army, the priesthood, and the government – and changed more dramatically, yet they too never completely abandoned their Gothic heritage.”¹⁰ In many respects, Burns actually conflicts with Heather in his assertion that the Gothic nobility represented the strata most influenced by *Romanitas*, despite the fact that they never abandoned their Gothic tradition.

⁸ Peter Heather, “Merely an Ideology? – Gothic Identity in Ostrogothic Italy,” 57.

⁹ Thomas Burns, *A History of the Ostrogoths* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1984), 16.

¹⁰ Burns, *A History of the Ostrogoths*, 218.

Patrick Amory offers a controversial opinion on Ostrogothic identity that, in some respects, stands in stark opposition to Heather, Wolfram and Burns. Amory does acknowledge that, “there exists the putative *possibility* that a single ethnic identity formed among the people called Goths in Italy between 489 and 554.”¹¹ Imagined communities were indeed constructs that permeated the Mediterranean region, however Amory emphasizes the value placed upon alternative elements of identity (social status, political allegiance etc.) in order to diminish the significance of the term “Goth” as a label of social importance within Ostrogothic Italy. According to Amory, the frequent relocation, splitting and re-forming of Gothic groups, in addition to their integration into the military and political structure of the empire, did not allow for the creation of a unified notion of “Gothicness.”¹² One of the most substantial additions to his argument is the discussion of the issues surrounding a unified notion of *Romanitas* itself and therefore a bulwark against which Gothic identity could be formulated, a theory that is placed alongside prosopographic evidence in a number of individual cases that suggest ambiguity in relation to cultural observance.

Within each of these primary bodies of scholarship, the answer to Arianism’s significance has been tied to each respective approach used to define the relationship that existed between Romans and Goths. Herwig Wolfram makes short reference to the topic in *The Roman Empire and its Germanic Peoples*, published in 1990.¹³ His discussion of the Ostrogoths claims that Theoderic’s adherence can be traced back to his ancestral veneration, an interpretation that appears to be closely tied to *traditionskern*. As a member of the social group who stood to inherit this “kernel of tradition,” Theoderic combined “knowledge

¹¹ Amory, 42.

¹² Amory, 314.

¹³ Herwig Wolfram, “The Roman Empire and its Germanic Peoples,” 206.

concerning his forefathers with an Arian Christianity his father had already known.” It was likely in Constantinople, Wolfram argues, that Theoderic learned “how important this Christianity was for the Gothic upper class in proximity to power.”¹⁴ This interpretation makes the important connection between the Amal dynasty and Arianism, however it focuses heavily upon an active pursuit of continuity with previous generations in a manner that suggests personal affinity, rather than the specific instance that the doctrine served to legitimate his position. This is certainly not to say that personal conviction did not play some factor, however it must be acknowledged that Theoderic faced the difficult enterprise of reconciling the various political factions within Italy. The effort he placed in building various monuments to his faith suggests that Arianism played a significant part in this reconciliation and construction of a social order.

Peter Heather supports this connection between Arianism and statecraft within both the Ostrogothic and Vandal kingdoms. His 2011 article entitled “Christianity and the Vandals in the reign of Geiseric,” advocates that Arianism’s possession of Gothic linguistic elements and doctrinal opposition to Nicene *Romanitas* lent itself to the creation of a cohesive Vandal identity.¹⁵ Like Theoderic, Geiseric faced the prospect of constructing a new polity out of a factionalized group. In fact, the presence of Alans within the Vandal cohort was sufficiently strong to require the use of the title *Rex Vandalarum et Alanorum* during the reign of his son Huneric. Arianism, according to Heather, provided a common thread toward which Alans and Vandals could orient their identity. The translation of the Bible into a Germanic language created exclusivity for Roman subjects as well as increased accessibility within the Vandals

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Peter Heather, “Christianity and the Vandals in the Reign of Geiseric,” *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 50, no.01 (2007), 145.

and Alans.¹⁶ Most importantly, Heather claims, Arianism was not the religion of the empire and therefore offered him the ability to “recreate the model for his own purposes,” a point that remains vitally important and yet unrefined.¹⁷ Chapter three of this thesis will further expand upon this idea, highlighting the elements of early fifth century Arianism that allowed for this sense political autonomy as well as its intended objective.

A similar explanation is posited by Heather for the kingdom of Theoderic. While acknowledging that, “there was nothing specifically Gothic about Ulfila’s teachings,” the use of Arianism as a marker of Gothicism is argued to be “a distinctive mark of Gothicism, only in a context where the Goths were living alongside Romans who generally held to Nicaea.”¹⁸ It is this symbolic representation that Heather uses as a means to support his notion of “Gothicism” within the Ostrogothic kingdom, albeit in perhaps a less deliberate way than that of their Vandal counterparts.

This link between the creation of social distinction and Arianism has received the support of Thomas Burns and John Moorhead. Unlike Heather however, Burns rightly places less emphasis on the contribution of supposed “inherent” elements of Arianism to its favor with the Gothic peoples, claiming that the Ostrogoths, “clung to Arianism for political and social, not theological, reasons.”¹⁹ The social draw of Arianism, as advocated by Burns, rests in the strict social divisions between Goth and Roman, which created an environment where Goths, “could preserve their own strengths and traditions within the overall harmony of the

¹⁶ Heather, “Christianity and the Vandals in the Reign of Geiseric,” 145, points out that the available evidence suggests that the Germanic dialects spoken by the Goths and Vandals were mutually intelligible.

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ Heather, *The Goths* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 1996), 315-16.

¹⁹ Burns, *A History of the Ostrogoths*, 159.

Roman world.”²⁰ Arianism, according to Burns, created a distinctive marker of Gothic identity that served to differentiate them from their Nicene Roman counterparts. Moorhead adopts a similar outlook, albeit placing more distinction between Romans and Goths on occupational differences that needed to be upheld. His statement “we may suspect that for the Goths an essential feature of their Arianism was that it was not the faith of the Romans,” continues to advocate an active differentiation between Goth and Roman, one in which identity was strictly tied to the Goth’s ability to define themselves against a monolithic *Romanitas*.²¹

Amory’s conclusions regarding the lack of serious social divisions and the creation of a cohesive identity among the Ostrogoths form a strong opposition to the aforementioned explanations for Gothic Arianism. Unified identities are largely predicated on an opposing entity and therefore an explanation must still be provided for the association that existed between Arianism and “Gothicness.” This issue will be discussed at length in chapter one of this thesis, but Amory makes a far-reaching conclusion that, “the name Goth appealed to the Arian church in Italy as a means of preserving its identity.”²² This claim places an interesting twist on the predominant discourse, however it is a difficult idea to substantiate. The dearth of evidence for Arianism constructs barriers that not only inhibit our understanding of a first person understanding of Arianism and its social and political goals, but also makes a misleading assumption that there even existed a consensus within the “Arian Church” that sought to construct a religious identity.

²⁰ Burns, *A History of the Ostrogoths*, 70.

²¹ John Moorhead, *Theoderic in Italy* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1992), 94.

²² Amory, 275.

With the exception of Wolfram, scholarship regarding Arianism has largely concerned itself with reinforcing either side of the identity debate; either as a distinct example of how Goths actively differentiated themselves from their Roman counterparts or as a religious ideology that sought to forge a following out of its own oppositions.²³ It is possible that the Roman ethnic construct that was “the Goths” was realized in some fashion. As Patrick Geary contends, the integration that the Goths experienced within the empire created a scenario in which, “it was impossible for the Goths, Burgundians, Franks and other “peoples” who had become masters in the Western Roman Empire to understand themselves and their past apart from Roman categories of ethnography, politics and custom.”²⁴ It is important not to understand this statement as advocating that Roman classification created a pan-Gothic identity, but rather the term Goth did exist and was applied to certain groups within the empire by Romans and Goths. What emerges is a question regarding the degree to which individuals considered this identity to be important. What perhaps remains most pertinent however is that the scholarly basis of salient identity, which allows for the positions undertaken by both Heather and Amory, also allows for an interpretation of Arianism that goes beyond the notion of active differentiation. The ability of an individual to interact within a given social framework according to the exercise of multiple, and interchangeable identities, suggests that Arianism must have remained pertinent to the important and primary areas of interaction. On that same note, it was of course not limited to an expression of any single given scenario. In this respect, it is possible for an element of identity to serve as a

²³ Wolfram, although not espousing any form of differentiation, remains limited in his interpretation of Arianism based upon his assumption of cultural continuity. It is, of course, entirely possible that Arianism did appeal to Theoderic and other Goths on a personal level, however to assume that such adherence was based solely upon familial nostalgia lacks a utilitarian explanation for its continued use.

²⁴ Patrick Geary, *Before France and Germany: The Creation and Transformation of the Merovingian World* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1988), 2.

marker when convenient, but its application can be applied to many different circumstances. Any assertion that Arianism was retained solely upon its differentiating qualities understates the number of functions any ideology can serve within a given context.

The majority of the aforementioned arguments stress a visible and intentional division between Roman and Goth, failing to embrace the possible political and social implications of Arianism in terms of inter-Gothic relations and political utility. The goal of this thesis is to explore alternative significances that Arianism held for the Ostrogothic and Vandal kingdoms, highlighting aspects of the religion that were conducive to the creation of these new political entities and the maintenance of internal, as well as external, social relations.

Methodology and Content

In order to stress the elements of social power toward which Arianism was conducive in the Ostrogothic and Vandal kingdoms, it is imperative to establish a framework that allows us to embrace ideology in direct relation to the maintenance of power. Within of these contexts, it is important to focus on the control exerted upon meaning, which rests at the core of any association between political power and ideology. Émile Durkheim's claim that religion at its base level is a social creation must remain at the foreground of this discussion, as its applicability within the social framework is essential to its perseverance. This understanding is augmented further by Durkheim in explaining the symbolic power of religious elements and their interpretation.

Religious representations are collective representations which express collective realities; the rites are a manner of acting which take rise in the midst

of the assembled groups and which are destined to excite, maintain and or recreate certain mental states in these groups.²⁵

Religion as a “collective reality,” acknowledges the relevancy of religion as an outgrowth of social need, however the rites themselves are the means by which power can manifest itself. Asserting control over the meaning associated with ritual practice, imagery and other representations provides the ability to change thought patterns regarding social organization (often in the form of drawing political, religious and social divisions) and legitimacy. As Michael Mann expresses, the route to social power is thereby dependent upon the monopolization of the meaning associated with these representations.²⁶

The monopolization of the meaning associated with Arianism asserts itself as a priority within both of the concerned constituencies. Theoderic’s use of Arianism and its contemporary association with the Goths was used as a means of upholding the legitimacy of his created “Amal Dynasty.” By establishing a close ritual connection between the Amal dynasty and Arian practices, he hoped to create a sense of legitimacy within the fragmented Gothic contingent that would promote his position as *rex* and solidify the succession of his grandson Athalaric. In a similar manner, Geiseric and Huneric found Arianism to be more conducive to their goal of asserting meaning over practice. The unstructured nature of Arian Christianity, stemming from its exclusion within the Roman Empire, allowed Vandal leadership to assert control over the religious practices and use it to further their intention of strengthening Carthage as a political, religious and economic center.

²⁵ Émile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1915), 10.

²⁶ Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power Vol. 1* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 17.

The first chapter of this thesis will seek to clarify, within the discussion of Arianism and “Gothicness,” the base arrangement that existed between the Goths and the ideology itself. Some assumptions have been made within scholarship that either some “ethnic” or “cultural” element of the doctrine facilitated its adherence, an explanation that ignores to a great extent its Roman origins and persistent presence within the academic, philosophic and religious *habitus* of the Roman world. Indeed, the Goths *were* often equated with Arianism in the later fifth century, however this perspective, as the end of the chapter will stress, was created as a result of the relationship between Nicene Christianity and *Romanitas*, as well as the political policies of Justinian I. The explanation for this project of “otherness,” should help to facilitate an understanding of the association between the two; that it was an indefinite relationship that could be magnified, but was by no means universal.

Chapters two and three will build upon this disassociation, exploring the role of Arianism in the Ostrogothic kingdom and Vandal kingdom respectively. Under Theoderic the Great, it will be argued, the creation of the Ostrogothic kingdom created a series of internal social stresses between the king and the leaders of the Gothic confederacy that accompanied him from Thrace. In order to solidify his legitimacy as head of the confederacy, in addition to securing the dynastic succession that was to follow, Arianism was used as an element of perceived continuity with previous Gothic practices, one that fit well with the creation of an “Amal Dynasty” that Theoderic sought to uphold. The relative peaceful relationship that existed between Nicenes and Arians under Theoderic and his successors will be juxtaposed with the tumultuous relationship that existed in the Vandal kingdom. The widespread persecutions enacted by the Arian leadership upon Nicene clergy will distance itself from the ethnic and cultural elements that have remained so prominent in historiography, and instead

stress distinctive qualities of Arianism that lent it to the process of political centralization sought by Vandal leadership.

These case studies, it is hoped, will add an element of illumination to the social and political processes associated with Arianism. As a doctrine, our perspective of Arianism is all too often subject to the monolithic nature ascribed to it by Nicene authors, an understanding that is often carried beyond the beginning of Nicene domination in the late fourth century. Efforts must be made to look at the importance of religious adherence as relevant to social and political elements; emphasizing the localized significance of religion as a means of explaining the broader phenomenon of Arianism's persistence within the disintegration of centralized imperial control.

Chapter 1

The “Arianism” of the Goths

Up until about thirty years ago, discussions of Arianism during the fifth and sixth centuries promoted the notion of expulsion and re-introduction. The idea was that the policies of the Emperor Theodosius I (r.379-395), forced the so-called heresy from the Roman Empire, only to see it emerge in a new form under the Gothic kingdoms of the early fifth century. This archetype obscures the close relationship that existed between the Roman theological and social roots of Arianism as well as its continued practice in small urban and rural populations throughout the empire.

The roots of the doctrine were indeed Roman, emerging as part of a common ecclesiastical discourse surrounding the Christian God. Several different interpretations of the Trinitarian relationship formed during the late third and early fourth century and until Theodosius, the various factions vied for political power on a fairly equal, although ever fluctuating, footing. At this time, there was no archetypal “Arianism,” but rather a diverse forum of theological discourse concerning the nature of Christ. It was the intense and prolific efforts of Athanasius in the mid-fourth century that projected the idea of a unified anti-Trinitarian movement, developed as a tangent of “orthodoxy.” Many historians have in fact attributed this idea of distinct homogenous opposition to Trinitarianism to the bishop of Alexandria himself.²⁷ In reality, the Christian climate during the time of Athanasius was one of indistinctive political and religious allegiance. The continued use of the term “Arian”

²⁷ David Gwynn, *The Eusebians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 9-10.

therefore offers a misleading connotation in both its assumption of continuity with the teachings of Arius and dualistic representation of the ongoing debate concerning the nature of Christ. The bishop himself held theological beliefs that were perfectly in harmony with many of his time; stressing the uniqueness of the Father and the Son's creation from non-existence, albeit as an embodiment of His will.²⁸ As R.P.C. Hanson has made clear, the bishop never saw himself as instigating a "new" theological school, but instead following the well-established beliefs of individuals like Lucian and Eusebius of Nicomedia.²⁹ Although a few schools of thought followed lines similar to the teachings of Arius, the label "Arian" acquired negative connotations after Nicaea. The practice of attaching recognizably "deviant" titles to groups considered theologically or socially unacceptable makes it difficult to identify the actual beliefs held by these groups. Often, clergy would incorporate many distinct factions together under a single name, creating a convenient opposition against which the Church could define itself. The widespread use of "Manichaeism" or "Pelagianism" enjoyed similar usage, acting as a convenient "known" heretical label to which people could attach negative connotations. Even the Eunomian Philostorgius classified members of the Homoousion (Nicene) movement as "Arians." The diverse applications of such terms, when held alongside their negatively charged associations and rhetorical use, cannot be necessarily held as indicators of an internal identity within these groups.³⁰

²⁸ Athanasius, "de Synodis," in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers Vol. 4*, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers Inc., 1999), II.16.

²⁹ R.P.C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: The Arian Controversy 318-381* (Edinburgh, UK: T&T Clark, 1988), 127.

³⁰ Philostorgius, *Church History*, trans. Philip R. Amidon (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007), xx.

Recent scholarship has been able to deconstruct these monolithic representations, highlighting the complicated nature of religious power and affiliation during the fourth century. Prior to the dominance of the Homoousion doctrine under Theodosius I, four main fields of doctrine possessed extensive support in the post-Nicene political and theological sphere. The “Homoousions,” or supporters of the term ὁμοῖος used in the Trinitarian description of the Nicene Creed of 325, supported a strict substantial relationship between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, ascribing to them a co-eternal existence. The term was originally employed by polytheistic Roman and Greek authors, predating its Christian usage.³¹ In fact, the word preferred by Tertullian, *una substantia*, would have been translated as *mia hypostasis* or one *hypostasis*.³² By the third century, the word appears to have undertaken a certain Gnostic connotation, a conclusion advocated by Heinz Kraft as meaning “of the same kind.”³³ The first substantial use in a theological context originates from the debate between Dionysius of Rome and Dionysius of Alexandria.³⁴ It is unclear who first utilized the term, however it is apparent that Dionysius of Rome employed it as a means of inferring that his Alexandrian opponent’s doctrine of three hypostases was tri-theism.³⁵ The meaning of the term during the mid third century should be considered to be drawing some form of divine equivalency between the Father and Son rather than its later definite theological connotation.³⁶ *Homoousios* and its usage in the Nicene Creed saw its most prominent support

³¹ Hanson, 190.

³² Hanson, 193.

³³ Heinz Kraft, “Homoousios,” *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 66, no. ½ (1955), 3.

³⁴ Hanson, 191.

³⁵ On the other hand, Dionysius of Alexandria possibly expressed concern over the usage of the term as coming too close to declaring some sort of original hypostasis between Father and Son. Manlio Simonetti, *La Crisi Ariana nel IV secolo* (Rome: Institutum Patristicum "Augustinianum", 1975), 242 n. 68.

³⁶ Hanson, 193.

in such figures as Basil of Caesarea, Ambrose of Milan, Athanasius and Gregory of Nyssa, who advocated the supremacy of the council.

As a result of the debate surrounding the use of ὅυσιος, three other doctrinal interpretations developed in concert with the Homoousians. The “Homoeusians” under Basil of Ancyra denounced the stance of Arius and yet were unable to accept the term ὅυσιος, preferring instead ὅμοιος or “like” to describe the persons of the Trinity. ὅμοιος emphasized a similarity in substance that existed between the three members of the Trinity, but allowed for ambiguity in rank. The Homoians of Eusebius of Nicomedia and eventually Ulfila, agreed with the Homoeusians regarding the use of ὅυσιος and as a basic rule preferred the use of ὅμοιος or “sameness” as well.³⁷ Divisions between the Homoian and Homoeusian factions came in the form of the Homoian political decision that all manner of terms relating to the Trinitarian relationship were unhelpful. As a compromise position, they achieved the support of Constantius II and were the driving force behind the Rimini Creed of 359, gaining the willing support of the Homoousians and coerced cooperation of the Eunomians. The Eunomians most vehemently opposed the Homoousion position on both a political and theological basis, supporting not only a created order and hierarchy between members of the Trinity but also a difference in substance. This has led some modern scholars

³⁷ Hanson, 617-19.

to conveniently label them “Neo-Arians;” although as a faction they cannot be considered a substantial movement prior to 350.³⁸

As a result of the doctrinal diversity surrounding the nature of Christ, the label “Arian” should be seen as an external attempt at categorization rather than a self-identifying title. The use of terms referring to essence as a means of demeaning doctrinal beliefs, serves as a distinct reminder of the semantics and rhetorical properties of such titles within the heated political and religious debates of Mediterranean Christianity.³⁹ As two groups to whom Nicene polemicists applied the Arian label, the theological underpinnings of the Homoians and Homoeusians shared a very close theological structure and interpretation of the Trinitarian hierarchy according to principles based on filial and biological relationships, however their perceptions on how to implement these roles in the political sphere proved divisive.⁴⁰

The survival of Homoian Christianity has been intricately intertwined with the history of the Goths from the perspective of both ancient and modern scholarship. Despite its origins as a distinctly Roman-Christian sect, the Homoian preference of the Gothic peoples presents the difficulty of defining its religious and cultural value in the context of Gotho-Roman

³⁸ Peter Heather and John Matthews, *The Goths of the Fourth Century* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1991), 128. Perhaps not the most substantial view of the Trinitarian factions, Heather and Matthews provide a convenient outline of the primary differentiating factors between each group. It must be noted however that these divisions were neither static nor universally adhered to, especially between the Homoeusian and Homoian factions.

The label “Neo-Arian” was provided first in 1979 by Thomas Kopecek, *History of Neo-Arianism* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1979).

³⁹ See Victor of Vita, *History of the Vandal Persecution*, trans. John Moorhead (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1992), III.1, for the dispute over the term “Catholic” between Homoeusian and Homoian clergy.

⁴⁰ Heather and Matthews, 128.

Basil of Ancyra, “Epistula,” in *The Panarion*, Epiphanius, trans. Philip Amidon (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1990), 300.

interactions of the fifth and sixth centuries. The appearance that Arianism assumed was described by Nicene authors as “Gothic” or “Barbaric,” and scholarship has not sufficiently questioned this narrative or focused on its practice and representation among the Goths. In order that social and political elements of Arianism might be exposed within the Vandal and Ostrogothic kingdoms, Arianism must be identified in relation to its supposed Roman counterpart. Peter Heather has argued that Ulfilan Arianism possessed distinct markers that were identifiably different from the Nicene practices associated with Roman ecclesiastical institutions, but while portions of his analysis remain applicable, the late divergence of Nicene and Homoian Christianity is not considered as a means of identifying common and separate elements.⁴¹ Similarly, William Sumruld’s exegesis on the confrontation between Augustine and Maximinus has led him to conclude that the theology of the Goths was entirely “Gothic” in nature and distinct from the hermeneutics of Nicene theologians.⁴²

Arianism’s manifestation among the Goths can only be described as “Gothic” in the sense that it was later perceived to be fundamentally at odds with the Roman hegemony of Nicene Christianity. In light of this association promoted by Roman Nicene authors, care must be taken not to characterize Homoian qualities as possessing some inherent “ethnic” quality that facilitated Gothic adherence. No central elements of Homoian belief can truly be classified as “Gothic” outside of external Roman ascriptions to it being a Gothic phenomenon. As will be discussed in subsequent chapters, this imposed identification meant that the individual did not experience some “innate” attraction to the doctrine, but rather formed their adherence based upon local and circumstantial necessity, often in relation to

⁴¹ Heather, *The Goths*, 317.

⁴² William Sumruld, *Augustine and the Arians* (Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press, 1994), 136-37.

present power structures (both Roman and Gothic). This chapter will advocate that Homoian practice saw a substantial resemblance to Nicene Christianity through the Ostrogothic kingdom and therefore possessed no visible contradictions that can be defined as “Gothic.” The chapter will focus first on the origin and continuity Homoian practice, emphasizing its Roman roots that began with the Bishop Ulfila in Constantinople. The contributions of Ulfila’s rendering of the scriptures into the Gothic language will also be considered along with their potential influence on theological development of Homoianism. By the early fifth century, similarities are still visible between the two sects in the debates between Maximinus and Augustine, resemblances that are likely reflective of ecclesiastical organization and shared origins. The chapter will conclude with an explanation of how the archetypal perception of Arianism as an outside force was created in the fifth century by Nicene authors and specifically, the political efforts of Justinian I.

Ulfila

Christianity’s connection to the Gothic tribes found north of the Danube is conveniently traceable through the family line of Ulfila himself, the man credited with facilitating the rapid spread of Christianity among the Goths. Philostorgius records the abduction of Ulfila’s πρόγονοι from Sadagolthina in Cappadocia as occurring in 264 but issues with this date emerge as a result of his claim the event occurred “during the reign of Valerian and Gallienus.”⁴³ Following the defeat of Valerian at the hands of Persians in 260, Gallienus separated himself from co-regency with his father, thereby making a date between

⁴³ Philostorgius, II.5.

253 and 260 more likely.⁴⁴ What can be discerned however is that small Christian communities materialized as a result of these trans-Danubian raids and integrated closely with Gothic society. Ulfila himself was a product of this amalgamation and his name (meaning little-wolf) as well as his inclusion within the diplomatic mission sent to Constantinople in 332, attests to the integration and social prominence of Christians within the Gothic community. The prominent social position held by Ulfila has led to a general consensus that it was his mother's line that was descended from Roman stock while his father held a prominent position in the Gothic aristocracy.⁴⁵ A significant connection to Roman culture is reflected in his participation and success in the imperial court, an accomplishment that also supports the prospect of a Roman education. At the epitome of his career, Ulfila's efforts of conversion and doctrinal synchronization amongst the Goths earned the praise of Constantius II, who referred to him as the "The Moses of our time."⁴⁶

A great deal of ink has been spilt over the actual form of Ulfila's theological adherence. The Nicene chroniclers Sozomen, Socrates and Theodoret underscore the "accidental" or political necessity of his association with the Homoian faction and attribute it to either the political conniving of Eusebius of Nicomedia or conformity to the beliefs of Constantius.⁴⁷ This question is further complicated by chronological discrepancies regarding

⁴⁴ Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, 76.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Philostorgius, II.5.

⁴⁷ Socrates, "Ecclesiastical History," in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers Vol. 2*, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers Inc., 1999), II.41, confirms Ulfila gave his consent at Constantinople but adds that up to that point he had been the disciple of 'Theophilus' who was supposedly bishop of the Goths and adhered to the decision at Nicaea. Socrates however does accuse him of falling to Sabellianism.

the date of his consecration provided by Philostorgius. Philostorgius records Ulfila as being named “bishop of the Goths” during the reign of Constantine by Eusebius, however the *Dissertatio Maximini contra Ambrosium* of Auxentius, a student of Ulfila, set his career at forty years, which with his death between 381 and 383 would place his consecration between 341 and 343. Certain elements of Auxentius’ segmentation of the life of Ulfila carry a number of symbolic properties (i.e. his ministry beginning after 30 years) and his dating should be held somewhat suspect as a result.⁴⁸ Wolfram places his consecration at the Council of Antioch in 341, however this date falls too close to the first Gothic persecution. While it is possible that a definite date cannot be conclusively set, the favor found by Ulfila in Constantius’ court and his ability to maintain the position of bishop indicates that his theological preferences fell in line with the new “moderate” position espoused by the new emperor. Beginning at Antioch in 341, Constantius contradicted the decision his father made at Nicaea regarding *homoousios* and came to favor the Homoian position as a means of reconciling the doctrinal disputes. While Socrates tried to assert that Ulfila eventually converted to the Nicene position, his claim assumes that the bishop possessed a connection with Theophilus, described by Socrates as “Bishop of the Goths.” There is indeed record of a “Theophilus of Gothia” present at Nicaea, however there is no evidence that the two had anything to do with each other, or for that matter that Theophilus, as bishop of “Gothia,” represented the same region as Ulfila. Any actual connection between Theophilus and Ulfila

Sozomen, “Ecclesiastical History,” in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers Vol. 2*, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers Inc., 1999), VI.37, draws from Socrates and confirms Ulfila’s adherence to Rimini. (IV.24). He also asserts that it was after Constantinople that Ulfila joined the “Arian” faction (Sozomen, VI.37.)

Theodoret, “Ecclesiastical History,” in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers Vol. 2*, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers Inc., 1999), XXXIII.

⁴⁸ For the Latin version, see Auxentius, *De Fide* (The University of Georgetown), <http://www9.georgetown.edu/faculty/jod/texts/auxentius.html>. A translated version is available in Heather and Matthews, 139.

is speculative at best and therefore it is the actions of Ulfila himself that give the best indication of his own theological preferences.⁴⁹

The creeds produced at Rimini in 359 and slightly modified a year later at Constantinople under Constantius were signed by Ulfila, an indication that by this point he had fully committed to the Homoian cause. Proponents of his “Arian” convictions hold this as evidence of long-held loyalty, while those in opposition claim the circumstances surrounding his consecration, which likely occurred in 341 at Antioch under Constantius II, played a significant role in his decision.⁵⁰ A closer reading of the creed given at Constantinople, and placed outside of Jerome’s accusations of its “Arian” nature, enumerates its position as a compromise.⁵¹ The creed attempts to do away with all language surrounding *ousia* and its surrounding controversy declaring, “Nor ought the subsistence of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit to be even named. But we affirm that the Son is like the Father, in such a manner as the sacred Scriptures declare and teach.”⁵² Hanson has rightly emphasized the desire of Constantius II to put an end to the heated disputes, with the creed acting as an exclusionary measure to what can be considered both “extremes” of the debate; the Eunomians under Eunomius and Arius and the Homoiousians associated with Athanasius.⁵³ This creed was staunchly supported by the Homoian and Homoiousian factions and with imperial coercion, managed to attain the cooperation of the Eunomians as well. The

⁴⁹ Socrates, II.41.

⁵⁰ Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, 81.

Patrick Geary, *Before France and Germany*, 67.

Philostorgius, n.20.

⁵¹ Jerome, “Contra Luciferus,” in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers Vol. 6*, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers Inc., 1999), 19.

⁵² Socrates, II. 41.

⁵³ Hanson, 362.

popularity of Ulfila at court and his participation in the moderate position offered in the compromise at Rimini, suggests that the bishop was, like many others, unsure about the term *homoousion* rather than an advocate of the Eunomian position. Auxentius, a student of Ulfila, describes the bishop as a passionately outspoken anti-Nicene, however we must acknowledge the heavy political siege that members of the Homoian sect found themselves in at the time of Auxentius' writings at the end of the fourth century.

Several events of the late fourth century helped to break the Homian control established by Constantius II and continued under Valens. The reign of Theodosius I, which lasted for sixteen years and was followed by his equally vehement Nicene sons Arcadius (r. 395-408) and Honorius (r. 395-423), allowed Nicene dominance to become entrenched. Nicenes also used the Cult of the Saints as an effective means of displaying divine favor, a tactic assisted by the social relevancy offered by the cult; serving as a personal and adaptable intermediary between God and humanity.⁵⁴ The hagiographical elements of Auxentius' letter too closely conform to retaliatory rhetoric to take the stronger elements of the letter as verbatim and although the remaining information is useful, the role of Ulfila within the letter is far too politically relevant to his student's context.⁵⁵ The more radical elements aside, based upon his espousal of the Riminian creed, election by Constantius and certainly Homoian (though perhaps not as extreme as Auxentius makes them out to be) outlook, Ulfila's theological opinions appear to fall somewhere between the Eunomian and Nicene positions. The lack of any reference to Ulfila by his contemporary Epiphanius alongside men

⁵⁴ D.H. Williams, *Ambrose of Milan and the end of the Arian-Nicene Conflicts* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1995), 16.

⁵⁵ Auxentius, *De Fide*. Consideration for the personal connection between Auxentius and Ulfila must be maintained as well.

such as Eusebius of Nicomedia and Basil of Ancyra, emphasizes his increasingly rhetorical importance as the Goths became a more political problem in the fifth century. With the extinction of the Eunomian and Homoeusian factions in Roman territories, Homoianism became increasingly perceived as the syncretic representation of the other sects as well as a particularly “Gothic” feature. As a result, Nicene authors began to place increasing emphasis upon the man they perceived as the instigator of the “Arian perfidy.”⁵⁶

Acknowledgement of the Homoian tendencies of Ulfila also becomes imperative when considering his role in translating the Old and New Testaments into the Gothic language. The precise linguistic turns upon which theological debate rested presented several opportunities for Homoian ideas to be expressed through translation, a concept that will be discussed at length later. In the present context however, it is necessary to reinforce the notion that for the majority of Ulfila’s life, the Christological debates remained undecided and that the bishop spent most of his tenure serving under eastern emperors who preferred the Homoian creeds. In reality, the distinctions between Gothic and Roman Christianity came for the most part as the result of divergent development on the part of the Nicene tradition, rather than any elements that could be determined as innately “Gothic” outside of external perception. The work of Ulfila amongst the Goths should thus be considered congruous with contemporary Roman Christianity and not the creation of a “Gothic” form of Christianity.

⁵⁶ Jordanes, *Getica*, trans. Charles Mierow (New York, NY: Barnes and Noble, Inc, 1915), 132.

Episcopi Gothorum

The ecclesiastical structure that served as the cultic center of Gothic Christianity followed the example of Ulfila, maintaining an intimate connection with the Roman political structure and classical education. Homoian bishops formed the crux of this establishment and administered to groups of people rather than a specified geographical region, often accompanying Goths both in the service of the empire and as independent groups. Ralph Mathisen has explained this phenomenon as emanating from the unique ecclesiastical structure of the Goths which began during the early missionary efforts. As the Gothic armies moved into the empire and saw increased employment as *foederati*, the bishops continued to accompany them.⁵⁷ The bishop Maximinus, who famously entered into a series of debates with Augustine of Hippo on the eve of the Vandal invasion, was one of these *sacerdos gothorum* sent as chaplain to support the spirituality (and morale) of the Gothic *foederati*. Although Possidius only records him as coming “to Africa with the Goths,” this association has led some scholars to conclude that Maximinus was a Goth himself.⁵⁸ The Homoian bishop proved himself a worthy opponent, displaying a religious aptitude that emanated from a Roman educational background. His rebuttals were sufficient that Augustine felt he needed to clarify his statements in the work *Contra Maximino*. While Maximinus’ origins remain ambiguous, there is evidence of bishops to the Goths who can be identified as Roman, and

⁵⁷ Ralph Mathisen, “Barbarian Bishops and the Churches ‘in barbaricis gentibus’ during Late Antiquity,” *Speculum* 72, (1997) pp. 664-697. Mathisen espouses distinct ecclesiastical differences between the use of *sacerdos Gothorum* in designating the functions of a bishop to the Goths in relation to the Roman *episcopi*. The difference in ecclesiastical function can be attributed to a social and organizational difference rather than doctrinal, as once the Goths established permanent residences, the role of the *sacerdotes* came to mirror that of the *episcopus*. This is visible in the establishment of permanent Churches by Theodoric and the confiscation of Nicene churches by Geiseric.

⁵⁸ Sumruld, 91.

the interaction between them and their Gothic counterparts exemplifies the continuity of Homoian practice in both groups.⁵⁹

The famous fourth-century bishop Ambrose of Milan, records the departure of the Homoian bishop Julianus Valens from his position as *episcopus* in Poetovio in Pannonia. Valens apparently left his urban assignment to become a *sacerdos (gothorum)* in an imperial contingent of Goths, an act that perturbed Ambrose of Milan even more than his doctrinal preference.⁶⁰ The ability of a Homoian bishop to act in two capacities, as a shepherd of an urban, and likely Roman, flock, as well as serve the religious needs of Gothic *foederati*, indicates that the two remained very similar in practice and belief, such that Gothic practice was not exclusive according to some ethnic principle. These bishops formed a continuation of the Homoian (and Roman) tradition of Ulfila and the apparent lack of any Gothic resistance has led Mathisen to ascribe a purely doctrinal role to the assignment of *sacerdotes* to Gothic peoples, stating, “But for their Arian flocks, it presumably was their role and religion, not their ethnicity that mattered.”⁶¹ As a result, we can identify the practice of Christianity among people referred to by our sources as “Goths” in the early to mid-fifth century as possessing both practical and ideological elements that still contained significant similarities to the philosophical and theological discourses produced in Roman urban environments. This lack of definitive association between certain sects of Christianity with internal or external elements changed during the fifth and sixth centuries as “Arianism”

⁵⁹ As a result of the almost exclusive aristocratic origin of Homoousion and Homoian bishops to the Goths, from Ulfila to Maximinus and beyond, a standard of Roman education was a part of the experience of Late Antiquity.

⁶⁰ Ambrose, “Epistulae X,9,” in *Fathers of the Church Vol. 26*, trans. Mary Melchior Beyenka (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1955).

⁶¹ Mathisen, “Barbarian Bishops,” 678.

became synonymous with “barbarians” among Nicene authors. In terms of form however, a great deal of continuity in Gothic Homoian practice is observable in a way that formed little distinction from its Roman counterpart, an indication that the doctrine provided little capability in distinguishing itself from its association with the greater Mediterranean Christian community. Baptism, in its ritual capacity as a ritual of both inclusion and exclusion, provides a convenient method of examining the continuity of this phenomenon up through the reign of Theoderic the Great.

The Practice of Baptism

The early debate over baptism provides one of the strongest indicators of simultaneous liturgical and theological development. As a liturgical centerpiece of the Christian experience, the practice of baptism remained relatively simple through the second and third centuries. Tertullian placed the ritual in opposition to the lavish nature of Roman rites, extolling the simplicity of the act. He lauded the idea that salvation could be obtained by a man, “going down to the water, and being with few words washed therein, with so much simplicity, without pomp, without any novel preparation, and finally without expense, riseth again.”⁶² It was not until Christianity acquired legitimacy within the Roman Empire under Constantine that it emerged as a ritualistic centerpiece of conversion and social distinction.⁶³ The politicization of theological divisions can be attributed to the legalization of Christianity and in a similar manner, this new social acceptance meant that baptism had to be formalized as a ritual, although its meaning remained highly responsive to local needs. The Nicenes,

⁶² Tertullian, *On Baptism*, trans. C. Dodgson (London: Oxford, 1842), II.

⁶³ Annabel Jane Wharton, “Ritual and Reconstructed Meaning: The Neonian Baptistry in Ravenna,” *Art Bulletin* 69, no. 3 (1988):359.

Homoeusians and Homoians adhered to a very similar conceptualization of baptism, differing primarily in interpretation rather than application. Baptism itself was a religious and social performance, an exclusive rite that can be explained in anthropological terms as regulating the divides between the excluded, the liminal and the aggregate.⁶⁴ It was not until the entire mystical nature of the rite had been completed that a catechumen possessed the full understanding of the Christian experience and achieved full participation within the community.⁶⁵ Certain elements of the elaborated ritual could be utilized to engage doctrinal discourse, but the base practice itself appears to have been relatively homogenized by the middle part of the fourth century.

It was not uncommon for some sects to be accused of divergence from the standard tradition of the three-part baptism expressed in Matthew 28:19 where Jesus urges his disciples to, “go forth baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”⁶⁶ Epiphanius records the Eunomians as baptizing in only the name of the Father and then submerging the initiate upside down with a rope tied to his heel.⁶⁷ The latter practice, while it presents an amusing picture, should be taken with a degree of skepticism as the use of upside down religious practices were commonly ascribed to heretical groups as a rhetorical “inverse” of proper doctrine. The Eunomians however do appear to have deviated from standard baptismal invocation. Both Socrates and Sozomen record them as baptizing

⁶⁴ Bryan Spinks, “The Growth of Liturgy and the Church Year,” in *The Cambridge History of Christianity* 2, no. 20 (2007): 603.

⁶⁵ Spinks, 604.

⁶⁶ Matt., 28:19 “βαπτίζοντες αὐτοὺς εἰς τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος.”

⁶⁷ Epiphanius, “Anomians” in *The Panarion*, Epiphanius, trans. Philip Amidon (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 76.

“εἰς τὸν τοῦ χρίστου θάνατον,” or “into the death of Christ.”⁶⁸ Such a claim is not unlikely and is possibly derived from Romans 6:3, which asks, “Do you not know that we who are baptized into Jesus Christ, are baptized into his death?”⁶⁹ The verse could have served the Eunomian purpose of distancing themselves from the practice of Nicenes and avoided discussions of hierarchy created by Matthew 28:19.

Differences in practice like those of the Eunomians were strongly chastised by Homoians and Nicenes, who adhered to the strict formula presented in Matthew. The letter of the Homoian bishop Basil of Ancyra, incorporated by Epiphanius into his *Panarion*, explicitly denounced the practice of “baptizing them in the name of the One without flesh,” or in the name of the “incarnate one,” or “immortal one.”⁷⁰ For both sects, the passage served as the unalterable base from which theological conclusions stemmed. From the Homoian perspective, the three-fold invocation as well as the three-fold immersion signified the independent nature of the three divine persons. Basil emphasizes the ordering of the phrase as representative of the natural order; namely that the Son is necessarily begotten by the Father and the Holy Spirit sent by the Son. In this respect, he argued, “we may conceive of the Father as cause of an essence like him, and when we hear the name of the Son we may conceive of the Son as like the father whose Son he is.”⁷¹ He explicitly condemns the usage of a single entity within the invocation saying, “[Christ] did not say: baptizing them in the name of the One without flesh and the incarnate One, or of the immortal One and the One

⁶⁸ Socrates, V.24.

Sozomen, IV.26.

⁶⁹ Romans 6:3.

⁷⁰ Basil of Ancyra, 292.

⁷¹ Basil of Ancyra, 73.3.1.

who has experienced death.”⁷² It is likely that this statement attacked both the Trinitarian unity of the Nicenes and drew equivalency between their diversion and that of the Eunomians.

It was not until the writings of Athanasius that the Homoian defense of the three-part baptism was contested in any way that could be perceived of as effective. In his *Orationes contra Arianos*, written in the late 350’s, Athanasius accosted the “Arians” for believing that the son is a “creature.” This claim was earnestly refuted by Basil and other members of the Homoian and Homoeusian sects, but it was on the issue of the complete nature of the Father that Athanasius chose to exploit. In order to distance the accusations of single unity, he drew relational dependency between what he defined as, “the Word, being the Image of the Father and immortal, took the form of the servant, and as man underwent for us death in his flesh...”⁷³ If indeed, he asked his counterparts, the Father was all-sufficient, then what need was there to invoke the Son?⁷⁴ It was therefore not the Homoian practice of baptism itself that Athanasius criticized, but rather their full understanding of the matter, retaining both the traditional and shared practical foundation of both sects while altering their base meaning. It was the debate within this textual framework that exemplifies the foundational similarities between the Nicene and Homoian dispute.

As a product of this heated debate, Ulfila brought to the Goths a form of Christianity that was in practice congruent with other doctrines, and at its most divisive was purely theologically interpretive and political in nature. As a practice, the underlying similarities

⁷² Basil of Ancyra, 73.2.8.

⁷³ Athanasius, “*Orationes Contra Arianos IV*,” trans. Newman in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers Vol. 4* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1999), 41.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

between Nicene and Homoian Christianity transferred fairly seamlessly, probably the result of the preexisting significant Christian population that had developed since the time of Ulfila's grandparents. From the Gothic perspective however, there appears to have been at least a vague association between those who practiced Christianity and an interpretation of Romanness. The political disputes that arose during the reigns of Julian and Valens with the Tervingi served as a basis for two persecutions, first in late 340s under Aoric and then soon after 369 under his son Athanaric.⁷⁵ Caution should be observed when classifying the persecutions as an ethnically stimulated response toward a growing Christian population. The first persecution occurred in the context of deteriorating Gothic-Roman relations, although not a great deal is known about the exact political circumstances surrounding this dispute. The second persecution provides a more identifiable association with contemporary events. Prior to the disputes of 369, the entirety of the frontier had been open for trade and annual tribute sent to the Tervingi and other groups along the Danube. The result of the conflict was the closing of the borders by Valens, which created an economic crisis amongst elites who relied upon the pre-existing agreement. These economic and political disruptions created an environment in which associations of "Romanness" became a target of enmity.⁷⁶ As a result, we can identify the Gothic perspective of Christianity in the middle part of the fourth century as possessing both practical and ideological elements that identified it as something particularly Roman. This association changed drastically in later centuries as "Arianism" became associated almost exclusively with "barbarians." In its initial form however, a great deal of continuity in Gothic Homoian practice is observable in a way that formed little

⁷⁵ Heather and Matthews, 125.

Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, 63.

⁷⁶ Heather and Matthews, 17.

distinction from its Roman counterpart, with baptism showing continuity under the reign of Theoderic the Great.

The mural painted on the ceiling of the Arian Baptistery in Ravenna remains one of the few intact physical manifestations of Arian religious structures.⁷⁷ Constructed during the reign of Theoderic, the baptistery was part of a greater Arian Episcopal Complex that included a cathedral (currently referred to as Santo Spirito) and a now absent bishop's palace. The construction of the complex was in almost every respect a continuation of contemporary Nicene architectural aesthetics, a fact that when paired with the relatively close alliance held between the Homoian emperor and Nicene clergy, suggests an attempt by Theoderic to elevate the prestige of Arianism to a state comparable to that of the dominant Nicene structures.

The only remaining original mural in the baptistery is the dome itself. Depicting the baptism of a young and naked Christ, it shows the sacrament being presided over by John the Baptist (shown in a simple garb of animal skin) but actually performed by the shower of water from the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove.⁷⁸ The mural of the Arian Baptistery can be effectively compared to the mural from the Neonian Baptistery that lies just over a third of a mile away in Ravenna. It was painted not long before the construction of the Arian Baptistery during renovations carried out by the Nicene Bishop Neon (c.451-c.473) and thus serves as a contemporary point of comparison.⁷⁹ The two images are largely similar, depicting a naked Christ in the Jordan in the process of being blessed by John the Baptist and closely attended

⁷⁷ Mark Johnson, "Toward a History of Theoderic's Building Program," *Dunbarton Oaks Papers* 42, (1988): 79.

⁷⁸ See Fig. 1

⁷⁹ Wharton, 358.

by the personification of the Jordan and twelve disciples.⁸⁰ Only two significant deviations occur between the two representations. The bust of the Christ presented in the Neonian mural is portrayed as significantly older than its Arian counterpart and wears a beard. The dove of the Arian baptistery administers the water upon Christ while the Neonian baptismal water is dispensed by a *patera* or bowl. The differences in the Christological depictions are not the result of theological difference, but rather of late-medieval renovations that were made on the Neonian mural. The Arian baptistery with its depiction of a youthful Christ shares consistency with other Nicene portrayals of the fifth and sixth century, an observation that suggests the original Neonian form would have been similar.⁸¹ According to Annabel Wharton, the *patera* held by John the Baptist was likely an addition of later renovations as well.⁸² The similarity observed between the ritual space of the Neonian and Arian baptisteries give an indication of the continuity of practice observed by both sects. The role of ideological reference placed upon visual representations in the performance of baptism meant that the instruction of the catechumens relied heavily upon the interpretation of the imageries of the baptistery. This does not necessarily indicate that practice could not be changed, but it provides an indication as to contemporary practice as well as the theological roots to which the practice ascribed.

As Peter Brown has rightly stressed, the usual assumption of a theological disconnect between the “educated” clergy and “uneducated” laity of Late Antiquity should be

⁸⁰ See Fig. 2.

⁸¹ Wharton, 370.

⁸² Ibid.

questioned.⁸³ The rituals surrounding baptism and the other sacraments formed a medium that could be effectively used to address contemporary theological distinctions and debates. Baptism itself as arguably the most spiritually and doctrinally significant moment in the conversion of the early Christian and formed a particularly vital moment in the construction of a new social and religious identity. The addresses given by St. Ambrose to newly baptized Milanese are rife with statements drawing distinction between the Arian and Nicene interpretation of baptism. The bishop is quick to emphasize the invocation of all members of the Trinity, making a point, like Athanasius, to avoid placing emphasis upon one member of the Trinity and insinuating a subordinate position.⁸⁴ The elements surrounding the Nicene baptism under Ambrose are free of theological association. The priest entered the baptistery first, stood beneath the mural of the baptism of Christ similar to those in Ravenna, and invoked the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.⁸⁵ The catechumen then approached the baptismal font through the apse and entered the holy water in front of the priest.⁸⁶ He was then asked three questions that fit the formula given in Matthew 28:19: “Do you believe in God the Father almighty? Do you believe in our Lord Jesus Christ and in His cross? Do you believe also in the Holy Spirit?”⁸⁷ The initiate was submerged after affirming each question. As the questions offered by the priest display, no predisposition to either sect entered the baptismal liturgy itself, adhering strictly to the agreed formula that was found within both Homoian and Nicene practice. The environmental elements of the Arian and

⁸³ Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 17-18.

⁸⁴ Ambrose, “The Sacraments,” in *Saint Ambrose: Theological and Dogmatic Works*, trans. Roy J Deferrari (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1963).

⁸⁵ Ambrose, “The Sacraments,” 14.

⁸⁶ Ambrose, “The Sacraments,” 16.

⁸⁷ Ambrose, “The Sacraments,” 20.

Neonian baptisteries wrapped the performance in the ritual space of the baptistery, created an atmosphere that, when passively observed, provided no indication of political strife or theological differentiation. The ritual itself was therefore stripped of its theological distinctions at the most symbolic and visual level, conveying no *inherent* theological designation to the ritual. Distinctions rested with the agency of the presiding clergy and as Ambrose displays, formed reflections of current political and religious discourse. The religious and social significance that stood behind the practice of baptism did indeed make it an ideal medium through which ritual meaning could be conveyed in times of political strife, however this practice must be considered an application of agency upon a neutral medium rather than the manifestation of any inherent theological designation.

The Gothic Bible and Linguistic Tradition

A similar debate has surrounded the basis for this ritual practice, the Gothic Bible. Scholarship has generally accepted the records of Socrates, Sozomen and Philostorgius in ascribing to Ulfila the first translation of both the New and Old Testament into Gothic.⁸⁸ Although this ascription is omitted in the surviving work of his student Auxentius, his silence is hardly enough to disprove his authorship considering the fragmentary nature of the work. It has been postulated by Peter Heather and John Matthews that the work was likely executed by a number of individuals within the community he established following his exodus from the Tervingi kingdom seven years after his consecration. The sheer volume of work required for such an endeavor gives some credence to the fact that it was beyond the work of a single

⁸⁸ Sozomen, VI.37.
Socrates, II.35.
Philostorgius, II.5.

man, however such statements remain purely in the realm of speculation.⁸⁹ When placed alongside the context of the debate surrounding Ulfila's theological predilections as well as questions regarding identity, the issue of authorship adopts a number of aspects that lend themselves to the discussion of identity. It is not necessary to draw an absolute direct correlation between all surviving forms of the Gothic Bible and their Ulfilan origin, however the belief of those who inherited their Homoian tradition from the work of Ulfila and did partake in the translation themselves poses significant questions regarding the use of the religious text in a Gothic context. When considering the intricacies of the debate surrounding the Trinity, small alterations produced profound results. The ability to ascribe certain attributes to a word served as one of the primary methods of adopting a philosophic definition of an entity, and these associations were derived from a very specific cultural and linguistic context. When searching for an equivalent, the translator possessed the ability to choose words or phrases that applied a literal translation. It has been argued by Friedrich Kauffman that Ulfila would never have altered the translations as the Homoian tradition, stressing their self-perception as orthodox.⁹⁰ At its base level, this argument possesses a relatively acceptable foundation as the primary Homoian objection was toward the non-scriptural origin of the word *ἰσοιός*. An Arian translation, according to this method of thinking, would have avoided alterations. There are issues with this conclusion however as such a hypothesis is derivative of the belief that certain words possess a universal quality that is apparent to their author and will always possess a linguistic equivalent. Translators were often placed in a context where they faced the necessity of choosing cultural equivalents

⁸⁹ Heather and Matthews, 145.

⁹⁰ Valentine Pakis, "Homoian Vestiges in the Gothic Translation of Luke 3,23-38," *Zeitschrift für deutsches Alterthum und deutsche Litteratur* 137, no. 3, (2008): 277.

from a given set of words and would have chosen according to his understanding and religious relativism. As a result, the possibility of interjecting Homoian beliefs into the translation, simply as an extension of personal conviction regarding its equivalence, must be entertained in relation to the possible authorship of Ulfila as well as those who continued the work following his death.

What remains of Gothic Codices make the prospect of attributing a “widespread” or “universal” label to any single translation of the scripture extraordinarily difficult. The most complete form surviving form is the Codex Argenteus, which currently resides at the University Library at Uppsala. The manuscript originated in Ostrogothic Italy during the early part of the sixth century and contains large, although incomplete, portions of the four Gospels. Further fragmentary pieces of gospels and Pauline translations remain at the Ambrosian Library at Milan and some manuscripts have been found as far a field as Egypt.⁹¹ There are some consistencies to what appear to be a wide assortment of biblical versions. All of the fragments were derivative of the same fourth-century Greek version that was recognized by John Chrysostom and the Cappadocian fathers, which at least allows for a point of reference and consistency.⁹² As direct translations of the Greek form, they were less likely to display vast differences based upon poor translation. The translators of the Gothic text were also conspicuously consistent, although not perfect, in their use of linguistic equivalents.⁹³ The rate of consistency in which Greek words were assigned a Gothic

⁹¹ For a full listing of the surviving codices, see Heather and Matthews, 147.

⁹² Heather and Matthews, 148.

⁹³ Heather and Williams, 148-49. The 1788 Greek words in the Gospels are represented by 1878 in the Gothic version, suggesting a relatively restricted use of vocabulary in the translation. the relation of 1788 Greek words to 1878 Gothic words and consistency in translation... relatively. Fragmentary nature of surviving material however, and variation is greater in some than others (i.e. Luke than Matthew, greater in Mark than John. (148-49)

equivalent varies between gospels, suggesting that the process continued to be organic well after the original work.⁹⁴ Further evidence against a homogenous rendition of the Gothic Bible is observed by Salvian who declared in his *De gubernatione Dei*,

For, if there are any barbarian nations who in their books seem to have the Holy Scriptures less interpolated or torn into shreds than others, nevertheless they have them as they were corrupted by the tradition of their old teachers.⁹⁵

Salvian's displeasure with the Gothic renditions was certainly more concerned with the prospect of translation itself, and as a vehemently Roman-Nicene and post-controversy perplexity with the idea of multiple interpretations placed a great amount of credence toward the persistence of Arian belief on the faultiness of the Gothic translation. Nonetheless, it should be kept in mind that there was little homogeneity with regard to the translations. Even with the reliance on an accepted Greek text, localized interpretations of the Greek could well have caused different renderings of Gothic equivalents or seen variation based upon the knowledge or beliefs of their authors. While this remains difficult to substantiate as a broader phenomenon, the survival of the *Codex Argenteus* does provide an opportunity to look at the effects of translation within a particular political and social context.

The early sixth-century origin of the *Codex Argenteus* provides for a theological and social perspective that is more than a century and a half displaced from Ulfila. The relationship between Theodoric's Arian Goths and the Roman Nicene population was for the most part passive and political cooperation between Theodoric, the papacy and ecclesiastical community formed an environment that at least internally, lacked any aggressive theological disputation. While the mantle of the Arian label hung over the idea of Gothicism in the

⁹⁴ Heather and Matthews, 149. From least variation to most; Mark, Matthew, John and Luke.

⁹⁵ Salvian, *De gubernatione Dei*, trans. Jeremiah O'Sullivan (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1962), V.2.

minds of Romans and created a definite distinction, the possibility of any Homoian vestiges preserved in the *Codex Argenteus* remains a contested subject.

The number of potential passages that have been ascribed to this Homoian influence remain relatively few and have almost exclusively centered around Gothic authors' translation of Philippians 2:6 and Luke 3:23. In 1835 Carlo Ottavio Conte de Castiglione observed that in Phil. 2:6, the Greek ἴσα θεῷ, meaning "equal to God" was translated as *galeiko guda* to which he ascribed the meaning "similar to God." Nowhere else in the text was *galeiks* used as an equivalent to ἴσα, instead serving as an equivalent of the word ὅμοιος or "similar, like," and favoring the use of *ibns*.⁹⁶ His conclusions were vehemently opposed by Frantz Jostes who drew an etymological parallel to the modern German word *gleich* as meaning "like". Most recently, Knut Schaferdiek has offered a similar explanation to Jostes regarding the use of the term "gleich", however asserts that the term ὅμοιος could have meant "equal" in the context of theological treatises from the fourth century.⁹⁷

The debates over the translation of the word ἀρχόμενος, most commonly translated as "beginning", as *uf gakunpai* in the first part of Luke 3:23 has been just as heated as that surrounding Philippians 2:6.⁹⁸ The most recent interpretations have stemmed from the work

⁹⁶ Pakis, 279.

⁹⁷ Pakis, 280.

⁹⁸ Luke 3,23: Καὶ αὐτὸς ἦν Ἰησοῦς ἀρχόμενος ὥσει ἐτῶν τριάκοντα, ὢν υἱός, ὡς ἐνομίζετο, Ἰωσήφ τοῦ Ἡλίου... And he, being Jesus, beginning about his thirtieth year, being a son (as was believed) of Joseph, of Heli...

The participle ἀρχόμενος from the verb ἀρχω is normally interpreted as 'beginning' or 'first,' however it has been used in a few circumstances to display hierarchy or rank in both the passive and active forms, as in its imperfect, active/indicative third person singular in Herodotus 5.1: "οἱ δὲ ἐν τῇ Εὐρώπῃ τῶν Περσέων καταλειφθέντες ὑπὸ Δαρείου, τῶν δὲ Μεγάβαζος ἦρχε (The Persians, having been left in Europe by Darius, were under the authority of Megabazus..."

of Ernst Bernhardt who in 1875 translated *uf gakunpai* as “being governed” through association with the use of *sik gakunnan* in 1 Corinthians 15:28 which translates as “to subordinate oneself” from the infinitive ὑποτάσσεσθαι. He also posited the theory that the translator perhaps mistook ἀρχόμενος for a passive participle of ἀρχω. This was supported in 1980 by Giovanni Mirarchi who stressed a connection between *uf gakunpai* and ὦν υἱός (being the son) rather than ἀρχόμενος and thus derived the phrase, “And Jesus himself was, for around thirty years, in filial obedience, so that he was believed to be the son of Joseph.”⁹⁹ Recent debate has surrounded the opinions of Mirarchi and Angela Cirrincione who support the definition of *uf gakunpai* as “at the time of his recognition/fame,” deriving the term from *gakunnan* “to know or recognize.”¹⁰⁰ As Valentine Pakis has concluded, the lack of definitive associations between correlative usages of *galeiko* and *gakunpai*, which have led to an academic stalemate, simply magnifies the possibility that the contemporary meanings behind these two words held the possibility of multiple interpretations. A modern analogy can be drawn to the usage of the term *like*, which has the ability to express sameness as well as somewhat removed similarity.¹⁰¹ It is therefore difficult to say that there was any concrete theological statement that manifested itself in the text or that from its inscription unique conclusions could be drawn. At its most speculative, the use of the term ἀρχόμενος can be seen as a reflection of the Homoian thought of its author.

Pakis herself has added a significant element to list of potential areas showing Homoian influence, citing the use of the word *sunaus* or “son” as a replacement of the

⁹⁹ Valentine Pakis, 294-96, presents an extraordinarily complete discussion of the debate surrounding Homoian influence on Phil.2,6 and Luke 3,23.

¹⁰⁰ Pakis, 296.

¹⁰¹ Pakis, 281, 296.

genitive article τοῦ supporting a stress on genealogical relationship.¹⁰² She observes that no other instances of the simple patristic genitive relation use the term *sunaus*, instead favoring the literal genitive form of *pis*. For example, Ἰάκωβον τὸν τοῦ Ζεβεδαίου (Mk 2:14) is rendered *Iakobau pamma Zaibaidaius*.¹⁰³ The most straightforward reaction to this hypothesis is the use of the Latin genitive form of “son,” *fili*, in some early translations as well as some modern English versions that draw biological associations not present in the original Greek. When one reaches the end of Luke 3:37, Σὴθ τοῦ Αδάμ τοῦ Θεοῦ, the Greek flows seamlessly from Adam to God. The Latin Vulgate does a fair job at compensating for this with *qui fuit*, but it still possesses a biological connotation that is avoided in the Greek. While the strict similarities between the use of *sunaus* and Latin renditions appear to assert the same conclusion, Pakis stresses that it is from the linguistic restrictions inherent to the process of translation that we must draw our conclusions regarding its use. The availability of the word *pis* as a literal translation of τοῦ was ignored despite the convictions of scholars like Kauffman. It is at this point that we must diverge from the idea of a direct translation to the immutable concept of meaning. Pakis’ assertion is a bold one and requires attention. It is all too easy to ascribe to these ideas the complaints of Kauffman regarding “changes,” to scripture. The translations were intended to convey meaning, and the inclusion of *sunaus* did exactly that. A Homoian, stressing the biological connection between the divine, would have read τοῦ just as Basil interpreted the three-fold immersion, as a reflection of biological descent and thus subordination.¹⁰⁴ In the eyes of the

¹⁰² Ἰωσήφ τοῦ Ἡλὶ τοῦ Ματθαῖ τοῦ Λευεὶ τοῦ Μελχί τοῦ Ἰανναί τοῦ Ἰωσήφ... Pakis stresses the unlikelihood that *sunaus* is derivative of an Old Latin translation as she dates these renditions to much later.

¹⁰³ Pakis, 297.

¹⁰⁴ Basil of Ancyra, 73.2.8.

author, this would have simply been a continuity of belief in its interpretive quality. The repercussions of such changes should not be taken to mean that theological changes occurred as a consequence of translation. These “alterations” were mere reflections of a pre-existing belief structure and although possessed the possibility of Homoian undercurrents, their indefinite nature preserved the uncertain nature of their rendering. This is further substantiated by the testimony given by the *vita Marcianii* that the Emperor Marcian allowed the scriptures to be read in Gothic on festival days.¹⁰⁵ This was not so much an advocacy of the form of Christianity practiced by the Goths in Constantinople, but rather an acknowledgement of the translation providing no obvious discrepancies with the Greek Scriptures.¹⁰⁶ At its most speculative, the use of the term ἀρχόμενος can be seen as reflecting the Homoian thought of its author, although some scholars along the lines of Friedrich Kauffman and G.W.S. Friedrichsen have argued that Homoians would never have altered the translation as a result of their emphasis upon literalism and self-perception as orthodox.¹⁰⁷ These views not only simplify the process of linguistic relativism, but also cloud the theological practice of Homoianism and its supposed Gothic stain of “biblical literalism and simplicity.”

¹⁰⁵ Rochelle Snee, “Gregory Nazianzen’s Anastasia Church: Arianism, the Goths and Hagiography,” *Dunbarton Oaks Papers* 52 (1998), 157.

¹⁰⁶ Snee, 176.

¹⁰⁷ Pakis, 280.

G.W.S. Friedrichsen, *The Gothic Version of the Gospels* (London: Oxford University Press, 1926), 175.

The *homoians* indeed disputed the use of the word ὁστος for its extra-biblical origins and utilized a more strictly textual form of hermeneutics; however we must diverge from the idea of a direct translation to the immutable concept of meaning. The translations were intended to convey meaning, and the inclusion of *sunaus* did exactly that. A *homoian*, stressing the biological connection between the divine, would have read the use *sunaus* in place of the genitive τοῦ in Luke 3:23 just as Basil interpreted the three-fold immersion, as a reflection of biological descent and thus subordination.¹⁰⁷ In the eyes of the author, this would have simply been a continuity of belief in its interpretive quality. The repercussions of such changes should not be taken to mean that theological changes occurred as a consequence. These ‘alterations’ were mere reflections of a pre-existing belief structure and although possessed the possibility of homoian undercurrents, their indefinite nature preserved the uncertain nature of their rendering.

Theology

Even in the relatively recent publication by William Sumruld, the idea that Homoianism possessed a distinctive “simplicity” has been supported, echoing E.A. Thompson’s assertion that it possessed “an absence of speculation and originality.”¹⁰⁸ Sumruld associates the “Gothic” form of Arianism with a minimalism that is juxtaposed against the more complex Nicene hermeneutics of the late fourth and early fifth centuries provided by Ambrose, Athanasius and Augustine. In his eagerness to ascribe a “Gothic” or “Ulfilan” nature to the forms of Arianism encountered by Augustine, he ignores its continuity with origins as a Roman theological position and ascribes to it a deceptive label.

Indeed, the type of Arianism encountered in Augustine’s later works is the Homoian Arianism of the Ulfilan school. It is an Arianism fully deserving of the title “Gothic”: Ulfila was the first Arian Gothic Bishop, the Goths were instrumental in spreading and protecting it, and the Goths continued for a long time to be its primary advocates.¹⁰⁹

At its most rudimentary level, this statement makes a great deal of sense. The Homoian form of Christianity did indeed find refuge and preservation amongst the Goths following its exorcism from the empire, and Ulfila was unquestionably a part of the Homoian movement and instrumental in spreading it amongst the Goths of the fourth century. To say that it was “Gothic” outside of the correlation provided by Nicene authors however is misleading. Ulfila himself had merely joined the movement in Constantinople (whether it at

¹⁰⁸ E.A. Thompson, 133-158.

Sumruld provides an appreciably simplified overview of the theology of Maximinus and Augustine, however his lack of appreciation for context as well as unfamiliarity with primary source material outside of theological treatises creates issues with his attempts to classify certain doctrines according to social or political groups. A condescending tone emerges when discussing what he perceives as Homoian inadequacy in the face of Homoousion ‘supremacy’, which perhaps may have served as causation for his oversimplified classification of Homoianism despite his detailed work on the subject.

¹⁰⁹ Sumruld, 137.

the time of his consecration or at the Council of Rimini in 361 is in this case irrelevant). The Homoian movement as it developed under the oversight of Eusebius of Nicomedia, Acacius of Caesarea and Eudoxius of Constantinople can be associated with intellectual movements that were part of Greco-Roman philosophy and its context, developing as a result of internal doctrinal conflict and as we have seen, exercised profound influence under Constantius II. While acceptance of ὁμοιος and rejection of ὁυσιος appealed to Ulfila's more conservative beliefs regarding the nature of the Trinity, the form of Christianity he took with him was derivative of the Roman cultural environment. To label Homoianism as practiced by the Goths as "Gothic" simply as a result of its relegation to Gothic is to deprive it of interaction with the Roman world as well as deny any sense of continuity with its origins. Sumruld's analysis of "Ulfilan" beliefs in the context of Augustine's experience remains exceedingly useful in terms of a theological study of Homoian belief, but its definition must be held as suspect. Further consideration must be made for the fact that Augustine's experience with "Ulfilan" Arianism occurred only a matter of decades following the dominance of Nicene Christianity under Theodosius I.

Augustine's first "encounter," with "Ulfilan Arianism," supposedly came in the form of a physician by the name of Maximus sometime circa 415.¹¹⁰ Maximus was a recent convert to the Nicene formula and Augustine shows a great deal of concern with the conversion of his family, servants and *coloni*. The conversion of the head of a household was seen as a vital first step in securing the adherence of his the rest of the household and Augustine was quick to comment on Maximus' ability to hold them as Arians prior to his

¹¹⁰ Augustine, "Epistula 170, Alypius and Augustine to Maximus," in *Fathers of the Church Vol. 4*, trans. Wilfrid Parsons (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1955), 61. Sumruld makes his case for Maximus on 137.

conversion, claiming that their conversion to “orthodoxy” should be just as straightforward.¹¹¹ In his first letter to Maximus, Augustine places a great deal of emphasis refuting biological means of subordination, drawing the definition of “Son” and “Father” away from an analogous state of meaning and looking to nature or substance for the defining root of the word.¹¹² The logical conclusion he sought to provide was one in which “each thing should beget offspring of its own substance,” and thus create a non-hierarchical relationship between Father and Son. The Homoian use of biological subordination of the Son was a fairly unique aspect of the disputation, as it upheld their view of the Son being “ὅμοιος” or “like” the Father without entering into the territory of the Eunomians who presented the Son as “ἄνόμοιος” or “unlike” the Father. Sumruld points out that Augustine makes no attempt to refute or discuss the uniquely Eunomian concepts of the “Son,” “Son of God’s will” or the Father as “the will of God.” Neither does he explicitly denounce any statements of “unlikeness.”¹¹³ Further, Augustine’s comment in Epistula 171A to Maximus that he “refrain from objecting to passages of the holy Scriptures which you would not yet understand and which seem to the uninstructed devoid of sense and contradictory...” displays the preoccupation of Maximus with scriptural application to the issue, something that appears to have annoyed Augustine a great deal.¹¹⁴ As Sumruld concludes, we do not see any indication of Eunomian elements in this exchange. This suggests that Maximus held beliefs that corresponded quite closely to that of the Homoians, a conclusion that Sumruld shares despite attributing it to a “Gothic” nature. He cautiously avoids any debate over the identity

¹¹¹ Augustine, “Epistula 170.”

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Sumruld, 77.

¹¹⁴ Augustine, “Epistula 171A, Augustine to Maximus,” in *Fathers of the Church Vol. 4*, trans. Wilfrid Parsons (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1955), 69.

of Maximus himself, as the status of a landowner near Hippo Regius prior to the Vandal invasion was almost undoubtedly Roman. A number of *foederati* did make their way to North Africa for the purpose of fighting outlying nomadic peoples, however to ascribe to them a large influence and landholdings (as well as the profession of physician, a learned profession) remains highly unlikely.¹¹⁵

A similar debate has surrounded Augustine's rival Maximinus with whom he debated on the eve of the Vandal invasion. An elderly bishop, Maximinus was summoned by Boniface to Hippo Regius, and the request may have had other significance considering that Boniface himself was married to Pelagia, a recently converted "barbarian." Pelagia relapsed soon after the birth of their first child and had it baptized as Arian.¹¹⁶ Possidius records Maximinus as coming "to Africa with the Goths," an association that has led some scholars to conclude that he was a Goth.¹¹⁷ Any association in this respect is difficult due to a lack of information, however what we do have the ability to discern are Maximinus' theological convictions.

Regardless of Maximinus' origins, he proved to be a formidable adversary for Augustine. Sumruld is quick to ascribe this to the recurring theme of E.A. Thompson's analysis of the theological ineptitude of the Homoians, downplaying their allegorical abilities with the claim that they simply provided a barrage of scriptural verse in order to confuse their

¹¹⁵ Frank Clover, "Carthage in the Age of Augustine," *Excavations at Carthage* 4 (1976): 7.

¹¹⁶ Augustine, "Epistula 220," in *The Works of St. Augustine*, trans. S.J. Teske (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2005), 3.

Possidius, "Vita Augustini," in *Fathers of the Church Vol. 15*, trans. Magdeline Muller (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1955), 17.

¹¹⁷ Possidius, 17.

opponents and as Augustine claimed, monopolize the discussion.¹¹⁸ His assertions that the Homoians possessed “a particularly unhealthy form of biblical literalism mixed with pulpit pyrotechnics aimed at elevating the pulpiteer than at educating the congregation,” have fortunately been supplemented by additional scholarship that offers a better comparison.¹¹⁹ R.P.C Hanson’s work, despite predating that of Sumruld by six years, offers a much better context for the hermeneutic tendencies of Homoianism.¹²⁰ He acknowledges that the practiced of allegorizing was not entirely avoided by the Homoians, as “almost no expounder of the Bible in the ancient world is free from some use of allegory.” They did however tend to adhere to a literal interpretation of scripture in the sense that they insisted upon utilizing the “actual meaning” of metaphorical or analogical language” relating to God as opposed to the more vague associations practiced by the Nicenes.¹²¹ Even Maximinus, who asserts, “I profess what I read. I read *firstborn*; I do not disbelieve. I read *only-begotten*; even if I am tortured on the rack, I will not say otherwise. I profess what the Holy Scriptures teach us,” does not overly invest in his literalism as Hanson is quick to point out.¹²² There is also no indication that the use of a separate textual source hampered his interpretation. At the outset of the debate, Maximus insisted on the exclusion of “those words which are not found in the

¹¹⁸ Sumruld, 59.

Augustine, “Collatio cum Maximino Arianorum episcopo,” in *The Works of St. Augustine: Arianism and other Heresies*, trans. Roland J. Teske (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 1995), I.1.

Augustine’s biographer Possidius, XVII, also ascribes his victory to his verbose approach to the debate and Sumruld echoes this complaint although a simple look at Augustine’s account shows his first responses to be quite lengthy as well.

¹¹⁹ Sumruld, 59. It is an observable evasion on the part of Sumruld to not bring Hanson into the discussion considering the latter’s long and prominent position in the scholarship surrounding Arianism until his death in 1988.

¹²⁰ Hanson, 559-560.

¹²¹ Hanson, 559.

¹²² Augustine, “Collatio cum Maximino,” 13.

Hanson notes Maximus’ skepticism of the description of God given in Psalms 78(77):66(65) as “like a strong man with a hangover,” and his chronological issues with the trials of Job, (Hanson, 560).

scriptures.”¹²³ What he was referencing of course was the use of ὁμοούσιος (*homoousios*), however this statement also has the benefit of providing the assumption of a common scriptural language. As a bishop to the Goths, he would have certainly been familiar with the Gothic Bible, but his theological reflections were based on the Latin rendition. There were no issues of translation within the debate, merely the difference of interpretation. In this respect, to revert to the discussion of Gothic translation, words themselves were mere reflections of theology rather than its foundation.

Maximinus, whether Roman or Goth, participated in the Greco-Roman philosophical framework provided by the Second sophists and Neo-Platonists. He displayed the ability to engage Augustine on a reciprocal level as well as a cunning adaptiveness to the polemics of the Bishop of Hippo. Despite this engagement, he managed to retain the scriptural interpretation supported by the architects of the Arimium Creed.¹²⁴ There was nothing distinctively Gothic about Maximinus or the Homoianism he practiced. The coercive intellectual power that the Roman philosophical tradition exercised within the empire meant that those who expected to function within its structure were required to base their practice on similar foundations. Nevertheless, practice itself did not mean that associations of “otherness” could not be ascribed to the doctrine, and indeed as the Platonic and Aristotelian tradition of Nicene Christianity created associations of “Romanness,” the increased practice of Homoianism by Gothic peoples helped create associations of the doctrine as a foreign entity.

¹²³ Augustine, “Collatio cum Maximino,” I.1.

¹²⁴ Augustine, “Collatio cum Maximino,” I.4.

Arianism and “Otherness”

In the absence of any “Gothic” elements, an explanation of the association between “Arianism” and Goths requires a look at the motives of political and ecclesiastical authorities during the fifth and sixth centuries. As Dragos Mirsanu has postulated, the relegation of “Arianism” to the Gothic peoples served as a useful rhetorical quality for Nicene polemicists and Justinian I.¹²⁵ The miserable failure of Leo’s expedition against the Vandals in 468, which was led by the general Basiliscus, was blamed on the *magister militum* Aspar. Aspar himself was an Arian and rumors circulated that he ensured the failure of Basiliscus on account of his sympathies for the doctrine that he and Geiseric shared.¹²⁶ It is significant to note however that the death of Aspar in 469 and subsequent persecution of Arians was not the end of the Arian presence in Constantinople. Until the middle part of the 530’s, an Arian population remained on the outskirts of the city and held vital political positions relating to the Gothic *foederati*, providing the imperial court with little interest in their elimination. A decree by the co-emperors Justin and Justinian in 527 protected all Gothic federates from persecution, illustrating the continued importance of the Gothic *foederati* to civic defense and military strength.¹²⁷ This necessary tolerance toward Arian populations was altered in the middle of Justinian’s reign as political distinctions and the construction of a new form of imperial legitimacy saw the collapse of the relationship between Justinian and the use of Gothic *foederati*.

¹²⁵ Dragos Mirsanu, “The Imperial Policy of Otherness: Justinian and the Arianism of Barbarians as a Motive for the Recovery of the West,” *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 84 (2008), 483.

¹²⁶ Gregory Greatrex, “Justin I and the Arians,” *Studia Patristica* Vol. 34 (2001), 73.

¹²⁷ *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, ed. Rudolf Scholl, Wilhelm Kroll, Paul Krueger, Theodor Mommsen (Berlin: Apud Weidmannos, 1973), I.5.12.17. Greatrex, 73.

The invasion of the Vandal kingdom by Belisarius was the third attempt to retake North Africa, and its success in 534 allowed for a re-categorization of the endeavor as evidence for the championship of Nicene Christianity. Following the invasion, imperial discourse began to identify the effort as a conflict between “Roman orthodoxy” and “barbarian heresy.” Prior to the invasion itself, the latter distinction unlikely served to legitimate the effort as the army led by Belisarius contained about one thousand Arian Goths.¹²⁸ What followed however was what Mirsanu has classified as a “post-event legitimating effort.”¹²⁹ The attempt to restructure the discourse surrounding the invasion was likely made possible by a Gothic revolt in North Africa in 536. The dissent started when Arian churches were disestablished at the behest of Nicene clergy, disgruntled by the long period of Vandal rule. Further restrictions were imposed upon liturgy and baptism, denying rites to all Arians, both Goth and Roman. Local inhabitants, along with the Arians who had accompanied Belisarius, rebelled and managed to subvert imperial power in the region for a number of years.¹³⁰ Attempts to pacify the situation were abandoned, turning the imperial focus to a decidedly pro-Nicene imperial policy. No longer requiring the support of the Arian contingents, the triumph of Justinian’s army became portrayed as proof of his orthodoxy, contrasting his successes with the miserable failures of his predecessors.

The legal and narrative works that formed out of this shifting paradigm effectively categorized the Vandals as an ethnic “other” by highlighting the persecution of the Nicene Christians as the subjugation of *Romanitas*. The emergence of the notion of Vandal destruction so pervasive in Victor of Vita’s narrative, focused on the supposed destruction of

¹²⁸ Procopius. *History of the Wars*, trans. H.B. Dewing (New York, NY: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1919), III.15.3

¹²⁹ Mirsanu, 483.

¹³⁰ Procopius, IV.xiv.10-17.

agriculture, religious structures and estates, all entities that held social significance to the creation of a Roman cultural sphere.

They gave vent to their wicked ferocity with great strength against the churches and basilicas of the saints, cemeteries and monasteries... in some buildings, namely great houses and homes where fire had been of less service to them, they smashed the roofs in pieces and leveled the beautiful walls to the ground... here at Carthage they utterly destroyed the odeon, the theatre, the temple of Memoria and what people used to call the Via Caelestis.¹³¹

The objects of destruction that Victor focused upon represented those particularly representative of “Romanness;” the theatre, temple, monasteries and agricultural output. Since the third century, the African provinces served as the primary provider of wheat and other subsidies for the urban centers of the empire, material goods that were associated with the Roman lifestyle. Disruption of this supply constituted a blow to Rome on a physical and ideological level. According to this narrative, the Vandals were no longer the appropriators of a Roman province; they were the destroyers of the traditional social, religious, economic and political bonds that created a notion of inclusion in the wider Roman world. Justinian and his “orthodoxy” became the emancipators from this persecution, “liberating all the west from slavery to the said usurpers who were Arians.”¹³² The invasion of the Vandal kingdom was therefore categorized by Justinian as an endeavor to “free” the Romans of North Africa from the barbarian domination of both body and soul.¹³³

There is some evidence that this association legitimated the invasion of Ostrogothic Italy in 535. Procopius records that the reasons for the invasion resulted from Theodahad’s murder of Amalasuntha, who had previously sought the support and protection of

¹³¹ Victor of Vita, I.4-8.

¹³² Cyril of Scythopolis, “Vita Sabae,” in *Lives of the Monks of Palestine*, ed. Richard Price and John Binns (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1991), 175.19-176.1.

¹³³ Mirsanu, 483.

Justinian.¹³⁴ The death of the queen was well removed from the pretext given for the African expedition, and the lack of any substantial conflicts between Arians and Nicenes in the Ostrogothic kingdom made such an assertion of subjugation difficult. It is also evident from Procopius that the prospect of invasion was not necessarily favored by the non-Gothic inhabitants of Italy. A man by the name of Tullianus claimed that his people had subjected themselves to the “barbarians who were also Arians” only as a result of necessity and that they had received poor treatment from Justinian’s armies.¹³⁵ In this case the notion of either “Roman” or “barbarian” rule toward local populations was reflective of treatment and circumstance, and although the association between Arianism and the Ostrogoths is evident, it does not necessarily depict a difference in preferred rule, but rather the practical concerns of the local population.¹³⁶ Justinian however, appears to have utilized a rhetorical stance similar to that surrounding the invasion of Africa, and a letter to the emperor from the Roman Senate in May of 535 reflects the notion of “liberation” emanating from Constantinople.

Do not let us, who have always seemed welcome to your friendship become your enemies... My religion, which is your own, is known to be flourishing; why then do you try to do more for me?¹³⁷

The relative peace between Nicene and Arian Christians in the Ostrogothic kingdom was reflective of the insignificant nature of the differences within that specific political context, and it was only as a result of Justinian’s campaign that it acquired a universal connotation as a defining feature of Gothiness. By reconstructing the dispute as possessing both cultural and religious connotations, the emperor was able to legitimate his victory over

¹³⁴ Procopius, V. ii.24; V.v.8.

¹³⁵ Procopius, V.ii.19.

¹³⁶ Mirsanu also utilizes this passage and agrees with the conclusion of its relation to local indifference toward ‘otherness of faith’, 493.

¹³⁷ Cassiodorus, *Variae*, trans. S.J.B. Barnish (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1992), XI.13.

the Vandals and eventually over Ostrogothic Italy, strengthening the association of the empire with the Nicene Church.

The continued propensity of late fifth and sixth-century chroniclers to associate “Arianism” with the external representation of the Goths should give us hesitation when assigning a specifically Gothic quality to the sect. Despite continuity with Roman practice, “Arianism” among the Goths took on the role as the most notable differentiating religious and political construct in the context of Justinian’s reign. Homoianism was effectively established as an external phenomenon foreign from the *Romanitas* of Nicene Christianity, thereby completing on an ideological and cultural basis the process begun by Theodosius I.

Conclusion

Examining the political significance of Arianism within the Vandal and Ostrogothic kingdoms first requires an awareness of the variability that can be ascribed to the practice of Arianism. It is only in the growth of Nicene equivalence with *Romanitas* that Arianism acquired an exclusive correlation with “barbarians.” Even with this acknowledgement, we should not assume that Goths themselves necessarily associated their practice with a sense of self-identity. The issue of Gothic identity is complex, as we have seen from the arguments of Amory, Heather and Wolfram. All of these scholars however accept the principle that identity is variable and hybridized, formed as a synthesis between local necessity and the broader framework. Homoian practice, or “Arianism” as it will now be referred to, can be

envisioned as functioning in a similar way.¹³⁸ Its origins were derived from the same as that of Nicene Christianity, but its social and political context changed the meaning with which it was associated. As such, we can perceive Arianism as variable, acquiring purpose out of circumstance and necessity. It is such a foundation that allows us to elucidate on its functions in the establishment and maintenance of two specific political entities; the kingdoms of the Ostrogoths and the Vandals.

¹³⁸ Although the term Arianism is misleading in its assumption of continuity with the teachings of Arius, subsequent chapters will use the term under the pretext that, by the fifth and sixth centuries, we are in fact discussing the existence of two primary doctrinal remnants of the Christological debates rather than several. Such a change in terminology, as long as its origins are kept in mind, can also help to retain the significance that the term held during the fifth century.

Chapter 2

The Amal Legacy: Arianism in the Ostrogothic Kingdom

The *Anonymous Valesianus*, a mid sixth-century Italian account that largely concerns itself with the reign of Theoderic the Great, records Theoderic's arrival in Rome to celebrate his *tricennalia* in the year 500. The pinnacle of the event was the meeting between the king and the elected Pope, Symmachus. The papacy at the time was divided between two candidates, Symmachus and Laurentius. Following the death of Anastasius in 496, the city of Rome erupted in conflict over the current ecclesiastical schism between Rome and Constantinople. The faction that formed around Symmachus refused to reconcile with the Eastern Church due to the contents of the twenty-eighth canon approved at the Council of Chalcedon in 451, which sought to place the See of Constantinople on equal footing with Rome. The divide was further enlarged by Zeno's compromise with the Miaphysites in 482, drafted by the bishop Acacius. The opposition under Laurentius sought to reconcile these rifts with the Eastern Church through the continuation of diplomatic efforts begun by Anastasius just prior to his death.¹³⁹ The *Anonymous Valesianus* records that during his visit to Rome, Theoderic "met Saint Peter with as much reverence as if he himself were Catholic," likely foreshadowing his eventual intervention on behalf of Symmachus in 506.¹⁴⁰ The cordial relationship that followed between the Nicene Roman clergy and Arian Theoderic was a significant part of the Ostrogothic legacy, standing in opposition to the stress that other

¹³⁹ Winrich Löhr, "Western Christianities," in *The Cambridge History of Christianity Vol 2: Constantine to c. 600*, ed. Augustine Casiday and Frederick W. Norris (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 15.

¹⁴⁰ *Anonymi Valesiani*, trans. John C. Rolfe (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1939), XII, 65.

kingdoms, especially that of the Vandals, experienced with two separate and established ecclesiastical communities.¹⁴¹ Theoderic was no stranger to the ideological and practical support offered by close cooperation between church and state. The support of the anti-Constantinopolitan papal candidate Symmachus offered theological legitimacy and protection to the Roman Church and simultaneously provided Theoderic with a supportive, rather than subversive, Nicene clergy that prevented outside ecclesiastical and political influence.¹⁴² Yet Theoderic's continued espousal of Arian Christianity in the wake of such cooperation, which arguably could have brought even closer ties with the Roman ecclesiastical establishment as it did for contemporary monarchs, has not been explained in terms of its political and social relevancy. Durkheim's observation that religion forms as an expression of collective reality that seeks to either change or maintain the status quo, necessitates a correlation between Arianism and the political and social realities of Theoderic's rule. The Amal support for Arianism was not novel in the sense that it distinguished them from other contemporary dynasties, therefore its significance must be

¹⁴¹ Procopius, V.i.29, adds support to the view that Theoderic's reign was relatively tolerant and experienced widespread support, adding, "love for him among both Goths and Italians grew to be great, and that too contrary to the ordinary habits of men. For in all states men's preferences are divergent, with the result that the government in power pleases for the moment only those with whom its acts find favor, but offends those whose judgment it violates." Granted, this statement is oriented by Procopius at the divisive policies of Justinian I, but given the general legacy of Theoderic it is likely the Constantinopolitan author envisioned Theoderic as an example of what Justinian should be with regard to religious policy.

The extent to which Nicene Christians experienced persecution in the Visigothic and Burgundian kingdoms are rightly disputed, however there certainly appears to have been periodic stress between Nicenes and Arians in both circumstances. In the Kingdom of Toulouse, Euric (r.466-484) appears to have made it difficult, if not impossible, for Catholic clergy to communicate with Rome and engaged in some form of Arian evangelical measures prior to a campaign. Conflict in this circumstance however appears to have stopped at the political level and does not represent any widespread attempt at conversion. (Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, 200). Similarly, Cesarius of Arles ran afoul of the Burgundians and was exiled in 506 because of his refusal to concede parts of his district to their control. (Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, 201) These two relationships between Nicenes and Arians were by no means as severe as the conflicts under Vandal rule, however the Nicene clergy do not appear to have embraced the same cooperation with the Arian political leadership in the Burgundian and Visigothic kingdoms that they did in Ostrogothic Italy.

¹⁴² Amory, 205.

seen as an effort to support continuity rather than alteration.

This sense of “continuity” of course is set against the turmoil that accompanied the establishment of Gothic hegemony in Italy. Sometime in late 488, Theoderic was urged by Zeno to attack Odoacer, for reasons that will be discussed shortly.¹⁴³ The protracted struggle that focused on Ravenna saw its conclusion in 493 at a banquet held by Theoderic where he himself murdered Odoacer.¹⁴⁴ The state that emerged was still very much embedded in Roman political tradition, culture and law. Following Diocletian and the restructuring of the army into heavy, mobile *comitatenses* and fixed outposts that housed stationary, lightly-armed military forces known as *limitanei*, the power structure of the empire shifted from the imperial center to the periphery. Emperors were military leaders that cultivated their following and power beyond the walls of Rome and the senate, commanding and dictating from the field. The integration of the rhetorically labeled “barbarians” into the empire was a syncretic process, not the divisive and ethnically charged categories that often form popular perceptions of the period.

In this chapter, I will argue that Arianism remained a vital part of maintaining legitimacy within the Gothic faction. The creation of the Amal line established a sense of continuity for the lineage, positioning Theoderic and his successors in the midst of an established ancestry. Associating his Arian faith with the Amali helped to enforce the legitimacy of the line, linking a perception of dynastic succession to success based upon religious adherence. The chapter will first explore the early period of Theoderic’s career and his inclusion within the Dominate-era military structure that emerged following the reforms

¹⁴³ Procopius, V.i.10.

¹⁴⁴ Procopius, V.i.25.

of Diocletian. The fragmentary and martial base for rule of these federates was retained within the Gothic political structure created in Italy, creating a need for Theoderic to establish an ideological base for dynastic continuity most visible in the writings of Jordanes and Cassiodorus. Although few documents survive that directly correlate the Amali and Arianism in any official capacity, the stamp of Amal influence on the religious works that Theoderic patronized emphasizes the connection that he sought to draw between the two.

Theoderic's Early Years

The early career of Theoderic was not unusual for a descendent of an influential military family of the later empire. The disintegration of the Hunnic confederacy in the wake of Attila's death in 453 created a power vacuum from which a number of prominent figures emerged as powerful federate leaders.¹⁴⁵ Theoderic's uncle, Valamir was one of these commanders who brought under their authority the residual military factions.¹⁴⁶ Theoderic, according to Jordanes' *Getica*, was the son of Valamir's brother Thiudimer and a concubine, although the sources are contradictory on this matter. The *Anonymous Valesianus* refers to Theoderic as the son of "Walamericus" and another sixth-century source, Malchus, provides the name Βαλαμέριος, undoubtedly referring Valamir.¹⁴⁷ Acknowledging that the *Valesianus* remains heavily dependent upon the work of Procopius, another sixth-century Constantinopolitan text, and Malchus derives from a similar geographical and chronological context, Valamir is most likely an acknowledgement of the significant role that Theoderic's

¹⁴⁵ Amory, 280.

¹⁴⁶ Jordanes, 271, 282.

¹⁴⁷ *Anonymi Valesiani*, 42

Malchus, "Testimonia," in *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire*, ed. R.C. Blockley (Liverpool, UK: F. Cairns, 1983), 15.

uncle played in regional politics than a true indication of his lineage.¹⁴⁸ While Jordanes is a source that must be used with a great deal of precaution, his use of Cassiodorus, a close Roman associate of Theoderic, does allow for some element of certainty in establishing Thiudimer as Theoderic's father.¹⁴⁹

Theoderic was sent at the age of seven (c. 461) to Constantinople as a political hostage to the Emperor Leo, where he remained until the age of eighteen.¹⁵⁰ It is important to stress that Theoderic was not a "barbarian observer," confined to the walls of the Imperial city. He was an inclusive member of the military aristocracy and court culture who received a classical education as part of that elite.¹⁵¹ Theoderic formed connections within the imperial court, embedding himself within the military aristocracy where he received the title of patrician. Such connections likely contributed to his support for Zeno during the coup of

¹⁴⁸ Jordanes, 288. Considering the late rise of Amal power as well as fragmentary nature of Hunnic rule, we ought to consider the rise of Valamir as the basis for Amal power. Theoderic's uncle led a number of what were labeled 'Gothic' federate groups under the leadership of Attila and was present at the battle of the Catalaunian fields in 451 (Jordanes, 251-53). It is quite likely that Valamir was able to consolidate a significant amount of power under Hunnic rule, allowing him to survive the subsequent breakdown of the confederacy and emerge in a significant leadership position although not in any capacity relating to 'Ostrogothic kingship'. We are once again reminded of both the non-linear as well as Roman-based nature of leadership within the late Empire, one that is contradictory to the narratives that sought to re-order the past in light of the fifth and sixth century kingdoms. This theory is supported by Burns' predecessor Philip Grierson, "Election and Inheritance in Early Germanic Kingship," *The Cambridge Historical Journal*, Vol.7, No.1 (1941), 1-22. His 1941 work *Election and Inheritance in Early Germanic Kingship* remains valuable despite its age due to its healthy skepticism of Jordanes as well as acceptance that the use of the term *rex* in the Vandal and Visigothic kingdoms represented a distinct model rather than widespread pattern of organization.

¹⁴⁹ For a concise summary of the arguments surrounding Cassiodorus, see Amory, 34-37.

¹⁵⁰ A similar deal presented in Malchus, 18, was proposed by Zeno to Theoderic Triarius as a means toward ensuring the latter's cooperation but was ultimately rejected.

¹⁵¹ Ennodius, 11.

"Greece, prescient of the future, reared you in the bosom of civilization. She educated you, as you entered the threshold of your life, so that, while still a cheerful boy, you presently came under a tutor's security."

Basiliscus in 475, where he played a role in reinstating the deposed emperor.¹⁵² For his efforts, he was awarded a consulship, just one of many titles he acquired during his long career.¹⁵³ Procopius refers to him as *consul* and *patrician*, while the *Anonymous Valesianus* attributes the more general title *dux*, all capacities relating to Roman positions.¹⁵⁴ The need to reconcile the apparent “Romanness” of Theoderic and his position as leader of a group of “barbarian” federates is paramount. The Ostrogothic Kingdom in Italy did in some ways possess distinct social divisions between “Goths” and Romans, however such monolithic depictions adopt connotations of separation and conflict. Context must be provided for the establishment of a broader cultural and political framework, one in which these labels were established, defined and adopted within the sphere of what has been referred to as “*Romanitas*.”

The Fifth-Century Frontier

A description of the social and political construction of the Roman frontier and non-urban regions helps to explain the nature of Theoderic’s command that began in the Balkans

¹⁵² Theoderic’s use of the title *rex gothorum* is recorded by Jordanes as being applicable prior to the defeat of Odoacer, however the title itself assumes domination over a cohesive political unit that defined itself as “Gothic,” a situation that did not exist until at least after the defeat of Odoacer in 493. The presence of other federate leaders like Theoderic Strabo in the Balkan region stresses that Theoderic was not unique in his position or relationship with Constantinople.

¹⁵³ The assistance given to Zeno is recorded both by Ennodius, 12-13 and the *Anonymi Valesiani*, 41-49. Both of these sources state that Theoderic offered help to Zeno, however it is not stated whether he was part of Zeno’s army or that of Harmatus, who was sent by Basiliscus but surrendered immediately to the exiled emperor (See Procopius, V.i.9). It is likely he was part of the former, as Theoderic Triarius had given his allegiance to Basiliscus and despite his pardon, was never allowed to forget about his treachery (Malchus, 15). It may well be that Zeno’s eventual preference for Theoderic over that of Triarius was based partially on the fact that the former had not cooperated with Basiliscus.

¹⁵⁴ Procopius, V.i.9.

Anonymi Valesiani, IX.32.

These titles are also referenced by Malchus, 20, who elaborates that they held the same significance as “a reward for those Romans who have labored particularly hard.” The connection drawn to the Roman position itself supports the lack of any “honorary” element and rather a practical application of the title.

and ended in Italy. At the outset, he was not a “barbarian king,” but rather a member of the military elite that defined the politics and social categories of the later Empire. Popular perceptions of “Roman” and “Barbarian” often bring to mind distinct cultural and political categories; stereotypes that occlude a complex reality. The blame for this perception rests a great deal upon Roman ethnographers themselves, whose active use of rhetorical style lent itself toward the creation of political “others.” These constructs could then be used to represent an antithesis of the culture or values they sought to define as “Roman.”

The ties between the “barbarian” peoples and the Romans were forged in the first century B.C.E. in the wake of conquests by Julius Caesar and Augustus. Bloody conquest was followed by the establishment of colonies under the auspices of elite Roman families, focal points that paved the way for the synthesis of Gallic and Roman culture. Urban centers that provided access to the Roman economy drew in surrounding rural peoples and resulted in what was essentially a forum of cultural interaction. The archaeological record shows that Celtic society saw a rapid growth of social distinction based upon material wealth, affluence that was almost exclusively Roman in origin and yet was used for purposes that reflected Celtic social needs.¹⁵⁵ Not all elites were keen to recognize and interact with their new neighbors; however Romans saw the utility in supporting the pro-Roman Celts as a means of establishing peace and exerting authority on the frontier. Suetonius recognized in the early second century C.E. the utility of such relationships with the peoples in the outer regions of the empire writing, “kings are the limbs and parts of the empire.”¹⁵⁶ This paradigm was

¹⁵⁵ Thomas Burns, *Rome and the Barbarians, 100 B.C.-A.D. 400* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 2.

¹⁵⁶ Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus, “Divus Augustus,” in *De Vita Caesarum*, ed. Maximilian Ihm (1907), XLVIII, ...nec aliter uniuersos quam membra partisq[ue] imperii curae habuit, rectorem quoque solitus apponere aetate paruis aut mente lapsis, donec adollescere[n]t aut resipiscere[n]t...”

experienced in all regions of the empire where there were no pre-existing unified state structures. “Barbarian” political units emerged alongside Roman authority, not outside of it, and led to the creation of boundaries that were fluid rather than fixed and divisionary.

This relationship between the empire and its neighbors developed into a policy of mutual security, as imperial objectives focused on the sustainment, rather than expansion, of the borders.¹⁵⁷ These regions were zones of economic, political and cultural exchange that merged together broader Roman ideas and material culture with local priorities, not unalterable political boundaries.¹⁵⁸ The result was a fluid and diffuse frontier, expanding outward in varying degrees of connectivity to military and urban centers from which imperial power was exercised. It was not so much the maintenance of these borders that necessitated the *limites* of Diocletian’s military reforms in the early fourth century, but the protection of economic and social interests. Obstacles like the Danube were centers of transportation from which the military and local communities could be stationed power exerted outward.¹⁵⁹ In this regard, it is misleading to describe the empire as possessing distinct boundaries, separating “internal barbarians” from “external barbarians” and defining a unified political region that can be classified as “civilized” or “Roman.” The groups that resided on the east side of the Danube possessed no cultural “continuity” that was entirely external from those “within” the Roman Empire, in a similar way in which we cannot describe the social units of the empire as categorically homogenous themselves.¹⁶⁰ What is evident instead is a graduated

¹⁵⁷ C.R. Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire* (Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 1994), 97, ascribes this shift in policy to one of logistical necessity based on a combination of social, economic and ecological impediments that reflected themselves in political decisions.

¹⁵⁸ Whittaker, 85.

¹⁵⁹ Whittaker, 95-96.

¹⁶⁰ Amory, 13.

relationship between primary urban centers like Rome and Constantinople and the periphery, where the periphery resided within its own set of political and cultural contexts and yet remains connected in various degrees to the center due to economic and political elements at level of local provinces. This concept possesses a great deal of relevancy when discussing the large scale migrations that occurred across the Danube in the late fourth century as it dispels any notion that “foreign” and “native” elements were the origin of the fifth-century conflicts.

Describing individuals like Theoderic in this context means abandoning the perception of “Barbarian” and “Roman” and accepting the fact that the inhabitants of the empire existed within multiple spheres of identity at any given point. The Roman military, as Thomas Burns stresses, served as a primary means of interaction in rural areas. Auxiliary camps, colonies for retired military personnel and outposts offered areas where intermarriage and exchange could occur. What resulted were individuals who possessed hybridized identities that cannot easily be easily classified in a concrete manner. A tombstone erected in Pannonia at Herculia in honor of Flavia Tattunis filia Usaiu draws a coherent picture of a person enveloped in several spheres of influence. Flavia, likely of substantial material wealth and influence, died at the age of eighty during the late second century, leaving behind at least one son by the name of Q. Flavius Titucus. Her name suggests that she was the daughter of a Romanized Celt and is depicted with a cloth headdress wrapped around her hair, wearing a dress of native construction embroidered at the cuffs and a burdensome *torques* of twisted filigree. As Burns states, such a pendant was a visible significance of her high position within the Celtic community. Beneath the bust sits a funerary altar, supported on either side by Corinthian columns. Flavia provides a personified example of the synthesis that occurred in the frontier provinces at the individual level. Elements of both social environments fused

together to form an ideological mesh that, in its hybrid nature, displayed intersecting levels of material and ideological culture that served the unique contextual environment of each person. Any attempt to separate these elements into distinct categories risks destroying the meaning that the individual ascribed to certain ritualistic practices. For Flavia, as Burns writes, “The classical altar as temple (*aedicule*) denotes the assurance of the Roman gods at death, but the wagon directly beneath her announced that her journey would be in Celtic conveyance.”¹⁶¹ By the fourth and fifth centuries, it becomes nearly impossible to distinguish those living in rural Roman areas and regions from those often classified within Roman ethnography as “barbarian.”¹⁶²

The inclusion of the Roman frontier society only increased with the military changes that began with Diocletian. During the civil wars of the mid third century, a lack of internal manpower altered imperial focus to the periphery and facilitated the growth of military factions that served usurpers and emperors alike. Under Constantine and his successors, the military focused upon two primary divisions as a means of exercising power: the mobile *comitatenses* and the *limites*, a series of fortified encampments that were placed under the command of a *dux*.¹⁶³ The existence of small, permanent forces throughout the provinces provided forewarning of uprisings and troop movements in addition to auxiliary troops that could support the *comitatenses* in major conflicts. Cavalry also rose in importance due to its ability to pursue small bands and respond quickly, encounters that formed the vast majority

¹⁶¹ Burns, *Rome and the Barbarians*, 224.

¹⁶² Burns, *Rome and the Barbarians*, 5.

¹⁶³ Pat Southern, *The Roman Army: A Social and Institutional History* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2006), 259.

of military exchanges.¹⁶⁴ This military structure formed the basis for political power after the late fourth century as a means of exerting control over both internal and external issues. Unlike the army of the Principate, which acted as the extension of the objectives of the Senate and Emperor in Rome, the army was the focus of the Empire itself. Emperors and usurpers alike required the support of the army to acquire and maintain political power, and it was from this medium that the majority of later emperors emerged. As an extension of this transformation, the political and economic system of the empire became perceived as simply a support mechanism for the military. It was only by controlling the manpower on the periphery that an emperor could maintain or establish power.¹⁶⁵

Theoderic's career developed within this periphery-focused military structure, and it was likely the result of an agreement or treaty drawn between his uncle Valamir and Leo I that he was sent to Constantinople at the age of seven. The dissolution of the Hunnic Empire in 453 left behind many federate groups who were willing to cooperate with the emperor in return for monetary compensation. Figures like Valamir, Theudimir and Theoderic, participated in the structure of *limitanei*, *comitatenses* and *foederati* and were eventually absorbed into the military organization. Older studies like Thomas Burns' *The Ostrogoths: Kingship and Society*, accepted the notion of a fragmentary leadership among these groups, but always from the perspective of some notion of "Germanic kingship," rather than a system derived from and existing within the Roman itself.¹⁶⁶ Burns himself has recently moved beyond this hypothesis, however it is still necessary to state that ideas of continuity fail to explain the problems of legitimacy faced by Theoderic's successors and simultaneously fall

¹⁶⁴ Burns, *Rome and the Barbarians*, 314.

¹⁶⁵ Burns, *Rome and the Barbarians*, 255.

¹⁶⁶ Burns, *The Ostrogoths: Kingship and Society*, 2.

prey to the image of dynastic leadership that Theoderic sought to cultivate.¹⁶⁷

The divided nature of federate leadership helps to explain the veracity with which Theoderic and his successors sought to propagate their lineage as the basis for their rule in Italy. While there was no definitive “right” of succession, the acquisition and retention of Roman titles formed a basic means by which legitimacy could be achieved. The practice of conferring imperial titles upon members of the *foederati* was a common practice by the fifth century, one that had origins in the term *rex socius et amicus*, a title reserved for allied kings recognized by the Roman state.¹⁶⁸ As a means of establishing legitimacy, these titles exhibit the degree to which the borders of the empire were of a purely political nature rather than cultural boundary. The loose political association between the imperial center and the position of *iudex* that existed prior to 369 was strengthened significantly by the increasing role of the *foederati* in Roman military strategy. The legitimacy of federate leaders became derived from an association with imperial authority. Ammianus records that in August of 378, just prior to the battle of Adrianople, Fritigern sent an embassy to Valens that included a private letter requesting he be recognized as *amicus futurus et socius*.¹⁶⁹ The appeal was likely a moderated form of the standard title *rex socius et amicus*, with the term *futurus* indicating a provisional title that Fritigern hoped would eventually lead to full recognition as *rex*.¹⁷⁰ A similar request was made later on multiple occasions by Alaric who was rejected out of hand by Honorius with the words “not at any time would he give to Alaric or anyone

¹⁶⁷ Burns, *The Ostrogoths: Kingship and Society*, 30-35.

Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, 25.

¹⁶⁸ Heather, 137.

¹⁶⁹ Ammianus, XXX.12.9.

¹⁷⁰ Heather, 137, attests that Fritigern, given the extensive use of the title among allied kings, was well aware of the title.

of his *gens* (γένος) the honor of *dux* (στρατηγία).”¹⁷¹ The efforts of federate leaders to distinguish themselves through the use of Roman titles further developed in the context of increased military dependence in the fourth and fifth centuries upon such groups. By the time of Theoderic, such titles were more than insular means of power; they meant control and prestige both within their own factions and the empire as a whole.¹⁷²

This association between federate leaders and the empire was a form of client-patron relationship, a union that provided the emperor with manpower to support the *comitatenses* and man the *limes*. Each federate group fell under the control of a local warlord who was owed allegiance by a number of landowning individuals and those who inhabited it.¹⁷³ The composition of these entities was diverse, often a mixture of both Romans and other self-identified peoples drawn from the peripheral regions of the empire, a fact that Olympiodorus alludes to; “The name *bucellarius* was given, in the time of Honorius, not only to soldiers of Rome but to certain Goths. In this same manner, the name *foederati* was given to a diverse and mixed group.”¹⁷⁴ The growing importance of frontier peoples within the military leadership was mirrored by their inclusion in the military ideological structure.¹⁷⁵ The position of a federate warlord was based upon two ideological notions, one of which dealt with its role in the federate system and derived its legitimacy from interaction with the

¹⁷¹ Zosimus, *Historia Nova*, ed. Immanuel Bakker (1885), V.48.

...ἀξίαν δὲ ἢ στρατηγίαν μή ποτε Ἀλαρίχῳ δώσειν ἢ τισι τῶν τῷ γενεῖ προσηξόντων.
...at dignitatem aut ducis officium nunquam se vel Alaricho vel eius gentilibus concessurum.

¹⁷² Amory, 152-64.

¹⁷³ It is difficult to distinguish between the Roman landlords and federate warlords of the periphery, a fact that further complicates their influence over one another as well as the way in which both formed what were essentially private armies hired by the empire as *foederati*. Whittaker, 275-76.

¹⁷⁴ Olympiodorus of Thebes, in *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire*, ed. R.C. Blockley (Liverpool, UK: F. Cairns, 1983), 7.4. Ὅτι τὸ Βουκελλάριος ὄνομα ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις Ὀνωρίου ἐφέρετο κατὰ στρατιωτῶν οὐ μόνον Ῥωμαίων ἀλλὰ καὶ Γότθων τινῶν · ὥς δ' αὐτῶς καὶ τὸ φοιδεράτων κατὰ διαφόρου καὶ συμμιγοῦς ἐφέρετο πλήθους.

¹⁷⁵ Whittaker, 278.

Roman power structure, and the other from the material needs of his followers.

Roman titles provided legitimacy within the larger Imperial framework and as we have seen, they were actively sought by foederati leaders for their association with the Roman political establishment. Titles and a connection to Constantinople were not in and of themselves sufficient legitimizing strategies among the federate groups. Both Jordanes and Procopius make reference to some form of discontent amongst Theoderic's people that merited imperial displeasure and spurred their move into Italy.¹⁷⁶ According to Procopius, the Goths "took up arms against the Romans under the leadership of Theoderic."¹⁷⁷ The apparent discord of Theoderic's faction is echoed in Jordanes' account although he distances Theoderic from the dissatisfaction, placing his residence in Constantinople where, "he heard that his tribe, dwelling in the Balkans, was not altogether satisfied or content."¹⁷⁸ In both cases an underlying sense of insecurity, either in Theoderic's control of his people or his relationship with the emperor, created a situation that made the faction's movement to Italy beneficial for both parties. Malchus adds clarification to these two reports, detailing the role of Theoderic's contemporary, Theoderic son of Triarius, in putting a halt to payments from Constantinople.

The two Theoderics fought for some time over financing from the empire, and Zeno consistently wavered on whom he wished to support, maintaining that the imperial treasury only possessed enough to compensate one or the other.¹⁷⁹ Theoderic Triarius demanded that

¹⁷⁶ Ennodius, 14.

¹⁷⁷ Procopius, V.i.28.

Ennodius, 72.

For the discontent of Romans, see Theoderic's praise of Cassiodorus during the early part of his reign in Cassiodorus, I.3.3.

¹⁷⁸ Jordanes, 290.

¹⁷⁹ Malchus, 15.

he be compensated not only for agreements regarding inheritance and titlature promised by Zeno, but for several years' worth of payments that had not been made.¹⁸⁰ After delaying to the point where it appeared that Triarius had acquired the upper hand, Theoderic was removed from office and Triarius was given supplies and the promised payment. Theoderic responded to this affront by attacking the city of Stobi in Macedonia and killing its garrison.¹⁸¹ Theoderic's need to pacify his faction were sufficient that he threatened Zeno, claiming that if he did not receive the proper payments, "he himself would not be able to prevent his large force from meeting its needs by plundering wherever it could."¹⁸² This factor was likely augmented by the factionary nature of the group, as Theoderic's legitimacy depended a great deal upon the material pacification of his elite followers and in turn their members. It should come as little surprise to find that within the federate system payments were as vital to the cohesion of the group as they had been for past armies under the employment of the state.¹⁸³ Likely emanating from the Roman practice of *hospitalitas*, which as Walter Goffart has convincingly argued should be distanced from the military concept established by Arcadius in 398, the accommodation of frontier peoples was a novel practice within Roman law that likely appealed to broader notions of "hospitality" throughout the Empire.¹⁸⁴ What we see is a synergy between central Roman and peripheral elements, in which the concept of *hospitalitas* diverged from a simple notion of shelter and provisioning,

See also Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, 269-71.

¹⁸⁰ Malchus, 3.

¹⁸¹ Malchus, 4.

¹⁸² Malchus, 3.

¹⁸³ The issue of mutiny relating to pay forms a prominent part of Tacitus' accounts of the early empire, denoting a recurring issue with maintaining the loyalty of troops posted well away from centers of imperial power. Tacitus, *The Annals*, trans. John Jackson (New York, NY: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1931), I.31.

¹⁸⁴ Walter Goffart, *Barbarians and Romans, A.D. 418-584* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987), 166-67.

developed in the context of the migrations of the late fourth century, into a form of monetary compensation in return for military service.¹⁸⁵ As this system became ingrained in the federate-imperial relationship, it became a necessary element of subsistence among the *foederati*.

Migration to Italy

The movement of Theoderic's army to Italy itself served in many ways as the ultimate pacification of this financial distress, with land distribution serving as the primary means by which obligations could be fulfilled. Despite Procopius' assertion that Theoderic only distributed land among his followers that had already been usurped by Odoacer, the discontent of many Italians early in his reign highlights the fact that in order to properly settle his people, the dislocation of some native Romans was necessary.¹⁸⁶ Further, care had to be taken not to ostracize those who had come to power under Odoacer and Theoderic continued to praise the followers of Odoacer for their loyalty to his predecessor well into his reign.¹⁸⁷

The conflicts that arose from the re-assignment of lands were mitigated to some extent by the issuance of an edict that was given between 507 and 512; "If, after the date of 489... a barbarian occupier has seized the estate of a Roman, without a warrant [*pittacium*]

¹⁸⁵ Goffart, *Barbarians and Romans*, 171.

¹⁸⁶ Theoderic praised Cassiodorus during the early part of his reign, saying, "You were a loyal subject at the very outset of my reign when the provincials were going astray in those uncertain conditions, and the novelty allowed contempt for an untried master, you diverted from rash resistance the minds of mistrustful Sicilians, preventing their crime and my need to punish it." Cassiodorus, I.3.3.

¹⁸⁷ Theoderic's espousal of Venantius to the Senate in Cassiodorus, II.16.2, provides an account of his father's actions and illustrate the degree to which Theoderic realized the integral nature that the function of the state relied upon the same individuals utilized by Odoacer. He praised the Patrician Liberius for his "total loyalty to Odoacer... although he had done much against me as my enemy. For he did not come over to me in the mean state of a deserter, nor did he feign hatred against his proper lord, to win for himself the favour of another... I gladly reward him because he has loyally aided my enemy."

taken from any assigning officer, he is to restore it without delay to its former master.”¹⁸⁸ The edict is significant on two fronts. First, it allowed for the continued occupancy of any Goths who had assumed control of the properties under Odoacer to retain their land. With the window of availability for Romans to present their case prior to the implementation of the *praescriptio temporis* quickly diminishing, Theodoric realized the need to protect the interests of his non-Roman subjects. The *pittacium* also gave legitimacy to the confiscations issued after 489 by means of the Roman legal system. The recognition of the legal limits presented by the *praescriptio temporis* provided a sense of continuity with Roman government and stability as well as legitimized the allocations issued by both Odoacer and Theodoric. He was therefore able to distribute land in a manner permitted under Roman law, both legitimizing past grants while simultaneously allowing for future action to be taken.¹⁸⁹ It was the utilization of these Roman forms of administration that emphasized continuity within the Roman community and maintained Gothic loyalties based upon federate forms of leadership.

While this tactic of appealing to both the federate and local Roman notions of legitimacy was pacified to a certain extent by the dissemination of land, it nonetheless highlights the difficulty Theodoric continued to face as the ruler of Italy. The legitimacy with which established himself in the Balkans was adjusted to the dynamics of a federate leader, namely the distribution of wealth derived from the empire as well as martial power over those who had pledged their allegiance to him (and by extension the emperor). Although this notion of leadership remained within the ideological framework of the empire, the relocation

¹⁸⁸ Cassiodorus, I.18.

¹⁸⁹ Goffart, *Barbarians and Romans*, 73, explains this land redistribution as the base for fifth century concepts of *hospitalitas* within the kingdoms, explaining its value via the assignment of tax-paying Romans to individual “barbarians.”

to Italy and his exploitation of the Roman power structure necessitated a change in the meaning ascribed to certain aspects of authority. The Roman elements of his rule, namely the titles of *consul*, *patrician* etc. were augmented as he assumed “all but the purple” and such changes required him to re-invent his image beyond that of a federate leader. The factions that accompanied him to Italy did not dissipate despite their distribution throughout Italy. As members of the Roman military structure, their status became even more augmented by the land distribution and thus their regulation was even more imperative for Theoderic. The concept of an Amal dynasty encompassed both of these aspects, a monarchical system substantiated by Roman authority that drew upon precedents of kinship and lineage evident in other contemporary monarchical structures. It was within this structure that Arianism fit, functioning as an element of dynastic continuity that conformed to the concept of a larger “Gothic” community that Theoderic sought to espouse.

The Ostrogothic Kingdom

Theoderic’s reign lasted for 33 years, from 493 to his death in 526 and it did not take him long to establish his house as a powerful political force in the region. His arrival in Italy was shortly followed by his marriage to Audefleda, the sister of Clovis, who had recently achieved a great deal of success in the north with his victory at Soissons against Syagrius in 486-87 and the Thuringians in 491-92. The marriage of his daughter Theodegotha to the king of the Visigoths, Alaric II, established a close familial association with one of the longest established Gothic lines in Europe, a move that likely helped to substantiate the assertions presented in Cassiodorus-Jordanes that the Amali and line of Alaric diverged upon the establishment of the Tervingi and Greutungi kingdoms. Theoderic’s other daughter, Ostrogotho, was wed to the Burgundian king Sigismund, son of Gundobad and his sister

Amalafrida was paired with the Vandal king Thrasamund.¹⁹⁰ These alliances did more than establish peace and secure borders with the preeminent houses of the west; it raised the political capital of his line and its offspring in each of the other kingdoms. Unfortunately for Theoderic and his successors, the kingdom did not last long after his death. Since the king did not have a son by his wife Audofleda, the line of succession passed to his grandson, Athalaric, son of his daughter Amalasuntha. Athalaric came to the throne at the age of eight with his mother in the position of regent until he came of age. As an adult however, Athalaric is depicted as a depraved individual, lacking in masculine qualities that required the presence of his mother in order to maintain control over the kingdom. Amalasuntha herself stands out within Procopius' narrative as a particularly successful leader. Her "masculine temper," endowed her with the ability to maintain relationships between both Goths and Romans and her reign is depicted by Procopius as successful up until her misplaced trust in her relative Theodatus.¹⁹¹

Theodatus was the son of Theoderic's sister Amalafrida and was given land in Tuscany after the settlement in Italy. Prior to the death of Athalaric, he appears to have been a problematic element of the Gothic aristocracy, however the abrupt demise of Athalaric on October 10, 534 brought uncertainty to Amalasuntha over the integrity of her power, causing her to accept Theodatus as a co-ruler.¹⁹² This gesture was likely geared toward preserving the dynastic integrity of the Amal line however apparently Theodatus had few qualms about trimming limbs from the family tree as he arranged for the murder of Amalasuntha soon after

¹⁹⁰ Moorhead, 52.

¹⁹¹ Procopius, V.ii.2.

¹⁹² Procopius, V.iv.4.

Theodatus himself admits in an address to the Senate that his previous conduct had been less than savory (Cassiodorus, VII.x.13), and yet makes the appeal that he has changed as a result of assuming the responsibilities of office.

Athalaric's death.¹⁹³ The line was finally severed in 536 when Theodatus was killed by Witigis, another Gothic noble, who assumed the throne until his defeat by Belisarius in 540. The line of the Amali was short-lived following the death of Theoderic; however the abrupt ending itself highlights the tedious nature of the dynastic line that Theoderic sought to establish. The continued existence of a Gothic elite displays the power dynamics that were subdued by Theoderic and continued to be problematic for Amalasuntha and Theodatus.

The elements of the Gothic aristocracy emerge in the narrative of Procopius at several intervals, however their nature should be held highly suspect due to the author's rhetorical goals. As a critic of Justinian's religious policies, Procopius composed his *Wars* in the tradition of classical historiography, yet with an important distinction. While his predecessor Polybius wrote in praise of virtuous men and their actions, Procopius focused on blame and the depravity he believed he witnessed in the degeneration of Constantinople. Both the *Wars* and the *Secret History* revolve around the figure of Justinian in a manner that, as Anthony Kaldellis describes, places him in an analogous place to the polis of Thucydides or the nation as presented by Herodotus.¹⁹⁴ Unlike other historians who waited until their subjects were safely deceased, Procopius composed his works during the reign of Justinian. The *Wars* should be therefore read with the veiled criticisms of the emperor in mind, critiques that were often transcribed onto other actors by means of disapproval or praise.

¹⁹³ Procopius, V.iv.15.

Amalasuntha's speech to the Senate, intended to legitimize her decision to accept Theodatus, is preserved by Cassiodorus, V.X.3. She emphasizes his descent from "Amal stock" as qualification for his right to rule.

¹⁹⁴ Anthony Kaldellis, *Procopius of Caesarea: Tyranny, History and Philosophy at the End of Antiquity* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 19-21.

The account of the Amali offered the opportunity for a comparison between a supposed “barbarian” kingdom and Justinian. In a method similar to Cato’s classic use of “barbarian others” as the embodiment of certain “virtuous” and “negative” traits perceived in his contemporary Roman, it is possible that Procopius saw in the religious tolerance of the Ostorogthic kingdom a trait lacking in the exclusionary and zealous Nicene policies of Justinian.¹⁹⁵ We are therefore forced to reconcile these rhetorical objectives with the subject matter itself. The seemingly monolithic stereotypes that emerge within the text, namely allusions to Gothic masculinity based upon martial accomplishments and the influence of war itself within the Gothic elite, are common in Roman descriptions of “barbarians.” Such representations however are not entirely rhetorical and have the potential to manifest themselves as personal elements of identity, so long as they are regarded as advantageous within social, political or economic interaction. The origin of such elements can be in part founded in fiction, but not entirely. The Carthaginians were famously accused by Roman polemicists of child sacrifice, an assertion that for a long time was discarded by historians until urns containing infants were uncovered by archaeologists, revealing a continued practice of ritual infanticide that lasted well up through the Roman period.¹⁹⁶ The suspicion of Romans with the snake charming and night-witching abilities of the Marci have been shown to be lacking in ritual practice among urban populations, however there appears to have been limited participation in rural areas that, through Roman fascination and unease, eventually became associated with the group.¹⁹⁷ In this manner, practices that are actually

¹⁹⁵ Emma Dench, *From Barbarians to New Men: Greek, Roman and Modern Perceptions of Peoples in the Central Apennines* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1995), 91.

¹⁹⁶ David Mattingly and Bruce Hitchner, “Roman Africa: An Archaeological Review,” *The Journal of Roman Studies*, Vol. 85 (1995), 180.

¹⁹⁷ Dench, 170.

peripheral within a given group are often magnified through the lens of cultural perspective, emerging as a “marker” from an outside interpretation. Similarly, the rhetoric itself often becomes utilized for various purposes. Identity is formed from both internal and external interaction and in times in which perceptions like aggressiveness may act in the favor of an individual, it would be unwise to assume that such stereotypes did not work to the advantage of their intended targets.¹⁹⁸ Notions of warlike aggression have been associated with peoples labeled as Gothic for more than a century prior to Theoderic. Philostorgius, writing in the late fourth century, recorded that the bishop Ulfila refused to translate the book of Kings into Gothic because he feared its often-violent narrative would further facilitate the Goth’s aggressive nature.¹⁹⁹ This narrative persists within Procopius in descriptions of the Gothic factions under Theoderic’s successors.

Procopius’ discussion of the role of the Gothic aristocracy attaches to itself several concerns regarding matters of masculinity, education and militancy. He records that,

Amalasuntha wished to make her son resemble the Roman princes in his manner of life, and was already compelling him to attend the school of a teacher of letters. And she chose out three among the old men of the Goths whom she knew to be prudent and refined above all the others and bade them live with Atalaric. But the Goths were by no means pleased with this... they wished to be ruled by him more after the barbarian fashion.²⁰⁰

The passage presents an interesting merger of supposedly Roman traits with the stereotypically barbarian. A lack of education stands at the forefront of this dichotomy,

¹⁹⁸ Dench, 47.

¹⁹⁹ Philostorgius, II.5.

²⁰⁰ Procopius, V.ii.7.

although it may very well be a critique of Justinian's neglect of educational institutions.²⁰¹

By asserting that not only was it recognized that a king of the Goths required a Roman education, but that the instruction itself was provided by Goths, Procopius offered an obvious contradiction to Roman notions of barbarian qualities and placed their virtue above that of Justinian and his policies. Yet the description of rule "in a barbarian fashion" brings with it some questions and should not be entirely disregarded as rhetorical. The relationship between the king and the elite members of society emerges again over the issue of Athalaric's education.

All the notable men among them gathered together, and coming before Amalasuntha... and made the charge that their king was not being educated correctly from their point of view nor to his own advantage. For letters, they said, are far removed from manliness, and the teaching of old men results for the most part in a cowardly and submissive spirit.²⁰²

Again we see a barbarian disdain for letters, one that supposedly contradicts the Roman ideal of education as a prerequisite for a Roman leader.²⁰³ The Anonymous Valesianus mirrors this sentiment with regard to Theoderic, claiming that he was illiterate and required "a gold plate with slits made, containing the four letters "legi"," so that in the

²⁰¹ Simplicios, "Commentary on Epiktetos," in *Prokopios: The Secret History with Related Texts*, trans. Anthony Kaldellis (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, Inc., 2010), 14.19-32. "...not to mention the destruction of education and philosophy, of all virtue and friendship and trust in one another; as for the arts and sciences, discovered and established over the course of many years, some have gone completely extinct, so that only their names are known, whereas the majority of them... only shadows and images remain." This passage could very well be referring to the closing of the Platonic Academy in Athens in 529 recorded by John Malalas, *Chronicle*, trans. Elizabeth Jeffreys, Michael Jeffreys and Roger Scott (Melbourne, AU: Association for Byzantine Studies, 1986), XVIII, 47.

²⁰² Procopius, V.ii.10.

²⁰³ For comparison, see the condemnation of Junilus by Procopius in *The Secret History*, XX, who as a Libyan is criticized for his lack of education and therefore inability to exercise the office of Quaestor. Similarly, the ineptitude of Justinian's father Justin is correlated to his illiteracy, using a wooden version of the same writing stencil claimed by the author of the Valesianus to have been used by Theoderic (Procopius, *The Secret History*, VI).

event he needed to sign a document he had only to trace the letters onto the paper.²⁰⁴ This view of the illiterate outsider is contradicted by the panegyric offered by Ennodius discussed above. It is possible that the author of the Valesianus, writing from the post-Justinian era, used the lack of literacy as a means of compounding the foreignness of Theoderic due to his Arian beliefs, pushing him further from an association with Roman virtues. Theoderic, as we have seen, was very much a part of the military aristocracy and was almost certainly educated to the level expected of a patrician. Nevertheless, the association with martial prowess that provides the undertone for the passage regarding education is likely rooted in practice, both as a Roman construct and reality among the Goths.

As we have already discussed, the federates under Theoderic were a vital part of the military structure of the empire, one that formed cooperation with Constantinople on the basis of treaties and compensation for their duties. It would also seem that this structure did not entirely disappear within the Ostrogothic kingdom, and that the army continued to provide the Goths with the same social and professional mobility it had offered its Roman constituents for centuries.²⁰⁵ An edict issued by Theoderic himself c. 508 and preserved in the *Variae* of Cassiodorus reveals the continued association between the Goths and the military.

To the Goths, a hint of war rather than persuasion to the strife is needed, since a warlike race such as ours delights to prove its courage... Therefore with the help of God, whose blessing alone brings prosperity, we design to send our army to the Gauls for the common benefit of all, that you may have the opportunity of promotion, and we the power of testing your merits.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁴ Valesiani, 79.

²⁰⁵ Southern, 9.

²⁰⁶ Cassiodorus, I.24.

We need not interpret this statement as an attempt to drive a wedge between Roman civility and Gothic aggression, as the Romans themselves had a long history of promoting themselves as a militant society. The same image is actually revisited in the edict itself, as Theoderic orders the Goths to “bring forth your young men for the discipline of Mars.”²⁰⁷ With the relegation of the Roman military perspective from the center to the periphery, the perception of war as associated with those who lived on the edges of the empire formed a contradiction with the urban elites, whose military role all but diminished in favor of localized control of political offices. At the same time however, the idea was also a reality derived from the primary occupation of the Goths and other peoples of the frontier. Promotion within the group stands at the forefront of this discussion, and Theoderic directly acknowledges the advantages that war offered for circumventing the normally stringent nature of social hierarchy. By engaging in warfare, Theoderic was acknowledging a tradition of militancy that offered the possibility of social mobility and wealth, however it would appear that armed conflict as a regular practice diminished after arriving in Italy. Theoderic and his Goths were *federates* of the empire in function even after their movement into Italy and to think that the notion of leadership that established itself on the frontier could be discarded overnight is unlikely.

The prospect of identifying all the aspects of federate legitimacy is unlikely; however a few elements are clear. Engagement in military endeavors continued to hold a place in Gothic society, and the issuance of the edict serves to show that such events were formalized in Italy. Witigis, who was elected by the Goths to replace the incompetent Theodatus, was reportedly of no distinguished pedigree and yet established himself through military prowess

²⁰⁷ Cassiodorus, I.24.

and success on the battlefield. The downfall of Theodatus displays the degree to which the assertions of Amal longevity and right to rule that Theoderic espoused was sufficiently ingrained to compensate for poor leadership, however this does not mean that Theoderic ignored the importance of creating a dynastic ideology. Arianism assumed an important role in the construction of this ideology that sought to complement, if not supplant the federate notions of leadership, appealing to the political independence sought by Theoderic in opposition to Constantinople, as well ideas of continuity that stemmed from the creation of an Amal dynasty.

Theoderic and the Nicenes

The Nicene Church fared well under the Amali, finding political and doctrinal refuge from the influence of Constantinople in the wake the Council of Chalcedon in 451. The Acacian Schism, as it became known, was based primarily on the refusal of Constantinople to recognize the Tome of Leo, which in light of their identification as “the new Rome” could not accept the primacy of the Roman See. Further division came in the form of an imperially supported compromise position composed by Acacius of Constantinople in 481 that accepted the Miaphysite Peter Mongus of Antioch back into the Orthodox fold. Pope Felix III excommunicated both Peter and Acacius and his successor Gelasius who came to power in 492 found support from both Odoacer and Theoderic. The conflict over the papal election of 498 proved advantageous for Theoderic, as he was able to decide upon a candidate that favored the hard-line stance taken against Constantinople.²⁰⁸ A month and a half prior to his death, Theoderic presided over another disputed election and established Pope Felix IV after

²⁰⁸ *Anonymi Valesiani*, 65.
Löhr, 18.

an interregnum of 58 days, a decision that was confirmed by the both Athalaric and the Senate during the latter half of 526.²⁰⁹ By promoting the anti-Acacian candidate and avoiding reconciliation, Theoderic provided the faction with bargaining power and autonomy from Constantinople. For his own part however, he was able to cultivate an environment in which little influence from Constantinople permeated the Nicene church and ensured its cooperation, rather than opposition to his rule. There can be little doubt, although contemporary Italian sources are understandably mute on the subject, that Nicene clergy took little joy from the fact that Theoderic supported Arianism, however his support for the authority of the Roman See on matters of doctrine, in addition to respecting the property rights of the church, appears to have superseded any antipathy. The result of such an agreement was a cohesive religious structure within which both Arian and Nicene Churches prospered, one that stands in stark contrast to the relationship found in the Vandal kingdom.

Even the conviction of Boethius, who is conventionally recorded as a being a victim of anti-Nicene sentiment, was based upon his supposed endorsement of a form of Nicene orthodoxy reconcilable with Constantinople as well as the maintenance of close ties with Justinian.²¹⁰ Theoderic likely saw him as a threat to religious and political independence rather than an ideological menace. There was nothing inherently divisive about the Arian religious structure created by Theoderic and that of the Nicene Church, and his ability to treat it with the same prestige and dignity as his own, suggests that Arianism supported multiple aspects of his rule. His observance of the doctrine however was as influential within the Gothic element of society as it was for diplomatic relations. The retention of Arianism fit

²⁰⁹ Cassiodorus, VIII.15.

²¹⁰ Procopius, V.i.32.

Anonymi Valesiani, 87.

within the longevity of the Amal dynasty he sought to create, the priority of which is evident in what remains of Cassiodorus' work.

Jordanes, Cassiodorus and the Amal Narrative

The means by which Theoderic sought to uphold the legitimacy of his family in the new political context of the Ostrogothic Kingdom centered on strengthening the discourse surrounding the Amali and their hegemonic control over the "Goths" extending back to the time to the first migrations from Scandza. The efforts of Cassiodorus Senator, who held a number of offices in Theoderic's court including *Consul Ordinarius*, *Praetorian Prefect* and *Quaestor*, were in no part insignificant toward this effort. His work, the *Historia Getae*, although now lost, is retained at least thematically in Jordanes' *Getica*. Jordanes himself had the opportunity to utilize Cassiodorus' work for only three days, and while the degree to which the contributions of his own research and the writings of Ablabius contributed to different sections, one of the central themes of Amal dominance remains for the most part uncontested within historiography.²¹¹ The concluding phrase of the *Getica* states, "And now we have recited the origin of the Goths, the noble line of the Amali and the deeds of brave

²¹¹ The most significant controversy remains the ratio of Cassiodorus' source material between "original Gothic traditions" and Roman sources. While most recent historiography has taken the latter perspective (See Heather, "Cassiodorus and the Rise of the Amals," 103-128; Liebeschuetz, 185, advocates that the contributions of Ablabius fill the gaps between Cassiodorus and Jordanes, providing at least in part vestiges of 'Gothic' oral tradition. Wolfram prefers to view the *Getica* as a very close representation of Cassiodorus' work and will often interchange their names when referring to Jordanes. Amory provides the most straightforward method of utilizing Jordanes as a source. He espouses its use as an end-point for the study of Gothic history, rather than a starting place. Jordanes utilizes a great deal more than just Cassiodorus and his point of composition, during the 550's, shines through as a contemporary analysis of the past. To argue for any "oral" elements being preserved is highly unlikely and Amory even argues that the initial work by Cassiodorus did not possess any oral quality to it, a case that is testified to by Cassiodorus, IV.9.25.

men,” and such assertions of the longevity of Amal rule were not relegated to purely literary endeavors.²¹²

An address given by Cassiodorus to the senate of Rome expounded the virtues of Theoderic’s son Athalaric and daughter Amalasuntha (likely an attempt to improve public opinion in the wake of Athalaric’s drinking problem and general unruliness), and provided a sense of the importance lineage played in the legitimization of the dynasty.

If the royal band of [Amalasuntha’s] ancestors were to look on this woman, they would soon see their glory reflected, as in a clear mirror. For Amalus was distinguished for his good fortune, Ostrogotha for his patience, Winitarius for Justice, Unimundus for beauty, Thorismuth for chastity, Walamer for good faith, Theudimer for his sense of duty, her glorious father, as you have seen, for his wisdom.²¹³

The reinforcement of this prestigious lineage was designed to reinforce hereditary notions of legitimacy in the context of what we have already seen to be a tenuous political relationship with the federate elite amidst the political changes of Italy. Theoderic’s lack of male offspring likely compounded the issue. The problem was likely mitigated to a large extent by Amalasuntha’s marriage to the Eutharic. The Visigothic king was an Arian himself and was recognized as possessing ancestral connections back to Ermanaric, suggesting that the marriage served to augment both the Amal link to the old kingdom of the Greutungi, reinforce a dynastic link to Arianism and ensure that Theoderic’s successor retained “Amal” blood.²¹⁴ As Athalaric himself said of Cassiodorus’ contributions to the dynasty;

²¹² Jordanes, 315.

²¹³ Cassiodorus, XI.1.19.

²¹⁴ *Anonymi Valesiani*, 80. The dating of Eutharic’s reign is difficult, as we only possess two dates: his marriage to Amalasuntha in 515 and appointment as Consul by Justin in 519. Jordanes, 304, puts his death prior to that of Theoderic in 526, explaining Amalasuntha’s role as regent for Athalaric.

He restored the Amals, along with the honor of their family, clearly proving me to be of royal stock to the seventeenth generation. From Gothic origins he made a Roman history, gathering, as it were, into one garland, flower-buds that had previously been scattered throughout the fields of literature... In consequence, as you have ever been thought noble because of your ancestors, so you shall be ruled by an ancient line of kings.²¹⁵

The creation of this Amal legacy espoused by Cassiodorus was evidently understood by Athalaric to be vital to the maintenance of his position; however the role of Arianism in the lineage presented by the *Getica* itself is noticeably absent. Not a great deal is known about Jordanes, however his use of the words “Arian perfidy,” and “heresy” strongly suggest a Nicene affiliation, a factor that could possibly have led to a reduction in the role of Arianism in the narrative.²¹⁶ The doctrine itself is not entirely missing from the text however, as the conversion as described by Jordanes is set during Amali rule and presented as follows.

Thus the Emperor Valens made the Visigoths Arians rather than Christians. Moreover, from the love they bore them, they preached the gospel both to the Ostrogoths and to their kinsmen the Gepidae, teaching them to revere this heresy.²¹⁷

A connection is certainly drawn here between the Ostrogoths and Arianism, with Amali participation in the process inferred by its correspondence with the reign of Ermanaric, in this case described as part of the Amal line. Within this vague association, any conclusive affiliation between the Amali and Arianism is absent. We can however establish that there existed within the popular mentality of the sixth century an association between Ostrogoths

²¹⁵ Cassiodorus, IX.25.4.

²¹⁶ There is some speculation that he may have been a Goth, bishop, monk or any combination of the three. Most of this is conjecture however and for the most part derived from the etymology of his name. Arne Soby Christensen, *Cassiodorus Jordanes and the History of the Goths: Studies in a Migration Myth* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2002), 84-86.

Jordanes, 131-34.

²¹⁷ Jordanes, 88.

and Arianism that went back to the fourth century. This affiliation was quite possibly derived from the widespread practice of Arianism among more “established” dynasties.

The prominent houses to which Theoderic married his female relatives were not only well established, but also predominately Arian. Theodegotha’s marriage to Alaric II (484-507) was followed by her sister Amalasuntha’s marriage to Alaric’s son Eutharic (c.507-c.526), both of whom were Arians. Amalafrida was married to Thrasamund, king of the Vandals (r.496-523) who, despite his Arianism, was regarded by Victor of Vita to be less oppressive toward Nicene Christians than his predecessor.²¹⁸ The only marriage to upset this trend was that of Ostrogotho to the Burgundian king Sigismund (r.516-523). Sigismund was the son of Gundobad (r.474-516) and, according to a letter sent to Pope Symmachus (498-514), he rejected his father’s Arian beliefs sometime prior to Gundobad’s death in 516.²¹⁹ It is believed that the marriage took place prior to Symmachus’ pontificate, and it is likely that it was actually the marriage itself in Rome that introduced Sigismund to Nicene belief and led to a rejection of Arianism.²²⁰ It is therefore likely that at the time of the alliance between Theoderic and Gundobad he had not yet rejected his father’s Arian beliefs. One way or another, that the marriage was performed at the height of Gundobad’s reign and therefore the marriage was into a royal family of prominent Burgundian Arians.

The Burgundian Kingdom was established by Gundahar in 413, who received permission from the imperial usurper Jovinus to establish a kingdom on the west side of the

²¹⁸ Procopius, I.viii.9-10.

²¹⁹ Avitus of Vienne, *Letters and Selected Prose*, trans. Danuta Shanzer and I.N. Wood (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2002), ep.29.

²²⁰ This is suggested by Barnish in Avitus of Vienne, 18.

Rhine.²²¹ According to Gregory of Tours, the house of Gundobad and Sigismund could be traced back to Athanaric and the kingdom of the Tervingi.²²² Like the claims made by Cassiodorus-Jordanes, it is unlikely that lineal connections to the fourth-century kingdoms existed, however the significance of these claims rests in the fact that, like the Visigoths and later Ostrogoths, the dynastic families of the Germanic kingdoms sought to establish the roots of their dynasty in Roman historical narratives. Theoderic may well have perceived Arianism as a pre-requisite for inclusion in this “Germanic” dynastic organization, emphasizing its connection to the Amali as a means of establishing his house in line with the others that had already existed for 80 years at the time of Odoacer’s defeat. It is in the sponsored enterprises of Theoderic however that this link between Arianism and the Amali becomes visible, as his patronage sought to elevate the doctrine to the level expected of imperial lineage.

The Amali and Arianism

We see no attempt by Theoderic to upset the Catholic hegemony in Italy, but neither should we assume that his patronage of Arianism assumed only a passive role. The construction of the Arian baptistery and its corresponding Episcopal Complex formed only a small sample of the building projects with which he sought to endorse the Amali.²²³ Specific attention however must be paid to both the creation of the Codex Argenteus, the Episcopal Complex and the San Apollinare Nuovo; Theoderic’s palace chapel. These projects

²²¹ Wolfram, *The Roman Empire and its Germanic Peoples*, 251.

²²² Gregory of Tours, *The History of the Franks*, trans. Lewis Thorpe (Baltimore, MD: Penguin, 1974), II.28.

²²³ The *Anonymi Valesiani*, 71, 95, also credits him with the construction of a palace, colonnade and mausoleum in Ravenna as the repair of its aqueduct constructed by Trajan. Another palace, baths and colonnade were constructed in Verona and at Ticinum he built a third palace, baths and amphitheatre as well as provided new city walls.

constituted an active attempt on the part of Theoderic to instill a sense of dignity and equality upon the Arian doctrine as well as place upon it the visible stamp of Amal patronage.

An obscure reference made by Gregory of Tours to the late Ostrogothic Kingdom, espouses a ritual connection between the Amali and Arianism. The bishop took note of a sacramental difference in the liturgy of Amalasuntha and Audofleda following the death of Theoderic. He claimed that it was customary when those of the sect approached the altar for communion, “for those of royal blood to drink from one cup and lesser mortals from another.”²²⁴ Gregory’s experience with Arianism was removed from the Amali by a few decades, and his description assumes that the practice was common within Arianism. The account itself is intended to explain the demise of Audofleda at the hand of Amalasuntha, who supposedly dropped poison into the chalice as she passed it to her mother. The events of the account are decidedly fiction; however the assertion that the royalty actively separated themselves is a strange. We have no evidence that such activity took place elsewhere, either in an imperial capacity or in other Gothic kingdoms, and nor is the idea of a separate chalice a common way of describing the obscene ritual perversions of heretics. As it stands, Gregory’s account cannot be confirmed, and yet it should not be completely disregarded. The presence of the Amali in association with sacred rituals and space can certainly be confirmed.

The construction of the San Apollinare Nuovo mirrored the Roman-Byzantine architectural themes of other Nicene Ravenna churches, and its inclusion in the palace complex placed it within the spatial ideology of the Amali. The south nave wall, which possesses some of the few original mosaics, depicts on the side nearest to the apse an image

²²⁴ Gregory of Tours, III.31.

of Christ on an imperial-style throne flanked by four angels, representing the heavenly court. Directly across from the seated Christ, lies the famous “Palatium” mosaic of Theoderic. Now showing only the city gate and a series of buildings constructed by Theoderic (the Arian Cathedral and baptistery, palace church and San Andrea dei Goti), the tiles from between the columns are now for the most part removed. These “holes” at one time consisted of several figures whose identities have remained somewhat controversial.²²⁵ Mark Johnson’s conclusion that the mosaic represented Theoderic and his court deserves strong consideration. Placed within the spatial context of the palace, which featured several representations of the Amali at prominent locations, the representation of the family on the wall directly facing the mosaic of the seated Christ cannot have been a coincidence. Such a representation would have placed the heavenly court directly across from its earthly counterpart, and its location on the wall directly in front of the apse places it adjacent to the most sacred space in the Church.²²⁶ The visual inclusion of the Amali within the religious sphere of the Church falls well in line with the divine favor espoused as legitimizing the long established dynasty of the Amali by both Ennodius and Cassiodorus.²²⁷ Well-established rule was often used as a reinforcement of doctrinal legitimacy, a tactic employed by Justinian in his victories against the Ostrogoths and Vandals, as well as promulgated by the Vandals

²²⁵ Johnson, 82. Vestiges of the remaining figures remain in the mosaic, with a disembodied hand being the most prominent.

See Fig. 3 and Fig. 4.

²²⁶ Johnson, 86.

Karl Swodoba, “The Problem of the Iconography of Late Antique and Early Medieval Palaces,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (May, 1961), 82.

²²⁷ Cassiodorus, X.3; Amalasuntha supports the ascension of her cousin Theodahad as, “by God’s help, I have kept my palace for a noble and distinguished man of my family: one who, sprung of Amal stock, will display royal stature in his actions.”

Cassiodorus, IX.24; Athalaric writes that his grandfather Theoderic, “deservedly obtained for his doings the protection of Heaven’s grace.”

Ennodius, 91; “Let no one rashly boast his stateliness, because what crowns being forth in other rulers, in my king his nature, formed by God, created.”

themselves during their century-long rule in North Africa.²²⁸ Justinian himself created a similar connection between dynasty and the sacred through his portrayal in the Church of San Vitale, finished between 544 and 545 in Constantinople. Displaying his wife Theodora accompanied by members of the imperial court and clergy, including the bishop Maximianus, the presence of the court in the holy space not only helped to signify Justinian's overarching support for the Nicene Doctrine, but placed the success of his authority in connection to the sacred.²²⁹ Performance of sacred rites within the San Apollinare Nuovo alongside iconographical representations of the Amali suggests a characteristically Amal-centric association with ritual. Considering that by the fifth century Nicene Christianity had established itself as the dominant practice within the empire and relegated alternative theologies to the periphery, those present at the rituals would have been predominantly Goths. Most importantly, the relatively small size of the San Apollinare Nuovo restricted the number of participants in ritual activities and therefore would have accommodated only prominent members of society closely affiliated with the Amali or visiting as guests or envoys. Whether it was through participation in the Eucharist, sermons or Baptism, the inclusion of the Gothic observer in this ritual performance was wrapped up in both the visual representation of the Amali as well as the knowledge of their contribution to the entire establishment.

The workmanship displayed in the Codex Argenteus exudes a sense imperial-style patronage that corresponds closely to the San Apollinare Nuovo. Its purple parchment that invokes an association with the imperial title is of exceptional quality, and the pages display

²²⁸ Victor of Vita, II.39.

²²⁹ Sarah Bassett, "Style and Meaning in the Imperial Panels at San Vitale," *Artibus et Historiae* 29, no. 57 (2008), 51.

the four Gospels written in gold and silver ink.²³⁰ Written in the Gothic language, its translation bears a close resemblance to other fragmentary Gothic manuscripts from the time, namely the Codex Brixianus and Codex Carolinus. The missing binding would likely add more conclusions regarding its ritual and symbolic purpose beyond the patronage of Theoderic, however at the bottom of each page, there lie four architectural columns serving as canon tables, each one serving as a cross reference to the other gospels.²³¹ The design of the columns closely matches those found in the sanctuary of the San Apollinare Nuovo. The same flowering Acanthus motif is also visible in the Palatium Mosaic that at one point depicted the royal household, suggesting that the Bible itself may have been a part of the broader program for Arian revivalism that Theoderic sought to construct in Ravenna.

The San Apollinare Nuovo and the Codex Argenteus formed only a small part of the medium through which Amal legitimacy was conveyed, however its insinuations of continuity and long established success of the Amali must be established as a part of the discourse that sought to reinforce the exclusive rights of Theoderic and his descendents. This sense of legitimacy was based upon two primary factors, divine support and continuity of the dynasty, and the direct implementation of the Amal family into the ritual practice, visual iconography and patronage of the religious space within which the ritual was carried out, served as reminders of the correlation between the success of the Amali and their Arian beliefs.

²³⁰ Detailed photographs of the Codex Argenteus as well as a comparison to the architecture of the San Apollinare Nuovo can be found at the website of its current institutional owner, the Uppsala University. <http://www.ub.uu.se/en/Collections/Manuscript-Collections/Silver-Bible/Codex-Argenteus-Online/Original-manuscript/>.

²³¹ Heather and Matthews, 146, 155.

Conclusion

The practice of Arianism was retained by Theoderic and espoused by his family as an outgrowth of the Gothic move into Italy. Blood relations in the federate system did not themselves ensure that a line of succession would remain intact, and indeed it eventually failed the dynasty only ten years after Theoderic's death. Nevertheless, Theoderic sought to use Arianism to bolster his line's historical roots. We cannot assume that Theoderic's piety was solely based on practicality; personal piety quite likely played a part in his retention of Arianism as may have the knowledge that his ancestors practiced the doctrine. Religion however must be acknowledged a significant factor in the effective establishment of legitimacy. Many of Theoderic's contemporaries including Sigismund, the Visigothic king and Clovis, stand as prominent examples of kings who diverged from previous religious practice and acknowledged Nicene Christianity.²³² In particular, Sigismund's case displays that there were a number of benefits to recognizing Nicene Christianity, with a closer connection to Constantinople likely helping to facilitate his claim to the throne.²³³ Jamie Wood has ascribed a similar explanation to the conversion of the Visigoths, although as a method of creating internal doctrinal cohesion amidst political divisions.²³⁴ The continued validity and importance of Roman titles in territories closely affiliated with Roman

²³² Fletcher, 99. The conversion of Clovis from Arianism, based on references made by Avitus of Vienne, ep.46, to his conversion to orthodoxy in the face of heretical coercion, has been explored as a possibility by Ian Wood, *The Merovingian Kingdom, 450-751* (London: Longman, 1994), 42, who points to discrepancies in the dates provided by Gregory of Tours regarding the exile of the Arian Quintianus of Rodez as well as his victory over the Alemans that acted as a catalyst for his conversion. Wood's primary concern appears to rest more on the re-analysis of Clovis as the staunch bulwark of Catholicism that Gregory sought to espouse, instead emphasizing that the possibility remains that Clovis could have just as easily chosen Arianism like his sisters Audofleda and Lenteild. (Wood, 45-46).

²³³ As Shanzer in Avitus of Vienne, 144, acknowledges, Epistula 47 provides an indication that Sigismund was in diplomatic relations with Constantinople prior to his father's death in 516, hoping to acquire the title of Magister Militum.

²³⁴ Jamie Wood, *The Politics of Identity in Visigothic Spain: Religion and Power in the Histories of Isidore of Seville* (Herndon, VA: Brill, 2012), 49.

administration displays the practical uses that associations with *Romanitas* brought to these kingdoms and their rulers. Such relations were likely just as enticing for the Goths who established themselves in Italy, and Theoderic himself was portrayed in an imperial fashion.²³⁵ For Theoderic, the expediency of retaining Arianism was certainly more than just a method of drawing stark divisions between Romans and Goths and for that matter personal adherence. Its connection with “Gothicness” in the Roman world likely added a sense of longevity that was needed to give depth and a sense of endurance to the dynasty he constructed with the help of Cassiodorus.

²³⁵ See Justinian’s appeal to the King of the Franks in Procopius, V.v.8, which advocates that “it is proper that you should join with us in waging this war, which is rendered yours as well as ours... by the orthodox faith, which rejects the opinion of the Arians...”

Chapter 3

Reorienting Imperial Power: Arianism in the Vandal Kingdom

The establishment of the Vandal kingdom and its adoption of the Arian doctrine predates the Ostrogoths by almost seventy years. Despite similarities that exist within the migration-sedentary pattern adopted by both groups, the time between the two events resulted in significantly different interactions between the Nicene and Arian religious establishments. Unlike the Arianism practiced by Theoderic, Arianism had only been rendered institutionally irrelevant within the empire a generation prior to the Vandal invasion into Africa. As was established in the first chapter, efforts to establish Nicene hegemony were far from complete and the persistence of land-owning elites like Maximus falsifies the notion of distinct Nicene-Roman and Arian-Vandal divisions. Another difference existed in the recent conversion of the Vandal leadership just prior to the African migration. Unlike the Arianism practiced by the Ostrogoths, this lack of a long-established Christian tradition allows us to distance the early Vandal use of Arian Christianity from any traditional elements of legitimacy as practiced by the Amali.

The new context presents difficulties with source material even more pronounced than those found within the Ostrogothic period. The incursion of the polyglot group of Vandals, Alans and Iberian Romans into North Africa under Geiseric has its place in contemporary narratives as one of the most identifiable examples of Germanic violence and anti-Romanism. The accounts of Victor of Vita, Orosius and Salvian describe the destruction of major African cities in horrific detail and place pronounced emphasis upon the Vandal

intent to destroy Roman civilization in Africa, subjugate its people under barbarian leadership and subvert the Nicene church in favor of the “Arian heresy.” The moralistic undertones of these sources produce significant barriers toward analyzing the development of political and religious leadership during the century-long Vandal rule, limitations that are reflected in the reduced scholarship on the period. Archaeological efforts of the past thirty years however have emphasized continuity rather than the widespread destruction espoused by the literary sources. The material record displays only slightly reduced quantities of trade with the broader Mediterranean and the vast majority of Roman institutions continued unhindered under Vandal rule.²³⁶ These elements of continuity necessitate a revised perception of the Homoian-Nicene relationship presented in the source material, distancing the “persecutions” and their religious fallout from any inherent doctrinal adversity.

Due to these limitations, this study will rely a great deal upon the broader context presented by archaeological evidence as a means of circumventing the issues presented by the literary accounts. Although in many circles this approach may be perceived as purely circumstantial, the correspondence between periods of intense religious upheaval and consolidation of Vandal rule remains evident. The continued observance of the Arian doctrine within the Vandal kingdom was tied to attempts by its leadership to orient political and ideological power away from imperial centers toward the court established in Carthage. Arianism played a significant role in this process of ideological reorientation. Its lack of a strongly connected ecclesiastical network made it an ideology over which meaning could be centrally controlled. The perceived anti-Nicene policies of Geiseric and his successors stemmed from the dichotomies presented by their attempt to reorient this ideological and

²³⁶ Mattingly and Hitchner, 213.

administrative focus toward the Vandal court, a practice that conflicted with the perspective of western Nicene clergy that meaning was reflected not through contemporary imperial control, but through an ecclesiastical consensus based upon past imperial decisions. In this respect, Nicene Christianity presented an ideological bulwark against local change, with African clergy looking toward external powers for confirmation of their practices and the meaning behind them. While previous studies have connected Arianism to a more overarching notion of cultural or ethnic significance, such views are far too simplistic and only serve to establish Arianism in opposition to outside influence rather than stressing internal applicability. The process of centralization begun under Geiseric cumulated in the problems surrounding this succession of Huneric, a time in which establishing full ideological control over internal political allegiances meant emphasizing Arianism as a means of ensuring greater connection to the Vandal court. In this respect, the doctrine was derivative not of ethnic divisions, but the immediate administrative needs of the Vandals.

This chapter will first explore the Vandal conversion to Arianism and the politically factionalized nature of the kingdom established by Geiseric. The following section will concern itself with the pre-existing Roman structures that focused on the urban center as a means toward explaining the methods by which the Vandals were able to establish control over the North African provinces and the essential nature of administrative and ideological centralization. The latter parts of this chapter will discuss the broader methods employed by the Vandals as a means of orienting ideological and religious focus away from imperial centers toward Carthage, along with the threat Nicones posed to the process. The conflict culminated in the persecutions of Huneric as a result of the insecurities surrounding his succession in the late 470's and early 480's. This period serves as a moment of crisis in

which these centralizing efforts can be most effectively observed, establishing Nicene Christianity as an impediment to religious centralization and Arian Christianity as the ideal doctrine for localized control.

Migration and Conversion

The Vandal conversion to Christianity makes an appearance in only two sources. The narratives of both Orosius and Salvian present sparse details, providing only a general chronological context for the event. Like the majority of conversion experiences faced by Germanic peoples, the Vandal conversion followed their broader incorporation into the empire during the migratory period beginning c.406 under Godigelus.²³⁷ The indication provided by both accounts, whose narratives are relatively contemporary with the events they describe, is that the conversion followed the Vandal settlement in Spain in 409 during the rule of Gunderic.²³⁸ Despite the silence of the sources on the matter, certain aspects of the conversion can be considered congruous with the uneven and slow permeation of Christianity in both Germanic and Roman populations. As a syncretic process, religion was a negotiated entity in which local concerns adapted and modified the meaning associated with practice. In the later Christian context, this dichotomy between local prerogative and institutional control

²³⁷ Procopius, III.iii.2-3.

²³⁸ See Hydatius, O. 297, for the entrance of the Vandals, Sueves and Alans into Spain.

It is important to stipulate that although the sources themselves often cite a cohesive unit of Vandals passing from the dynastic control of Godigelus to his son Gunderic and younger son Geiseric, when the Vandals settled in Spain, they established themselves according to two groups, the Silingi and Hasingi. The accounts do however insinuate the conversion of multiple groups including Huns, Sueves, Alans and Vandals, which suggests that the Vandals were simply a part of a broader Iberian conversion effort.

Orosius, "Seven Books Against the Pagans," in *The Fathers of the Church Vol. 50*, trans. Roy Deferrari (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1964), VII.41.

Salvian, VII.11, attests the Vandal successes against Boniface and Castinus to, "a chain of heavenly speech against us, and against those who came they put, as fighters, the writings of the Sacred Book, as if they, in a way, unlocked the very mouth of God."

often led to conflicts, as efforts toward synchronizing meaning and ritual were implemented by the ecclesiastical and institutional establishments. As a result, attempts to homogenize meaning and exercise authority over religious practice were gradual and rarely complete outside of urban centers, involving a prolonged reorientation of civic life and institutional priorities.²³⁹ We cannot therefore assume that the conversion of the Vandals and other peoples of Spain was anything but a protracted process that extended well beyond the two possible dates.²⁴⁰ The dates provided by our sources suggest either 409, a year that corresponds with their settlement in Spain, or 423, which saw the end of imperial-Visigothic campaigns against the Vandals.²⁴¹ In either case, these dates place conversion during the reign of Geiseric's brother Gunderic and therefore within at most a generation prior to Geiseric's ascent to power. Consideration must therefore be made for the fact that the newly adopted Christianity was by no means adopted uniformly within the various political and social identities that accompanied Geiseric into Africa in 428. The process of conversion likely extended well into the occupation of Africa Proconsularis, a conclusion that provides for the competition between conversions within the kingdom; efforts that are highlighted by Geiseric's struggle to integrate the numerous groups into a cohesive Vandal identity.

It is even possible that Geiseric himself was a recent convert to the Homoian doctrine. Hydatius provides evidence for a contemporary rumor that the Vandal leader was converted from Nicene Christianity early in his reign.²⁴² Beyond stressing a personal connection to

²³⁹ David Riggs, "The Continuity of Paganism between the Cities and Countryside of Late Roman Africa," in *Urban Centers and Rural Contexts in Late Antiquity*, ed. Thomas S. Burns and John W. Eadie (Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2001), 286.

²⁴⁰ Heather, "Christianity and the Vandals in the Reign of Geiseric," 143.

²⁴¹ Heather, "Christianity and the Vandals in the Reign of Geiseric," 143.

²⁴² Hydatius, O. 428.

conversion, this episode is at least a possible indication that Christianity among the Vandals was contested and not exclusively Arian. Peter Heather advocates that the conversion of Geiseric was indeed a possibility, however his attempt at analyzing the conversion falls short in its attempt to expand upon the incentives that conversion may have brought. His use of the Gothic Bible as the primary evidence for an ethnic predisposition falls short since, as was discussed earlier, the text did not mandate that the doctrine transmitted through its use was inherently Homoian. Arianism itself was not specifically relegated to the Goths, nor were all Goths Homoian (if we consider, as Heather does, there to be a kernel of truth in Hydatius' account).²⁴³ It cannot therefore be said that the Gothic Bible produced Arians any more than can be said that the Latin or Greek edition produced Nicene belief. Moving beyond any inherent inclination to the Homoian doctrine, its adoption in the context of Geiseric must be placed alongside the reality of his political situation, which saw leadership over a variety of political identities prior to and following the migration into Africa.

Multiple Political Identities

Like the later Ostrogoths, the Vandal leadership exercised control over a number of political entities following the collapse of the other major Iberian powers. The wars with the coalition consisting of imperial and Visigothic troops destabilized the kingdoms of the Siling Vandals, Alans and Sueves and brought them under the rule of Gunderic who waged war up and down the Iberian Peninsula until his death in 428. His brother Geiseric inherited control over these factions and a year later crossed the Strait of Gibraltar into Africa. At the time of the migration, Possidius recalls the people under Geiseric as consisting of Vandals, Alans

²⁴³ Heather, "Christianity and the Vandals in the Reign of Geiseric," 145.

and a variety of other people identified as “Gothic.”²⁴⁴ The recent creation of this polyglot group likely led to continued political distinction made between Vandals and Alans . Until the middle part of Geiseric’s reign, the official title of the Vandal leadership was *rex Vandalorum et Alanorum*, which was, according to Procopius, changed to *rex Vandalorum* in an attempt to supplant the various loyalties.²⁴⁵ While this change in title remains within the realm of possibility, it does not appear to have remained the definitive title for his successors, as later edicts issued by Huneric are issued with the title *rex Vandalorum et Alanorum*.²⁴⁶ When coupled with the apparent repeated need to distribute land and wealth amongst his followers in a manner similar to that of Theoderic, the politically unstable and fragmentary nature of Geiseric’s following becomes apparent.²⁴⁷ This situation was further exacerbated by the creation of the Vandal kingdom in Africa Proconsularis, which saw the incorporation of the pre-existing Roman structures as a means toward centralizing the discordant factions on the court established in the city of Carthage.

Importance of the Urban Center

The landscape of Dominate Roman Africa prior to the Vandal invasion was one of primary orientation toward urban centers. The majority of imperial, political, economic and ideological interaction remained focused on the city and its administrative role within the surrounding region. Recent arguments have sought to elaborate upon the notion of the

²⁴⁴ Possidius, Caput 28, records Geiseric as leading to Africa, “ut magnus ingens diversis telis armata et bellis exercitata, immanium hostium Vandalorum et Alanorum comixtam secum habens Gothorum gentem, aliarumque diversarum personas, ex Hispaniae partibus transmarinis navibus Africae influxisset et irruisset.”

²⁴⁵ Procopius, III.5.18.

²⁴⁶ Victor of Vita, III.3.

²⁴⁷ Examples of land redistribution abound in Nicene sources, see Procopius, III.v.10; Luxorius, “Liber Epigrammaton Viri Clarissimi Luxori et Spectabilis” in *Luxorius: A Latin Poet Among the Vandals*, trans. Morris Rosenblum (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1961), #55-56; Victor of Vita, I.15-18.

“Consumer City” espoused by Max Weber and bring to the forefront its role as an economic and administrative entity central to the maintenance of imperial, and later Vandal, hegemony.²⁴⁸

Economically, the large urban centers of Alexandria and Carthage served as the hub through which goods flowed outward to the rest of the empire. Under Constantine, the grain that had once shipped from Alexandria to Rome was diverted to his newly established namesake city on the Bosphorus. Carthage was designated as the new center for agricultural supply in the west and the new arrangement significantly lessened logistical issues related to distance. It was this participation within the larger trade network that formed the basis for the majority of local interaction with the imperial center, although even this interaction was mediated through the city itself. The administrative institutions of Carthage were aware of the city’s imperial role. The medieval copies of the *Notitia Dignitatum*, last edited close to the early fifth century, preserve the images of the goddess of Carthage representing the Proconsul of Africa. The goddess is depicted holding stalks of wheat and standing above two square-rigged ships transporting grain across the sea.²⁴⁹ At the individual level, participation with the production of grain destined for imperial centers was highly controlled. A receipt from the Oxyrynchus Papyri details the grant of seed to Cleochares, son of Chaeremon c. 148 with the stipulation that he receive 28 ¼ arbatas of wheat, measured by government officials,

²⁴⁸ Helen M. Parkins, “The ‘Consumer City’ Domesticated? The Roman city in elite economic strategies,” in *Roman Urbanism: Beyond the Consumer City*, ed. Helen M. Parkins (New York, NY: Routledge, 1997), 83,99.

²⁴⁹ Frank Clover, “Carthage in the Age of Augustine,” 2.

The current editions of the *Notitia Dignitatum* are derived from four manuscripts, three of fifteenth-century origin and one from the sixteenth century; all copies of the same, likely tenth-century, document. Scholarship remains generally agreed upon its relatively reliable transmission. A nineteenth century compilation still remains the most prominent: the “Notitia Dignitatum or Register of Dignitaries,” in *Translations and Reprints from Original Sources of European History, Vol. VI:4*, trans. William Fairley (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1889), 2.

See also, Clover, “Carthage in the Age of Augustine,” 2.

...on the condition that they are to sow it on the land faithfully under the supervision of the usual officials, guaranteeing it at your own risk, on condition that they will return the equivalent amount of the new crop with the accompanying charges together with the state taxes on the land.²⁵⁰

The contract between Cleocharēs and the local imperial representative exhibits extensive imperial control over the wheat destined for Rome, from measurement to periodic inspection of its growth and finally receipt of a finished transaction. The most important aspect however is the closed nature of the imperial grain distribution network. The seed itself was provided by the imperial system, grown under its supervision and distributed in entirety to the imperial center. In this respect, attention must be given to the predominance of local sustenance patterns in opposition to an area's inclusion within the broader imperial trade network.

The city of Alexandria acquired the goods necessary for its subsistence not from the larger grain trade that was cultivated on the upper and middle Nile, but from its own hinterland. The goods produced in the Lake Mareotis region were not part of the broader trade network, but consumed by the city itself, constituting an independent and self-sustaining microcosm. This system also included industries like shipbuilding and the pottery necessary for the transport and storage of these goods, which were themselves harvested from estates almost exclusively owned by elites living in the city itself. A similar situation existed in Carthage where imperial lands produced the grain that was shipped to Rome and local estates fulfilled the needs of the city. This self-contained economic structure meant that not only could an urban center exist administratively and economically outside of the

²⁵⁰ P.Oxy.XLI 2956, ed. R.A. Coles (Egypt Exploration Society, 1964).

imperial network, but its significance within the Mediterranean trade network allowed it to harness control over all economic activity that was intended for imperial purposes.

Ideology adopted a similar relationship between the imperial and regional centers. The vast majority of religious institutions centered on a cultic urban center toward which focus was oriented. Even for Christianity, which like its polytheistic Roman predecessors developed popular notions of pilgrimage to sacred rural areas, authoritative control over the meaning ascribed to those areas derived from interaction with religious rites conducted in the city. Imperial control and the incorporation of polytheistic practice has often been the focus of studies, but as David Riggs has expressed, what we colloquially refer to as “paganism” was not a system of belief necessarily predicated on a cultic center. Localized meaning and necessity took precedence upon religious practice, and such practices existed quite naturally outside of state control.²⁵¹ Riggs’ analysis can be elaborated upon by stressing that the cultic centers were able to exert control over meaning through institutional control, but only over a distance determined by accessibility. The fourth-century *synaxis* from the city of Oxyrhynchus records five months of the calendar with special events taking place on fifty-five separate days.²⁵² If we were to expand this schedule throughout the year, between 130 and 150 special services would have been conducted annually. The vast majority of these events consisted presumably of processions and readings. The events listed in the *synaxis*

²⁵¹ Riggs, 285.

²⁵² P.Oxy.XI 1357, ed. B.P. Grenfell and A.S. Hunt (Egypt Exploration Society, 1915).

took place in at least twenty-four separate locations within the city or close to it, drawing in a great number of people from the surrounding region.²⁵³

It is important to stress the participation of local individuals within both the city and its supporting hinterland. Legal, religious and economic exchange kept the focus of those able to participate in these institutions oriented on the city, and therefore even those who worked in the agricultural areas supporting the city found themselves regularly attending events in the urban environment.²⁵⁴ By drawing in those able to access the urban center, central institutions were able to exercise control over the visual and auditory aspects of processions and rituals and implement direct authority over how these practices were interpreted. Most importantly however is the fact that it was the city that represented and controlled the center of imperial interaction. The majority of these positions fell upon small political and aristocratic elite who were for the most part focused on the consolidation of power at the local level.

Although the city was integral in its participation within the broader economic and political framework, the political requirements of the senatorial elite meant that those engaged at the highest level were required to be in close proximity to the imperial capitals. This arrangement possessed drastic ramifications for North Africa as logistical issues prevented the constant presence of senatorial elite in their provincial estates. The vast majority only visited when an appointment to the position of proconsul required them to fulfill the obligation. This left the administration of local centers in the hands of the

²⁵³ Richard Alston, "Ritual and Power in the Romano-Egyptian City," in *Roman Urbanism: Beyond the Consumer City*, ed. Helen M. Parkins (New York, NY: Routledge, 1997), 165.

²⁵⁴ Riggs, 288.

provincial aristocracy who possessed long-established local ties and perceived the *negotium* with imperial Rome as a “necessary” but often exasperating arrangement.²⁵⁵

Administrative positions centered in the urban environment formed the crux of aristocratic power after the reforms caused by the crises of the third century oriented power to a soldering elite.²⁵⁶ The corresponding movement toward estates by aristocrats should not suggest a disinterest or disconnect from urban political life but rather a restructuring of the broader imperial framework. Cities and their administrative positions became the focus of elite culture and politics and therefore when we speak of center and periphery, it is best to emphasize localized notions of civic identity and its immediate hinterland as being the “center” rather than the traditional perception of direct authoritative control exercised by Rome or Constantinople. The aforementioned concept of “authoritative power” was utilized by imperial centers to orient political focus; however control over the means by which this connection was maintained was exercised by local elites. As stated previously, *negotium* with the empire was a necessary hassle that served to legitimate their position but was not necessarily the foundation of local power. In this regard, the meaning ascribed to these institutions was in local hands and could be oriented toward any political establishment, not necessarily broader imperial centers.

The previously outlined institutions exemplify the role that the urban center played as the focal point of administrative power. All ideological, economic and political activity, whether connected to local development or the broader Mediterranean world, filtered from rural areas onto these few cities. Control over these institutions therefore represented the

²⁵⁵ Clover, “Carthage in the Age of Augustine,” V.6.

²⁵⁶ Clover, “Carthage in the Age of Augustine,” V.6.

focal point for the collection of power over both meaning and temporal goods. Since Octavian's annexation of the African provinces, the destination of activity mediated through African cities was Rome or Constantinople, with the early fifth-century Carthage gravitating toward the former. The Roman ability to utilize all of these institutions as a means of supporting the legitimacy of the state coalesced in a form of "authoritative capital," in which the term capital itself exhibits the transitive nature of the institutions that were established while under Roman hegemony. The same institutional and administrative structures that made control over the immediate urban center and its surrounding hinterland possible was not exclusive to imperial control, as the majority of these positions fell to local elites who had little interest in dealing with the imperial centers outside of the ability to gain legitimacy through ideological connection.

With the overthrow of Roman power by the Vandals, these same institutional entities were retained and continued to exist, adopting new meaning to further the agendas of the local elites as well as new political authority. Geiseric's choice of Carthage was no coincidence. The broader imperial role that Carthage assumed meant that its ideological and administrative framework exhibited a wide area of influence. Up until this point, ideological and political power had been focused toward imperial centers, but Geiseric and his successors acquired control of this authoritative capital, usurped it, and in effect reoriented its focus toward Vandal authority rather than the more distant imperial court.

Conflicting Narratives on Vandal Institutional Use

The literary and archaeological records contrast significantly on the issue of institutional continuity under Vandal hegemony. The expulsion of prominent members of

society and the destruction of significant monumental architecture factor significantly into the narrative accounts of Victor of Vita and Possidius, the latter of which describes the conquest of Carthage and Hippo Regius as devastating. Victor of Vita records the destruction of “great houses and homes... they utterly destroyed the Odeon, the theatre, the temple of Memoria and what the people used to call the Via Caelestis.”²⁵⁷

Little is known about Victor of Vita apart from his work. It is thought that he composed the majority of his work in the year 484, reflecting upon more than sixty years of Vandal rule. In terms of his ecclesiastical position and background, we remain in the dark. A bishop by the name of Victor occupied the position in Vita in 484, however this bishop did not attend Huneric’s council in 484 and it is evident from the work that its author was present. The text emphasizes the martyrdom of Nicene Christians under Arian rule, focusing on themes of barbarian destruction, Nicene solidarity and re-baptism.²⁵⁸ One of the biggest contributions of the work however is the transmission of edicts issued by Huneric, the language of which suggests that these were in fact relayed in their original form.²⁵⁹ These edicts will be covered later and form a significant part of the argument presented in this chapter. The accuracy of Victor’s list of the Vandal’s destruction stands in contrast to these edicts and is difficult to substantiate, although we can call into question his inclusion of the Via Caelestis, which fell to Catholics prior to the Vandal acquisition of Carthage.²⁶⁰ His decision to include these buildings was far from arbitrary. Victor’s attempt to instill a “barbarian” nature upon the Vandals and distance them from any form of Romanness

²⁵⁷ Victor of Vita, I.8.

²⁵⁸ Moorhead in Victor of Vita, xiv.

²⁵⁹ Moorhead in Victor of Vita, xvi.

²⁶⁰ Clover, “Carthage in the Age of Augustine,” V.8.

(represented by adherence to Nicene Christianity) made the destruction of buildings explicitly associated with the city's inclusion within the Roman political and cultural sphere. The theatre and Odeon, which were centers of musical production, hosted reproductions of seminal works from within the Greco-Roman cultural tradition. The destruction of beautiful estates similarly emphasized the ruin of the civilized world, as did the exile of those associated most closely with imperial centers. Rather than stressing the adoption of the Roman administrative capital, Victor chose to focus on its destruction and alienation from the Roman sphere. It is unfortunate that this rhetoric has endured in the public psyche, however at least within scholarly discourse studies have come to emphasize the continuity and efforts at centralization exerted by the Vandal court.²⁶¹

Continuity of Infrastructure

The city of Carthage retained under Vandal rule the same economic role it assumed under Roman authority. There is evidence for a slight decrease in the magnitude of shipping, however the grain trade remained an integral part of supplying Rome and archaeological evidence suggests the continued production of goods intended for export into and beyond the Vandal period.²⁶² The abundant remains of Late type 4 pottery (also known as Gaza) at Carthage point not only to the continued prolific shipment of wine during the Vandal period, but the local origin of production displays the continued manufacturing infrastructure necessary to support the trade.²⁶³ The continuation of this participation in the Mediterranean trade network expands our perception of the importance placed upon the maintenance of the

²⁶¹ Mattingly and Hitchner, 210.

²⁶² Mattingly and Hitchner, 211.

²⁶³ Lucy Neuru, "Late Roman Pottery: A Fifth-Century Deposit From Carthage," in *Antiquités africaines* 16 (1980): 203.

city's infrastructure by Vandal leadership. While some elements of the Theodosian wall and circus fell into disrepair, the vast majority of structures that served economically or administratively significant roles went unchanged or were expanded. The circular and rectangular harbors saw extensive renovations and urban development continued to expand around these economically significant portions of the city.²⁶⁴ The maintenance of these vital infrastructural elements served a purpose that extended beyond the ability of Carthage to maintain its economic prestige. By ensuring that the city remained the economic focal point for trade, Vandal leadership continued to establish the city as the ideological center of the region.

Ideological Centralization

The ability of the Vandals to utilize Roman infrastructure extended into the ideological sphere. The continued meeting of the *curiales*, most prominently in Africa Proconsularis, remains one of the more curious continuities. Begun during the Principate, the *curiales* were a provincial council that met annually to correlate local concerns and relay them to the imperial court. The council also practiced the ritual veneration of the emperor. Such rites were an integral part of ensuring overt gestures of allegiance to the emperor as well as ensuring that regular communication continued between provinces and the imperial centers. The primary position was that of the *flamen perpetuus*, who was tasked with overseeing the proper veneration of the emperor and his predecessors. The reign of Theodosius I changed the methods by which the emperor was venerated, doing away with traditional rituals that emphasized the divinity of the imperial position. Nevertheless, the

²⁶⁴ Mattingly and Hitchner, 211, describe this expansion as developing “in the lower part of the city from the Byrsa southward to the ports.”

emperors continued to encourage the meeting of these councils and they maintained a presence as a crucial representation of imperial power and connection to local elites.²⁶⁵

Two epitaphs from the “Vandal Chapel” of Ammaedara have since the early part of the twentieth century served to attest to the continued meeting of the *curiales*. The epitaphs commemorate the deaths of Astius Mustelus, *flamen perpetuus* (d. 6 December, 526) and his relative Astius Vincicianus, *vir clarissimus et flamen perpetuus*. Any notions that the maintenance of these titles was tied only to local significance have been dispelled in recent scholarship by the discovery of thirty-six *flamen perpetui* and two *sacerdotes*, signifying the persistence of the council as a whole well into the Vandal period.²⁶⁶ The Astii, a family of senatorial and local significance, figure prominently in these lists with a number holding the titles of *flamen perpetuus* and *sacerdotalis provinciae Africanae*.

As Frank Clover has suggested, the continued use of the *curiales* reflects the dependent relationship that existed between the Vandal and African elites. Effective governance fell upon the manipulation of authoritative capital away from its primary orientation and imperial function toward the Vandal court, the successful use of which relied heavily on the participation of local elites. Granted, not all of the aristocrats of Africa Proconsularis profited from Vandal rule, but many found the Vandal leadership to be an effective means of establishing legitimacy and used the new political structure as a means of furthering their own political influence. Clover suggests therefore, that the Vandal leadership

²⁶⁵ Frank Clover, "Emperor Worship in Vandal Africa," *Romanitas-Christianitas. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Literatur der römischen Kaiserzeit*, Berlin (1982): 668.

²⁶⁶ Clover, "Emperor Worship in Vandal Africa," 664. The Tablettes Albertini that originate in southwestern Byzacium between 493 and 496, record Flavius Geminius Catullinus as *flamen perpetuus*. The idea that these titles were retained for local significance alone was rejected in 1969 when another epitaph from Ammaedara records Astius Dinamius as *sacerdotalis provinciae Africanae*, suggesting that this contemporary of Astius Mustelus was *sacerdos* of the provincial council of Carthage.

“deflected” the veneration of emperors toward themselves, utilizing the relationship that the rituals and function of the *curiales* formed between the aristocracy and the center as a means of cementing not only a hierarchical relationship with elites, but establish a ritual-based authority for themselves.²⁶⁷

Such claims can be seen as contradictory to the prevailing discourse surrounding the supposed cultural conflicts that existed between Vandals and Romanized elites of North Africa.²⁶⁸ Indeed, the sources themselves are keen to emphasize the disconnect that formed between the Vandal leadership and Roman elites, not to mention the cultural elements that were mandated by the court to bring conformity.²⁶⁹ Considering that the Vandals had existed within the empire for more than two decades before even entering Africa, it should come as little surprise that the material record has only provided eight graves in North Africa that can be to some degree be identified as “Germanic.”²⁷⁰ Rather than forcing attention upon the supposed cultural conflicts, we must continue forward with this idea of centralization that Vandal leadership sought to achieve. The persecutions that show up prominently in sources must be divided up according to legitimacy and context, as the most definite instances occurred when the power of Carthage was challenged.

²⁶⁷ Clover, “Emperor Worship in Vandal Africa,” 668.

²⁶⁸ Mattingly and Hitchner, 211.

²⁶⁹ See Victor of Vita, II.8. for discussion of issues of dress. A.H. Merrills, *The Vandals* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2010), 103, presents an excellent explanation for the perceived dichotomies present in a description of “barbarian dress” (*habitus barbarus*) from concepts of “Roman dress” and relates it more to the idea of social standing and the label “barbarian” as relating to the dress of the court.

²⁷⁰ A.H. Merrills, “Vandals, Romans and Berbers: Understanding Late Antique North Africa,” in *Vandals, Romans and Berbers: New Perspectives on Late Antique North Africa*, ed. A.H. Merrills (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2004), 12. In this case, the term “Germanic” is problematic, but can refer to burial practices that do not coincide with Afro-Roman rituals or display attributes common to the northern frontier regions of the empire.

The “Persecutions” of Geiseric and Huneric

The persecutions correspond closely to Nicene resistance and represent the most significant medium through which Nicene and Homoian interaction can be viewed, albeit through a highly subjective lens. Too much emphasis upon the few instances of institutionalized aggression has the potential to carry focus away from the long periods of benign interaction between the two groups and suggest a persistent violent and aggressive relationship. On the other hand, our knowledge of religious relationships during the Vandal period is almost exclusively gleaned from these periods of conflict and with no surviving Vandal religious architecture, sermons or letters from which to draw, our focus on these periods is entirely derived from the Nicene perspective.²⁷¹ In light of these restrictions, we must perceive them as an outgrowth of the political conditions rather than as a prevailing trend.

Victor of Vita remains our most accessible and useful source for the period of Vandal hegemony, although his attempts to emphasize the heretical status and “barbarian” nature of Vandal rule make for the perception of a prolonged period of Nicene subjugation. Discontent certainly persisted as a result of the extensive confiscation of ecclesiastical establishments and subversion of Nicene political dominance, however an edict given by Huneric in early 484 indicates that, at least for the first half of Vandal rule, many towns remained under the political leadership of Nicene Christians.²⁷² The majority of ecclesiastical contests appear to have revolved around the city of Carthage itself, where Geiseric exiled the Nicene bishop of

²⁷¹ Heather, “Christianity and the Vandals in the Reign of Geiseric,” 138.

²⁷² Victor of Vita, II.23.

Carthage and confiscated a number of Nicene churches.²⁷³ Despite the vision of devastation we receive from Victor's account, Nicene churches remained untouched both within and outside of the city during the reign of Geiseric and there appears to be no significant evidence for a systematic persecution of Nicene Christians outside of Victor's account. These concessions help to explain the small contradictions that occur in Victor's account, especially pertaining to the better-known mandates such as the requirement that all serving members of the court convert to Arianism. Victor attributes this policy to both Geiseric and Huneric, with the former serving as part of the narrative and the latter included within the edict issued by Huneric in 484. It is possible that the contradiction is the result of an initial edict that was gradually eased until it was reinstated by Huneric in the early years of his reign, however Geiseric's relationship with the Nicenes in Victor's account is not reflected within any other sources like the conflicts that existed during the reign of his successor Huneric.

Only Hydatius, the bishop of Aquae Flaviae, who likely recorded his chronicle during the reign of Geiseric, provides any systematic "persecution" of Nicenes by the Vandal leader. The context for this event lies not in Africa, but rather his invasion of Sicily in 440.²⁷⁴ The goal of Geiseric, according to Hydatius, was to "force [the people of Sicily] into the Arian impiety by any means whatsoever," a process that gained a few converts although, "a considerable number persevered in the orthodox faith and achieved martyrdom."²⁷⁵ It is difficult to place much credence on this systematic persecution considering the absence of any acknowledgement by Hydatius of any other persecutions in Geiseric's own kingdom.

²⁷³ See Hydatius, O.439 for the exile of the bishop of Carthage and Victor of Vita, II.2, for the reinstatement of the position under Huneric at the behest of Zeno and Placidia.

²⁷⁴ Hydatius, O.304.

²⁷⁵ Hydatius, O.304.

Geiseric was certainly known for his brutal sacks of cities, which commonly led to the looting of religious establishments and confiscation of land, but any evidence for a specifically religious agenda is lacking outside of the displacement of politically opposed bishops and confiscation of church property.

Neither of the aforementioned actions should be truly considered an act of persecution in the institutionalized sense. To the Nicene clergy, it doubtless appeared to be the case, however its actions were neither coordinated nor oriented toward the elimination of the Nicene sect. The most likely scenario actually stems from the need to create an ecclesiastical structure from which Homoian clergy could practice. During periods of migration, the *sacerdotes gothorum* accompanied the various groups, but the establishment of a new kingdom brought the need for the creation of new ritual centers to correspond with the settlement of the people. Theoderic found himself in a similar situation that led to the creation of the Arian Episcopal Complex and various other chapels, but for Geiseric, it appears to have been easier to just confiscate a few churches and repurpose them for Arian use.²⁷⁶ The silence of other sources on any active persecution of the Nicene establishment by Geiseric should bring pause to ascribing too much validity to Victor's account. It is quite possible that in many cases the earlier forms of persecution recorded by Victor, a good example being the requirement of Arian adherence for court participation, were edicts issued by Huneric and then retroactively applied by Victor to the early reign of Geiseric in order to establish a continuity of persecution. This does not mean that his account of Geiseric's reign is entirely contrived, as events like the expulsion of many politically active bishops are well documented in other sources. What we should maintain however, is an acknowledgement of

²⁷⁶ Victor of Vita, I.15-16.

Victor's purpose and sense of caution regarding the outright and systematic persecutions of Nicene Christians under Geiseric. The hostility portrayed by his son and successor however, remain a great deal more valid in both their contextual background as well as representation within the primary source material.

The persecutions of Huneric (r.477-485) are far better represented. Procopius records episodes of forced conversion and outright persecution that continued through his successor Gundamundus.²⁷⁷ The flight of a number of prominent members of the Nicene clergy to Constantinople is recorded by Malchus, as well as the attempt by Zeno to secure the well-being of all Nicene Christians under Huneric's rule.²⁷⁸ Victor of Vita of course covers the episode in detail; but any notions of a blind and wrathful persecution must be first dispelled by the understanding of the issues presented in Huneric's ascension to power and the threat posed to the policy of political centralization begun by his father.

Conflict of Succession

Huneric's succession was particularly bloody and is recorded by Victor as claiming the lives of all his brothers, their sons and wives, and anyone suspected of challenging his right to rule. Even the Arian church did not emerge unscathed from the political purge. The bishop Jacundus was burned at the stake and other followers suspected of opposing Huneric's rule were publicly executed in spectacular fashion.²⁷⁹ Although Victor makes no attempt to disguise his hatred of Huneric, the difficulty of the king's succession and especially the elimination of political threats who were Arian, gives some credence to his

²⁷⁷ Procopius, III.viii.3-8.

²⁷⁸ Malchus, 17.

²⁷⁹ Victor of Vita, II.12-16.

account. Rather than perceive his actions as exclusively anti-Nicene however, Huneric's succession should be perceived as a period of internal conflict in which familial and social ties became strained by the politically fragmentary nature of society under Vandal rule. The strong rule of Geiseric that was able to unite the Alans, Vandals and Romans succumbed to the upheaval caused by Huneric's ascension.

The resulting discord was followed by an assertive campaign oriented toward solidifying political and religious focus on Huneric's court. Coinage issued by the regime, which has figured prominently in discussions of Vandal-imperial relations, was notably only issued after Geiseric's death in 477, continuing to uphold the same ideological support that existed in the retention of the *curiales*.²⁸⁰ This currency should not be perceived as a means of differentiating the kingdom from the Romans on a political or cultural level. Coinage was an important means of conveying ideological legitimacy and power. The images of the emperors that were embossed on the coins were fairly generic; in fact, the Julio-Claudian coinage is notoriously uniform in its depiction of the emperors, suggesting that its significance rested more upon the representation of the position itself and its influence upon the standardization of the currency. From an economic standpoint, the currency displayed a guarantee of value that was tied directly to the power of the emperor. Simultaneously, the image of the emperor himself was part of an ideological network surrounding the Imperial Cult, imposing itself on various public and private spaces within the empire and reinforcing

²⁸⁰ Merrills, "Vandals, Romans and Berbers: Understanding Late Antique North Africa," 11. The number of coins issued by the Vandals is not insignificant. They began issuing coins from the mint at Carthage during the 440's, however the transition to a fully Vandal-centric ideology behind the coinage was gradual and did not fully occur until after the death of Geiseric in 477. The transition of this iconography to the Vandal court also follows 476 and the overthrow of the Western Roman Empire by Odoacer, a chronology that suggests Vandal leadership may have felt that they possessed the liberty to associate the coinage with their own authority. For details, see Frank Clover, "Felix Carthago," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, Vol. 40 (1986), 3.

imperial legitimacy.²⁸¹ We have only to look as far as the *damnatio memoriae* to see the significance that these representations held. Emperors who emerged as usurpers or from a contested succession quickly made efforts to distribute their own coinage and imagery and destroy that of their opposition or predecessors.²⁸² The influence of these coins was recognized by the Vandals, who used the same basic currency as their Roman counterparts. By participating in a recognizable Roman ideological system, they established themselves within the bounds of the system rather than in opposition to it.

Another issue is that the problems faced by Huneric reign were for the most part internal, not external. The relationship with Constantinople during this period was admirable, as it had been for the majority of Geiseric's life, ending with a treaty in association with Zeno to prevent future hostilities.²⁸³ The coinage itself instead served as an internal means of legitimacy, utilizing a recognizable ideology to orient power away from imperial centers toward the Vandal court. Fitting into the previous ideological and economic discussions, the issuance of coinage solidified the perspective of all activity that filtered through Carthage on the Vandal leadership with the intent of repairing the divisions created during the early part of Huneric's reign.

Victor's narrative surrounding the persecutions follows on the coattails of the succession, forming almost a continuation of the inter-familial atrocities into the religious sphere. A decree was issued stating that only Arians were allowed to partake in public duties, a reiteration of one of Geiseric's proclamations which suggests that this practice had lapsed

²⁸¹ Louise Revell, *Roman Imperialism and Local Identities* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 88-89.

²⁸² Revell, 87.

²⁸³ Procopius, III.vii.25.

in the later part of Geiseric's reign.²⁸⁴ This may also be related to the concern given by Victor to the issue of rebaptism. As we have seen, Homoian and Nicene baptism emerged from a similar origin, using the three-fold immersion and similar imagery. Victor gives no inclination that the process was any different, only that the court insisted upon the rebaptism of Nicene converts. Given the symbolic nature of baptism within the Christian community and the growth of *Christianitas* as a similitude to *Romanitas*, the process of baptism can be perceived during the early fourth century as ritualistic inclusion in the broader Christian community.²⁸⁵ In this regard, it is possible that the process Victor describes was one relating to the symbolic ritualization of political allegiance rather than a theologically based requirement. The issue of allegiance materialized in conflict between the Arian establishment and the Nicene clergy, rising from the interwoven political and ecclesiastical structure that defined Nicene Christianity by the late fifth century.

The Nicene Problem

The threat posed by Nicene clergy fits into the general discussion of the establishment of a localized rule that was previously part of a broader ideological framework. The Nicene ecclesiastical structure formed what was, in essence, a structure that superseded this objective of Geiseric and culminated in the persecutions of Huneric. The Nicene Church developed an increased connectivity and ideological centrality following its recognition as the official doctrine of the empire during the reign of Theodosius. Correspondence is visible in the vast amount of anti-Vandal literature that emanated from North Africa during the fifth century

²⁸⁴ Victor of Vita, II.23.

²⁸⁵ Frederick Paxton, "Birth and Death," *The Cambridge History of Christianity Vol. 3: Early Medieval Christianities c. 600–c. 1100*, ed. Thomas F.X. Noble and Julia M.H. Smith (Cambridge University Press, 2008), 385-87.

and enhanced the connectivity between centers of Nicene thought.²⁸⁶ Arianism on the other hand lacked a definitive centralized structure (if it ever possessed one at all) and as we have seen increasingly became associated with the *sacerdotes gothorum*.²⁸⁷ Whether we claim that Nicene Christianity possessed a definitive center in the imperial court, or that it had begun simply to approach a broader sense of purpose, it posed a threat to the efforts of Huneric to orient the political and ideological elements of the kingdom toward Carthage. To succumb to Nicene Christianity would have meant giving up the ability to determine the meaning surrounding certain rites and ecclesiastical appointments, a process that would have impeded the goal of bringing the important members of society under the influence of the Vandal court. It is possible that, if Hydatius' rumor of Geiseric's conversion is valid, the Vandal leader saw the benefit of a loosely affiliated ecclesiastical structure and therefore the potential for authoritative control over the local African population as well as the groups that accompanied him from Iberia. The control he exerted over these groups however does not appear to have been challenged in a manner that necessitated widespread conversion in the way it did for his successor. Huneric's situation was a great deal more precarious and his insistence on a widespread doctrinal appeal to the clergy of Africa exemplifies both his goal of doctrinal centralization as well as the political position he sought to achieve.

²⁸⁶ See Evagrius Scholasticus, *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius Scholasticus*, trans. Michael Whitby (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000), III.18-19, for an account of the Acacian Schism. The mobilization of opinion surrounding the Miaphysite compromise (originally accepted by Zeno) provides a prime example of the degree to which ecclesiastical authorities were able to control the political and doctrinal environment, displacing the overwhelming religious authority we see in figures like Theodosius, Constantius II and Constantine.

²⁸⁷ If we consider the aforementioned argument of a "search for the doctrine of God," we can perceive of a lack of cohesive structure during the early development of the debates. It is notable however how effectively Nicenes were gradually able to gain hegemony over the discourse surrounding the Christological issue and a purely quantitative and organizational reasoning may be a part of the answer to their success. Either way, it is evident that their incorporation into the imperial structure led to a great deal of connectivity into which the Arians were never fully able to integrate and utilize.

The Doctrinal Disputes and Edicts of Huneric

The concentrated effort at solving the Nicene-Homoian divide began with an edict issued on May 20th, 483.

Hunirix to all the Homooousian bishops. It is known you have been forbidden to celebrate liturgies in case they seduce Christian souls and destroy them. But may have continued, and since we do not want scandal “in the provinces granted us by God” know that by the providence of God that on the first of February you are to come to Carthage to debate the principles of faith.²⁸⁸

A number of significant issues pertaining to the contemporary religious sphere at the time can be discerned from this edict. The first is an acknowledgement that we are not looking at two staunchly divided Nicene and Arian populations, one Roman and one Vandal. Huneric’s accusation that souls had been “seduced” by Nicene liturgies shows a fluidity of adherence between sects, one that was not based upon cultural predilections but religious affiliation. Victor of Vita’s account features few distinctions between Roman and Vandal, preferring instead to discuss notions of doctrinal observance. The divide was therefore not composed of homogenous cultural affiliations, but rather a religious debate embroiled in a political dispute surrounding the right to control religious doctrine.

The second and most important concept was the declaration of the doctrinal debate itself. We do not see a mandated or authoritative means of coercing the cooperation of Nicene clergy, but rather an active attempt to instigate a new, authoritative consensus. Doctrinal debates had served the imperial court well in the previous century and a half, providing opportunities for bishops from all over the empire to be brought under the

²⁸⁸ Victor of Vita, II.39.

authority of the emperor. Such assemblies allowed the political center to exercise authority over religious doctrine and construct a relative consensus on religious practice and its associated meaning. The debate issued by Huneric managed to procure a few Nicene representatives who issued what had become a standardized declaration of Nicene doctrine, however a disruption on the second day led to a suspension of the proceedings, which caused Huneric to issue a series of restrictive measures on Nicene power and land.²⁸⁹ While such measures were cited by Nicene clergy as persecutions upon the faithful, Huneric explained his actions in an edict given on the 25th of February 484, and drew particular attention to his ability to centralize religious decisions based upon imperial precedents.

The edict recalls the mandate that the Nicene clergy defend their doctrine through scriptural use and ends with a comment decrying any attempt to overturn the findings of “a thousand and more bishops from the whole world at the council of Ariminum and at Seleucia.”²⁹⁰ The continued reflection on the primary councils that served to legitimate the Homoian faith should not be entirely surprising considering the Vandal usage of Roman precedents. Presided over by Constantius II, the councils of Ariminum and Seleucia were the forefront of a series of empire-wide councils beginning with Nicaea and ending with the First Council of Constantinople under Theodosius I in May of 392. The declarations of Constantinople emphasized the imperial prerogative on matters of doctrinal belief. It was this imperially centralized control that Huneric sought to reassert over religious practice. His decree places repeated emphasis upon the ability of Huneric’s court to exercise religious authority in the same manner as the Nicene emperors to whom the clergy looked for doctrinal

²⁸⁹ Victor of Vita, III.6.

²⁹⁰ Victor of Vita, III.5.

legitimacy. The king condemns their lack of cooperation with Vandal authority and stating that, “it is necessary and very just to twist around against them what is shown to be contained in those very laws which happen to have been promulgated by the emperors of various times, who with them, had been led to error.”²⁹¹

The penalties issued against Nicene clergy, including the confiscation of forbidden books, fines according to social standing, confiscation of church land and assets and the inability of the Nicene Church to ordain clergy and worship, were drawn explicitly from the restrictions placed upon non-Nicene Christians by the Nicene emperors.²⁹² Although, from the perspective of Huneric, Theodosius and his successors had abandoned the true faith for misguided notions of Christ, the methods by which doctrine was enforced remained within the bounds of imperial jurisdiction. The shift of religious power in the western Nicene church from the emperor to bishops resulted in a dispersed and well-connected network of religious consensus. It became difficult for any one political power to alter Nicene doctrine at will without experiencing social and political difficulty. Gradual and significant doctrinal change did of course occur, especially as papal power grew after the seventh century in Italy, however the same rapid changes experienced during the fourth century between emperors were no longer feasible. Huneric however perceived this departure from centralized imperial control as an insubordinate movement, derivative of previous emperors’ support of a false

²⁹¹ Victor of Vita, III.7. The decree of Huneric recorded by Victor: “Provoked by these people, we ordered that their churches were to be closed. As expressed in a written communication to them, the terms were that they were to be closed until such time as they chose to come to the debate which had been proposed. But, impelled by an obstinacy which their wicked purposes seem to have led them to embrace, they did not wish to do this. And so it is necessary and very just to twist around against them what is shown to be contained in those very laws which happen to have been promulgated by the emperors of various times who, with them, had been led into error.”

²⁹² Victor of Vita, III.7-12.

doctrine. Huneric's statement provided in the edict of February 484 discusses this privilege in the context of his restrictions placed upon the Nicene population.

The aforementioned emperors also raged against the laity in a similar fashion, because they were to lose completely their right to bestow and bequeath, or to receive what was left to them by others, whether in the form of a bequest held for someone else, or of a legacy, or of donations, or by that means termed 'by the cause of death', or by means of any codicil or any pieces of writing whatsoever.²⁹³

The success of the Vandals was lauded as proof of Arianism's orthodoxy, projecting the fall of imperial power in the west as evidence of their abandonment of the true faith.²⁹⁴ Such assertions expound the role that Arianism played within the greater process of centralization into the Vandal court at Carthage and explain the discord that existed between the Nicenes and Vandal court. The consensus of bishops like Victor of Vita that the role of Church doctrine resided primarily in the jurisdiction of ecclesiastical officials contrasted vehemently with the ideological reorientation that Huneric sought to achieve. Arianism did not enjoy the same widespread and powerful ecclesiastical structure that the Nicene Church possessed, due primarily to the efforts of Theodosius and his successors. The doctrine offered a structure that was local, which meant that it could be easily centralized and controlled in a way that Nicene Christianity could not. When Huneric sought to exercise the same control over Nicene Christianity as he did over the Arian bishops, the Nicene church refused to cooperate.

Persecutions in the Vandal kingdom corresponded with periods of political uncertainty or transition, events that necessitated an assertion of political control. This

²⁹³ Victor of Vita, III.9.

²⁹⁴ The edict of May 483 provided by Victor of Vita, II.9, "in the provinces granted us by God" also alludes to Vandal hegemony as resulting from their Arian beliefs.

correlation explains why, in periods of relative cohesion like the end of Geiseric's reign, mandates like requiring court officials to adhere to Arianism were not strictly enforced. If the divisions we see between Arians and Nicenes in the Vandal kingdom had indeed been the result of a cultural conflict between Romans and Vandals, we would expect to see a prolonged and persistent conflict as opposed to the sporadic, albeit intense disputes that we actually see.

Conclusion

The support of Arian Christianity within the Vandal kingdom must be perceived as more complex than a symbolic marker of a cultural divide between Vandal leadership and their "Roman" subjects. A predisposition to the doctrine was perhaps the result of recent conversion efforts, however complete allegiance to Arianism within the Vandal and Alan populations should not be taken for granted. Their recent conversion and the difficulties inherent to maintaining sanctioned Christian ritual practice outside of urban areas, decries any sense of uniformity to the significance of the doctrine. The political support given to Arianism by the Vandal kings does give us an indication of its significance within their broader efforts to focus economic, ritualistic and political procedures on Carthage. Pre-existing Roman administrative structures like the imperial cult and grain export system were already oriented on Carthage and proved conducive to the efforts of Vandal leadership to consolidate the Vandal-Alan alliance under a single political leadership. These structures were needed to enforce ideological legitimacy of Vandal hegemony and increased control over the functions of the North African provinces. It is into this framework that Vandal Arianism fit. The persecutions of Huneric suggest that the most significant rows between the Nicene and Arian establishments occurred during a period of political and social transition.

The tightly knit political framework created by Geiseric was in danger of collapse during Huneric's succession. Huneric himself intensified Carthage's control over the religious and other ideological structures of the empire, including the issuance of coinage, purge of Arian religious opposition and attempts to enforce religious homogeneity. As a result, explanation of the Vandal Arianism must be perceived as a means of ideologically reinforcing the new political establishment similar to the later efforts of the Amali. Although no attributes of the practice led it to be considered innately "Gothic," Arianism's place in the Mediterranean religious and political transformation rendered "Arianism" useful to the efforts of centralization exercised by Geiseric and his successors.

Conclusion

Explanations for the persistence of Arianism, or more appropriately Homoianism, among the Gothic “peoples,” have not been fully distanced from the preoccupation with Roman and Germanic identity. Ethnic affiliation no longer holds the dominant position within such narratives, having given way to a multidimensional and variable understanding of identity. Nevertheless, the significance of Arianism has not been explained in terms its political and social utility outside of divisionary characteristics. The elaboration of these attributes serves to elaborate upon the solutions that were developed in response to the political complexities of integration and the transformations of the fourth, fifth and sixth-centuries.

The roots of the Homoian doctrine formed alongside other approaches to the Christological question, entities that sought through Greco-Roman philosophy and hermeneutics to explain the relationship between members of the Trinity. As the significance of Christianity rose in the empire, these divisions became political and ecclesiastical authors attempted to discount other doctrines as deviants, rather than part of a broader discourse. When viewed from the perspective of this simultaneous development, it should not be surprising that the practice of Homoianism remained in almost every respect identical to its Nicene counterpart outside of theological underpinnings. As the doctrine made its way into the north-eastern periphery of the empire as a result of the efforts of clergy like the bishop Ulfila, its influence within the empire dwindled, only to be rekindled by the migration of these peripheral peoples, colloquially known as “Gothic,” into the empire. Despite claims

that elements of Homoianism can be identified as “Gothic,” a study of the most important practical elements, baptism and the bible written in the Gothic language, yields no elements that can be definitively qualified as Gothic or possess elements that exclusively render their practice Homoian.

The association between the Goths and Homoianism in Nicene rhetoric provides an explanation for this prevailing discourse. Following the usual Roman practice of “otherizing” social and political elements that were perceived as threatening, ecclesiastical writers and most prominently the emperor Justinian, sought to encourage this connection between “Arianism” and Goths as a means of associating their own doctrine with *Romanitas* as well as legitimizing the later invasions of Italy and North Africa. The significance of Arianism must therefore remain distanced from innate notions of “Gothicness,” accepting that such an association was an external, rather than internalized label. This conclusion opens the door for a variable understanding of Arianism, one that corresponds with a hybridized perception of identity.

The Ostrogothic kingdom provides one of these contextual representations of the internal significance of Homoianism. The support of the doctrine by Theoderic and his successors supported the legitimacy of the Amal dynasty within the factions of *foederati* that accompanied Theoderic from the Balkans. The post-Hunnic Germanic factions formed an integral part of the post-reform military structure, a position that required their leaders to participate within a sphere of imperial interaction as well as that of the factions they commanded. Theoderic himself was brought up within the culture of the imperial court, receiving a Greco-Roman education and participating in the regional politics as a military leader. These positions were not mutually exclusive, but required a careful balancing act.

Following his migration into at the behest of Zeno, Theoderic faced the need to continue to exert his authority over the military factions as well as over the Romans of Italy, adopting the imperial political and administrative structure for one, and establishing the concept of a hereditary right to rule. This Amal dynasty, establishing an unbroken line through “Ostrogothic history” as presented by Cassiodorus and Jordanes, formed the backbone of this legitimacy and attempted to establish continuity with his predecessors. Connections between this ideal and Arianism can be seen primarily in the architectural contributions and marital connections established by Theoderic. When paired with the late fifth-century assumption that Arianism was associated with the Ostrogothic tradition, its retention in Ostrogothic kingdom formed a central part of this strategy, creating continuity with the ancestors of Theoderic.

The Vandal kingdom, with its recent conversion to Christianity, did not allow for legitimacy to be tied to the doctrine in the same manner as its Ostrogothic counterpart. Like the Ostrogoths, the Vandal kingdom consisted of several different political identities, many of which accompanied Geiseric from Iberia in 428. Despite Geiseric’s attempts to unify these groups, political factionalism persisted well through the reign of his son and successor Huneric. Geiseric himself was able to mitigate these factional loyalties through the use of pre-existing ideological and administrative structures that focused economic and ideological activity on Carthage. Geiseric and his successors utilized many of these institutions, which included the imperial cult and economic activity, to form continuity with previous Roman administration and keep the political process focused on the Vandal court rather than in the hands of the various factions.

While Geiseric was able to pacify political unrest during his reign, the upheaval caused by the succession of Huneric corresponded with the persecutions of Nicene Christians that factor so prominently in narratives of the Vandal kingdom. Instances of active persecution under Geiseric appear to have been minimal; however under Huneric we possess a number of the edicts that help to explain the conflicts between the Homoian establishment and Nicene clergy. The desire of Huneric to exert control over doctrinal decisions and the meaning associated with religious practice corresponds to the efforts of centralization that mirror the efforts of earlier emperors, often calling upon their authority in restrictions placed upon the Nicene Church. Like the reorientation of the imperial cult, Arianism offered a more localized and minimally structured ecclesiastical body that could be oriented and controlled by the court. Nicene Christianity on the other hand, with its preference in the western half of the empire for upholding the decisions of earlier Nicene emperors as well as appealing to a Mediterranean-wide community, expressed displeasure at the attempts of Vandal leadership to create a homogenous doctrine over which it could exert control. The resulting conflict can therefore be expressed as not an issue of culture, or Vandal attempts at differentiating themselves from Romans, but rather an issue of political control over meaning.

The relationship that existed between “Arianism” and the Gothic kingdoms cannot be oversimplified. The transformative process that led to local structures taking precedence over imperial control meant that the majority of the framework that existed under the Roman Empire was simply reconfigured for a new purpose. Religion and identity remain closely tied in the notion that local and individualized meaning must pose some form of social significance in order to remain relevant. To assume that a universal need for active differentiation between Roman and Goths existed, undermines the complex situation that

formed the socio-political methods of accommodation posed by the Gothic migrations and kingdoms. Continued efforts must be made to shed light on the many functions that Arianism served within each political unit, with the hope that subsequent studies will assist in explaining the ways in which “Arianism” helped to facilitate the transformation from the socio-political structures of the Roman Empire to the successor states of the Middle Ages.

Figures



Figure 1. The mural on the ceiling of the “Arian Baptistery” in Ravenna. Mary Ann Sullivan (Bluffton University, Bluffton Ohio), <http://www.bluffton.edu/~sullivanm/italy/ravenna/arianbap/arian.html>.



Figure 2. The mural on the ceiling of the Neonian Baptistery in Ravenna. Mary Ann Sullivan (Bluffton University, Bluffton Ohio), <http://www.bluffton.edu/~sullivanm/italy/ravenna/baptistery/baptistery2.html>

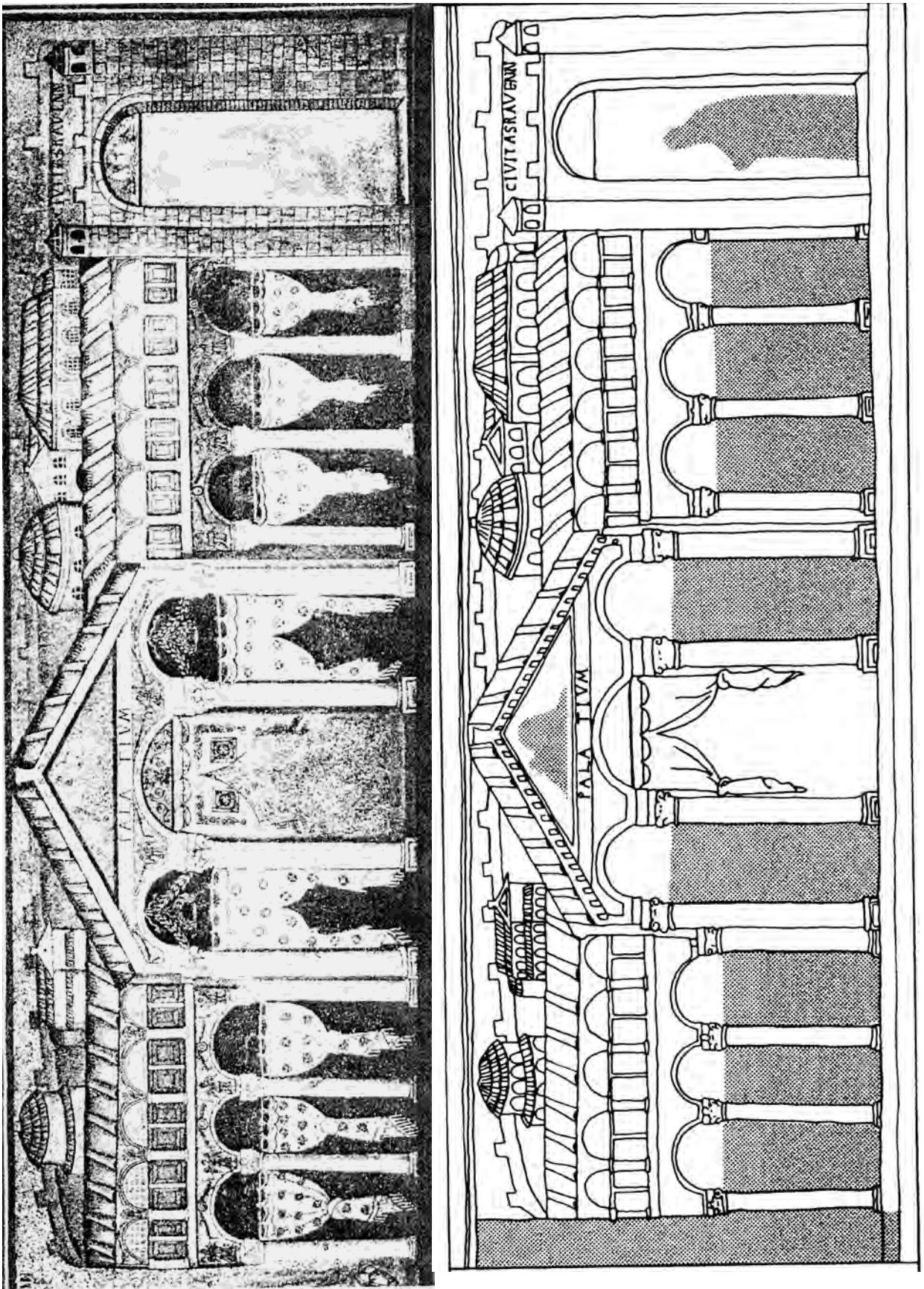


Figure 3. The Palatium Mosaic, San Apollinare Nuovo. Outline on right showing changes made after 540. Mark Johnson, "Toward a History of Theoderic's Building Program."

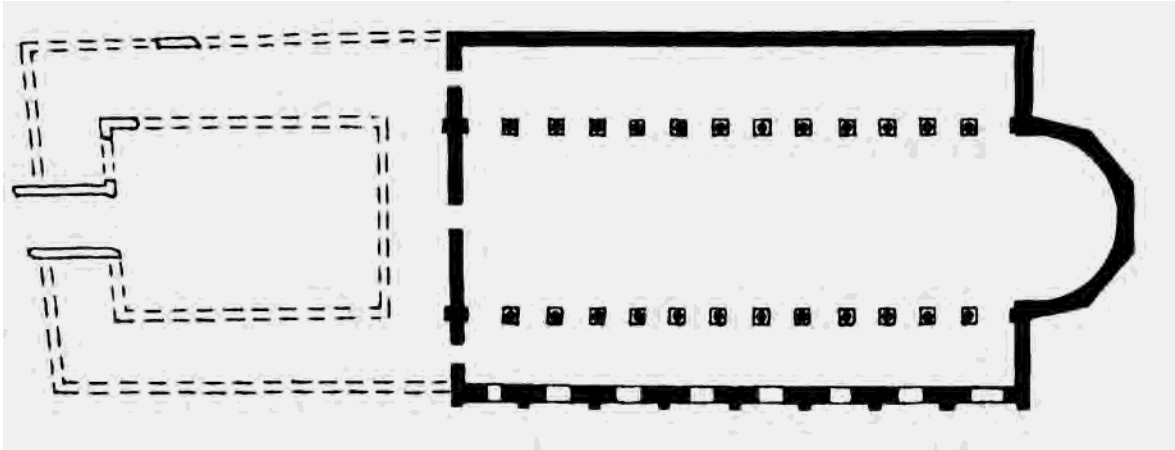


Figure 4. Restoration of the San Apollinare Nuovo Chapel. Mark Johnson, "Toward a History of Theoderic's Building Program."

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