

ROMAN-BARBARIAN MARRIAGES IN THE LATE EMPIRE

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In 1964 Rosario Soraci published a study of *conubia* between Romans and Germans from the fourth to the sixth century A.D.¹ Although the title of the work might suggest that its concern was to be with such marriages throughout the period, in fact its aim was much more restricted. Beginning with a law issued by Valentinian I in 370 or 373 to the *magister equitum* Theodosius (*C.Th.* 3.14.1), which banned on pain of death all marriages between Roman provincials and *barbarae* or *gentiles*, Soraci, after assessing the context and intent of the law, proceeded to discuss its influence upon the practices of the Germanic kingdoms which succeeded the Roman Empire in the West. The text of the law reads:

Nulli provincialium, cuiuscumque ordinis aut loci fuerit, cum barbara sit uxore coniugium, nec ulli gentilium provincialis femina copuletur. Quod si quae inter provinciales atque gentiles adfinitates ex huiusmodi nuptiis extiterit, quod in his suspectum vel noxium detegitur, capitaliter expietur.

This was regarded by Soraci not as a general banning law but rather as a limited attempt, in the context of current hostilities with the Alamanni, to keep those barbarians serving the Empire (*gentiles*) isolated from the general Roman populace.² The German lawmakers, however, exemplified by Alaric in his

interpretatio,³ took it as a general banning law and applied it in this spirit, so that it became the basis for the prohibition under the Germanic kingdoms of intermarriage between Romans and Germans.

Although Soraci's aims were limited, being primarily legalistic, his study leaves a strong impression that throughout the period marriages between Romans and Germans were rare. This impression is reinforced by an appendix which offers a list of marriages between Romans and Germans from the mid-third to the mid-sixth century A.D. In it there are eleven marriages labelled "databili," thirteen "di data incerta" and seven "dubie" -- thirty-one examples in all, a small number for a period of over three centuries.⁴ The list (which Soraci admits to be incomplete) offers fifteen marriages between men with Roman names and women with German names and sixteen examples of the reverse, most of the latter being probably from the period of the Germanic kingdoms.⁵ Soraci's procedure seems to have been to enter only those liaisons in which one of the partners probably did not have Roman citizenship and thus lacked the *ius conubii*. This is reasonable in the context of a limited study of the kind undertaken by Soraci, but it begs a number of questions important for the study of marriages between Romans and non-Romans during the late Empire.⁶

Soraci takes *barbara* as used by Valentinian to be a neutral term (as in Alaric's *interpretatio*), meaning roughly "foreigner" or "alien," and *gentilis* also to be neutral, indicating a soldier of foreign origin or, more specifically, a barbarian border-soldier (*limitaneus*);⁷ and for his purpose both refer to Germans. In the first case he appears to be correct, though *barbarus* is not to be regarded as a legal term with a clearly understood meaning (as it could be under the Germanic kingdoms). In the case of *gentilis*, though he could be correct in limiting it to soldiers, more likely, as is suggested by the second sentence of the law, the word has a wider connotation, being the equivalent of *barbarus* and used a variation for it.⁸

Discussion of the terminology of the law or of its intent (whether it was a general banning law or one of specific application) serves only to obscure a deeper difficulty. This lies in the use of the law by Soraci and other scholars as the starting point of their studies. For, although it seems that Valentinian's law was important as the basis for the laws of the Germanic kingdoms, it is far from clear that it was of any importance in respect of the marriage practices of the late Empire. Moreover, because its terminology is susceptible to different interpretations, it serves to confuse, rather than clarify, the situation. For these reasons, and for others remarked below, I

propose to set the law aside as a piece of special, and perhaps aberrant, legislation (there are no parallels) and to take another starting point.

When Soraci discusses marriage and compiles his list, he omits all marriages between Roman women and those Germans who held high military office in the Empire. He does this presumably because he regards the latter as having acquired Roman citizenship and thus the *ius conubii*; and he also seems to regard them as having ceased at this point to be *barbari* or *gentiles* or (if one takes his title seriously) even Germans. Long ago, however, Mommsen pointed out that there is no clear evidence that in the late Empire a barbarian received Roman citizenship upon entry into the legions or even upon acquiring veteran status; indeed, it is no more than possible that he received it when he became a Roman officer.⁹ Nevertheless, Mommsen did appear to think it likely that citizenship was given to officers, an assumption in which both he and (apparently) Soraci are almost surely correct. Certainly, German and other foreign officers are found marrying Romans and owning property, which itself would suggest citizenship.¹⁰

Mommsen also pointed out, however, that at the period the acquisition of Roman citizenship was not regarded as conferring Roman nationality.¹¹ Although the evidence which he quoted (primarily *CIL* III. 3576: *Francus ego civis, Romanus miles in armis*) is hardly compelling, the concept of dual citizenship and residual obligations towards one's original place of domicile was well established in the Roman world. It is hardly likely that the Frisians to whom Nero gave citizenship in A.D. 58 (Tacitus, *Ann.* 13. 54) regarded themselves, or were regarded by anyone, as having ceased to be Frisians;¹² and in the fourth century the Frank Mallobaudes could hold at the same time the positions of *comes domesticorum* in the Roman forces and *rex Francorum*.¹³ When one looks at general opinion, the evidence increases and the situation becomes clearer. Stilicho, though thoroughly Romanized, is called *semibarbarus* by Jerome (*Ep.* 123.16 -- perhaps an indication that he had a Roman mother); Nevitta, *magister equitum* and consul under Julian, is called *barbarus* by Ammianus (21.10.8; 12.25); and Victor, *magister equitum* in 378, is called *Sarmata* by the same writer (31.12.16).¹⁴

The point at which these foreign officers, or their descendants, would have been considered to have ceased to be *barbari* is unclear and probably varied from case to case and period to period, although a generation or two of residence and service would have been usually necessary. The considerations, as they had long been, were probably primarily cultural.¹⁵ The unfortunate

Silvanus, *magister peditum* and short-lived usurper in 355, can stand as one example amongst many. He was born in Gaul of a Frankish father and a non-Roman mother (Victor, *Caes.* 42.15: *barbaris parentibus*). Though he kept his Frankish connections and was called a "fellow countryman" (*popularis*, Ammianus 15.5.11) by the Frank Malarich, when he fell into danger from the suspicious Emperor Constantius II and considered flight to the Franks, he was informed that they would surrender him to the Romans (*ibid.* 16). Clearly, Silvanus, with his Latin name and Roman upbringing (*Epit. de Caes.* 42.11: *institutione Romana satis cultus et patiens*) was on the way to assimilation, though not fully absorbed.¹⁶ Ammianus, who approves of Silvanus as a general, does not stress his "Frankishness," in contrast with his treatment of Nevitta, whose elevation to the consulship is condemned because he was a *barbarus*, with the specific complaint that he was *inconsummatum et subagrestem et (quod minus erat ferendum) celsa in potestate crudelem* (21.10.8).

However, the point at which a non-Roman became a Roman is not important for the present paper. What is important is that there were a number of Germans and other foreigners (whom I have included), who may or may not have been citizens, who would still commonly have been regarded as foreigners, yet who married Romans. The list of marriages set out below, which only occasionally overlaps with that of Soraci (a large portion of whose examples are drawn from the German kingdoms, which I ignore), is based upon the broader view, set out above, of what was a barbarian. While it does not exhibit the conceptual precision underlying Soraci's list, it does serve as a corrective in that it brings out not the isolationism and xenophobia at times manifested in late Roman legislation but the melding and mutual assimilation which was also an important characteristic of the late-Roman period.¹⁷

Third century:

1. Gallienus - Pipa (Pipara). He was Roman Emperor 253-63, she the daughter of a Marcoman chief, Attalus. The sources seem to suggest that it was not a regular marriage. (Soraci "databili" 1.)
2. Bonosus - Hunila. He was an usurper 276/82, born of a British father and a Gallic mother. She is said to have been a Gothic princess. The source (*SHA, Quad. Tyr.* 15.3-7) is unreliable. (Soraci "databili" 2.)

3. Proculus - Vituriga (*quae et Samsa*). He was an usurper 276/82, a nobleman who claimed descent from the Franks (thus perhaps an earlier inter-marriage). Her name might be Germanic. Again, the source (*SHA, Quad. Tyr.* 12.3-4) is unreliable.

4. Tiranes - Aelia. He was king of Bosphorus circa 276/79. Her name looks Roman (*IGR I.* 871, from Panticapaeum).

Fourth century:

5. Arsaces III - Olympias. He was king of Armenia circa 350-circa 364 or 339-69 (see *PLRE I* "Arsaces III"), she the daughter of Ablabius, praetorian prefect of Constantine I (*Ammianus* 20.11.3; *Athanasius, Hist. Arianorum* 69).

6. Magnentius - Justina. He was Emperor 350-53 and of barbarian descent (*Victor, Caes.* 41.25: *gentis barbarae*; cf. *Epit de Caes.* 42.7), though born in Gaul. His father was possibly British, his mother a Frank (see *PLRE I* "Magnentius").¹⁸ Justina was the daughter of Justus, consular governor of Picenum under Constantius II.

7. Agilo - daughter of Araxius, praetorian prefect of Procopius (365-66). He was an Alaman and *mag. ped.* 360-62. Her name was probably Vetiana (*PLRE I* "Vetiana"). On Agilo's relationship to Araxius see *Ammianus* 26.7.6; 10.7.

8. Bauto - Roman wife (?). He was a Frank and *mag. mil.* 380-85 (*Zosimus* 4.33.2), whose daughter, Eudoxia, married the Emperor Arcadius. Bury suggested that her mother was a Roman.¹⁹ *Philostorgius (HE* 11.6) might be understood to mean that she was herself a barbarian and thus descended on both sides from barbarians. But, since he is talking about the barbarous traits in her character and he does not specifically mention her maternal descent, his evidence is not firm. If *Philostorgius* did mean to say that Eudoxia was a full barbarian, then her marriage replaces Bauto's.

9. Fravitta - Roman wife. He was a Goth and *mag. mil.* 400. Earlier, when he was leader of a band of federates (before 393 and probably soon after 379), he asked for and received a Roman wife (*Ennapius, Fr.* 60).²⁰

10. Hormisdas - *matrona opulenta et nobilis*. He was the son of a Persian prince of the same name who fled to the Roman Empire in 324. He was married by 365/66 (Ammianus 26.8.12).
11. Merobaudes - Roman wife (?). He was probably a Frank²¹ and *mag. ped.* 375-88. His wife was apparently named Nonosa.²² It is presumed that Fl. Merobaudes, *mag. mil.* 443, was his descendant (PLRE II "Merobaudes"). Since the latter seems to have been regarded as a Roman (and he married the daughter of Fl. Astyrius), the line must have acquired a Roman wife at some point, and her name suggests Nonosa as a strong possibility.
12. Stilicho's father - Stilicho's Roman (?) mother. Stilicho's father was a Vandal (Orosius, *Adv. Pag.* 7.38.1) and a cavalry officer under Valens, Emperor 365-78 (Claudian, *Cos. Stil.* 1.35-39). Since Jerome (*Ep.* 123.16) calls Stilicho *semibarbarus*, his mother is presumed to have been Roman. If she were not, then Stilicho's own marriage to Serena would replace his father's.
13. Nebridius - Salvina. He was a nephew of the Empress Flacilla (Jerome, *Ep.* 79.2.1), she the daughter of Gildo, *mag. mil. Africae* 386-98 (Jerome, *Ep.* 123.17). Gildo was a son of king Nubel of Mauretania (Ammianus 29.5.2 and 6) and brother of Firmus, who revolted circa 372. Kotula argues that Firmus was a Moorish chief,²³ and if this were so, Gildo was probably a Moorish *gentilis* rather than a Roman subject. Salvina would, therefore, have been either a full Moor or, if Gildo married a Roman, half-Moorish. In the second case, the marriage of Gildo would replace that of his daughter.
14. Fl. Alatancus - Victoria. A tombstone from a military cemetery at Concordia (CIL V. 8738), dated to the late-fourth or early-fifth century, records Fl. Alatancus, *domest<icus>*, husband of Victoria. Schönfeld says that the name is Gothic =*Ala-pagks.²⁴
15. Ursinianus - Ludula. CIL XIII. 3787 is the tombstone of a deacon erected by his wife, whose name is Germanic. The stone is dated to the late-fourth or early-fifth century. (Soraci, "databili" 4.)

Fifth century:

16. **Ataulf - Placidia.** He was king of the Visigoths 410-15 and in 414 he married, in a Roman-style ceremony at Narbonne, the sister of the Emperor Honorius, Galla Placidia (Olympiodorus, *Fr.* 24; Orosius, *Adv. Pag.* 7.42.3). (Soraci, "databili" 3.)

17. **Boniface - Pelagia.** Boniface married his second wife possibly in 426 (*PLRE* II "Bonifatius" 3). She was of barbarian, possibly Visigothic, origin (Augustine, *Ep.* 220.4).

18. **Aetius - Pelagia.** After the death of Boniface, Aetius married his widow (John of Antioch, *Fr.* 201.3; Marcellinus, *Chron. s.a.* 432).²⁵

19. **Roman father - Gothic (?) mother of Fl. Areobindas Martialis, mag. offic.** 449. The name Areobindas suggests German descent, and *PLRE* II "Martialis" proposes that his mother was the sister of Fl. Areobindus (*mag. mil.* 434-49) and his father a Roman.

20. **Armatius - Roman wife.** Armatius, the son of the Gothic *mag. mil.* Plinthas (Priscus, *Fr.* 1), married a woman of high birth, presumably a Roman, who after his death was married in 449 to Constantius, the secretary of Attila (Priscus, *Fr.* 14).

21. **Huneric - Eudocia.** Huneric, the son of the Vandal king Gaiseric, was betrothed to Eudocia, the daughter of Valentinian III, before 446 and married her probably soon after 455 (*PLRE* II "Eudocia" 2).

22. **Ricimer - Alypia.** Ricimer, *mag. mil.* 456-72, was of mixed Suevic and Visigothic descent. He married Alypia, the daughter of the Emperor Anthemius, in 467 (*PLRE* II "Ricimer" 2).

23. **Patricius - Leontia.** Patricius, the son of the Alan *mag. mil.* Aspar, probably by a Gothic mother, was married to Leontia, the younger daughter of the Emperor Leo, in 470 (Jordanes, *Get.* 239; Malalas, *Fr.* 31; Marcellinus, *Chron. s.a.* 471).

24. **Hermineric - daughter of an illegitimate son of the Emperor Zeno.** Hermineric, youngest son of Aspar, probably by a Gothic mother, escaped the

massacre of his family in 471 and is said to have been sent to Isauria by the future Emperor Zeno, where he married the daughter of an illegitimate son of Zeno (Theophanes, *Chron. a.m.* 5964).

25. Fl. Areobindus - Anicia Juliana. Fl. Areobindus, *mag. mil.* 503-04 and grandson of the Goth Fl. Areobindus (*mag. mil.* 434-49), married Anicia Juliana, daughter of the Emperor Olybrius, in 478/79 (*PLRE II "Areobindus" 1*).

26. Gento - Roman wife. Malchus, *Fr. 18 ad fin.*, mentions one Gento, a Goth (probably the leader of a band of federates) married to a Roman woman from New Epirus. The date of the passage is 479.

27. Gessius - barbarian woman from Phrygia. Procopius of Gaza (*Ep.* 125) writes to Gessius, an iatrosophist, on the death of some of his children and of his wife, a barbarian from Phrygia. The date is in the late-fifth century.

Sixth century:

28. Rufinus - daughter of John the Scythian (?). Theophanes (*Chron. a.m.* 6020) possibly indicates that Rufinus, *mag. mil. Thraciae* in 515, was married to a daughter of John the Scythian, *mag. mil.* 483-98 and probably a Goth.

29. Justin I - Lupicina Euphemia. Justin, Emperor 518-27, is said by Procopius (*Anecd.* 6.17; 9.48) to have married a barbarian slave whom he had bought from her former owner. Before she became Empress, her name was simply Lupicina (*PLRE II "Euphemia" 5*).

30. Zaunas - Roman wife (?). Zaunas was the son of the Lazian Pharesmanes, *mag. mil.* 505-06. Zaunas' sons were Rufinus and Leontius (Procopius, *BV* 2.19.1; 20.1), whose names suggest the Romanization of the family and perhaps the marriage of their father to a Roman.

31. Ztath - Valeriana. He was crowned king of the Lazi by Justin I in 522. At that time he married Valeriana, grand-daughter of the patrician Nomus (Theophanes, *Chron. a.m.* 6015; other references in *PLRE II "Valeriana" 2*).

32. Germanus - Matasuntha. In about 550 Germanus, the nephew of Justin I,

married Matasuntha, an Ostrogothic princess (Jordanes, *Get.* 251; 314; *Rom.* 383; Procopius, *BG* 3.39.14). (Soraci, "databili" 9.)

Although this is a significant number of marriages between Romans and barbarians (as I am using the term) in the late Empire, it is too small to permit any sweeping conclusions. The smaller numbers for the third and sixth centuries mean nothing, since in both cases they represent only half of the century. The following observations are, however, suggested:

1. the marriages seem to be spread fairly evenly between the eastern and western parts of the Empire, as far as one can associate them with either part. Most involve military men, who, by the nature of their careers, are mobile.
2. marriages with eastern barbarians are rare (two Lazi, one each Persian, Bosporan and Armenian), evenly spread, and all the easterners are male.
3. Germans, both male and female, predominate heavily amongst the barbarians (twenty-four Germans; and the two "barbarian" females noted were probably northern people); and amongst the females all but one were probably Germans (nine Germans, two "barbarians," and one Moor).
4. of the thirty-two marriages, twelve involve Roman males and twenty Roman females. If the nine marriages of the third and sixth centuries are removed, the proportion changes to 17:6 in favour of the females.²⁶
5. although the number of marriages between Romans and Goths increases from the reign of Theodosius I -- a result perhaps both of that Emperor's pro-Gothic policy²⁷ and the subsequent close contacts between the Romans and the Visigoths and, later, the Ostrogoths --, marriages between Romans and Germans in general are fairly evenly spread over the fourth and fifth centuries. If there is any grouping at all, it is around the 360's and 370's. Could this be the result of the Germans introduced by Constantine I and his sons reaching the peak of their careers at this period, so that they or their sons could aspire to marriages with well-connected Romans? Careerism (usually military) over a number of generations is well-attested and needs no particular comment.²⁸ Acculturation, especially of Germans, and even the ultimate absorption of the family are also attested. The marriage of the daughter of Bauto, himself a *trans-rhenanus*,²⁹ to the Emperor Arcadius, and the rise of Stilicho, a second-generation servant of the Empire, to the position of husband of the Emperor Theodosius' adopted daughter and father-in-law of the Emperor Honorius, are the most spectacular examples. Equally impressive is the absorption of the descendants of the Gothic *magister militum* Areobindus, whose grandson married

the daughter of the western Emperor Olybrius (and who was himself briefly hailed Emperor at Constantinople³⁰), and whose great-great-grandson was Areobindus the Patrician, married to Justinian's niece Praiecta and now so thoroughly integrated that Procopius (BV 2.24.2) could characterize him as well-born, a man of the Senate, but of no expertise in war.

That is not to claim that there was no resistance to the barbarians, either in the East or in the West. Hostility, often fuelled by religious differences, is found not only in writings such as the *De Regno* of Synesius with its plea to the Emperor Arcadius to drive out or enslave all the barbarian soldiers, or the racism of Claudian's Gildonic War, but it also appears in a few laws banning the wearing of articles of foreign dress by Romans.³¹ On the other hand, the old and pervasive doctrine of the universalism of Roman power and culture continued to temper such exclusivism (at least in the West),³² and there was a tendency to see similarities, especially with high-ranking and Romanized northern barbarians. Often similarity of religious beliefs acted as the bridge. Thus, Gregory of Nazianzus, in a letter (*Ep.* 136) to the Christian Goth, Modares (*mag. mil.* 380-82), emphasizes that differences between Greek and barbarian are external only, and the pagan Eunapius, who usually expresses strong dislike of barbarians,³³ says of the pagan Goth Fravitta (*Fr.* 60) that he was "a man young in years, but most remarkable of all in his virtue and honesty. He openly declared that he worshipped the gods after the ancient fashion"³⁴

Certainly, whatever the degree of general prejudice that existed against barbarians, there is remarkably little hostile comment upon mixed marriages beyond the complaints of Claudian.³⁵ There is, for instance, no attempt, even on the part of later sources hostile to him, to attack the pedigree of the part-Frank Emperor Theodosius II. There are no suggestions that the marriage between Ataulf and Placidia was null, and when Huneric married Eudocia the Emperor Leo even gave her some of her ancestral property.³⁶ Furthermore, Attila's claim to the hand of Honoria, the sister of Valentinian III, was rejected not on the ground that such a marriage could not exist but that she had been already married to another.³⁷ In all these cases the possibility of a legal marriage seems to have been assumed.

The willingness of the nobility of the late Empire to marry its daughters, and at times its sons, to foreigners appears to be a major departure from the reluctance which the same group had traditionally shown towards such alliances. Times had changed. From the middle of the third century the Empire was more on the defensive, and from the reign of Constantius II diplomacy and the

pursuit of peace were becoming as important as war in defining relations with outside peoples. Moreover, foreigners, especially Germans, were entering the ranks of the nobility via military service. Friendly relations, even marriage alliances, with these men were becoming desirable. From another point of view the development of marriage alliances is not so strange. The Roman family had long supplied a model for formalizing relations with foreigners in the form of the patron-client nexus. This was appropriate when the Roman was clearly the dominant element in the relationship. But when the parties were more equal, marriage, which had always been used to forge links within the nobility, became a more appropriate model.

To a German (or to an Iranian), amongst whose nobility the use of external marriages was not uncommon, such a means of cementing a relationship was natural.³⁸ When Fravitta wished to demonstrate and consolidate his loyalty to the Roman Emperor he asked Theodosius I for a Roman wife. Since the Emperor judged it politic to accede to the request, he agreed, to the joy, so Eunapius (*Fr.* 60) says, of the father of the girl chosen; and if Fravitta did not possess Roman citizenship, the Emperor would probably have conferred it at this point as a gift. From the other side, in the fifth century the Emperor Zeno was quite ready to offer the hand of Juliana, the daughter of Olybrius, to the Ostrogothic king Theoderic.³⁹

The familial model was also extended into adoptions. If Zeno was unable to give Theoderic a Roman wife, he at least adopted him as his son, as Aetius had done earlier for a son of the Frankish king.⁴⁰ This practice, familiar to Romans and non-Romans, on one occasion became a source of major embarrassment, when Justin I felt compelled to reject a proposal from the Persian king Kawad that he adopt his son Khosro in order to protect him for the succession. Initially Justin had been warm to the proposal, but he was persuaded against it for fear of the legal implications for the succession to the imperial throne.⁴¹

In sum: although the data are not extensive, they do seem to indicate that, amongst the upper classes at least, marriages between Romans and barbarians were not rejected in the late Empire. In most cases citizenship and the *ius conubii* would probably have already been conferred as a prerequisite for high military office; where they did not exist they would probably have been given as a gift. To a Roman, as to a German (or an Iranian), such alliances amongst the leaders and their families would have been more than something personal. The marriage of Ataulf and Placidia, accepted as valid by Romans and Visigoths, symbolized a union of Romans and Visigoths that is made explicit by the naming of their son Theodosius and by the often-quoted statement

of Ataulf's that he wished to use the might of Gothia to restore the splendour of Romania.⁴² Similarly, the declaration of Jordanes, that the marriage of Germanus and Matasuntha, by uniting the lines of the Roman noble family of the Anicii and the Ostrogothic royal family of the Amals, bore through its offspring the hopes of both, was not mere wishful thinking, even if it remained unrealized.⁴³ For in late antiquity the nature of rule was still personalized, and the social and familial relationships of the ruling groups carried important implications for the relations of the peoples whom they ruled.⁴⁴

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NOTES

¹ *Ricerche sui conubia tra romani e germani nei secoli IV-VI* (Catania 1965; ed. ampl. 1974).

² *Op. cit.* 81-108, esp. 105 ff. Since Soraci treats fully the earlier (and ample) discussions of this law, I shall not reproduce the bibliography here. For a contrary view, that it was promulgated as a general banning law, see J. Gaudemet, "L'Etranger au bas-empire," in *L'Etranger I. Recueils de la société Jean Bodin IX* (Bruxelles 1958) 223 f.

³ *Ad C.Th.* 3.14.1 (ed. Mommsen): "Nullus Romanorum barbaram cuius libet gentis uxorem habere praesumat, neque barbarorum coniugiis mulieres Romanae in matrimonio coniugantur. Quod si fecerint, noverint se capitali sententia subiacere."

⁴ The appendix is in *op. cit.* 183-205.

⁵ Non-Romans did sometimes adopt Roman names, although unless there is a clear statement that the name was borne by a non-Roman, one cannot, of course, be certain. At times it might have been assumed upon receipt of citizenship (see A.N. Sherwin-White, *The Roman Citizenship* [Oxford 1973] 386-90), although in some cases this was probably not so (e.g. the Alamannic chieftain Serapio, whose name was changed from Agenarich by his father after a stay in Gaul [Ammianus 16.12.25]). Other names, such as Ursicinus, could apparently be German or Roman. For the purpose of this paper I have assumed that, unless

there is clear evidence to the contrary, Roman names indicate Romans and German names Germans.

⁶ If this was the consideration, Soraci should probably have omitted at least the seventh amongst the "di data incerta," Mero (baudes)? - Maxsimin(a). Other marriages are doubtful, especially the first two amongst the "databili", Gallienus - Pipa and Bonosus - Hunila. The first of these is termed *matrimonii specie* by *Epit. de Caes.* 33.1, while the latter is attested only by the unreliable *SHA, Quad. Tyr.* 15.3-7. Soraci also fails to acknowledge the freedom with which Roman Emperors bestowed citizenship upon individuals (see F. Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World* [Oxford 1977] 477-83). If the marriages of Gallienus and Bonosus are historical, the women would have been granted citizenship before marriage, as, in fact, the *SHA (loc. cit.)* says Aurelian did for Hunila. Others could have acquired it in the same way.

⁷ On *barbarus* see *op. cit.* 111-23 (esp. 115 ff.) and on *gentilis, op. cit.* 83-110 (esp. 103-06).

⁸ R.A. MacMullen (*Soldier and Civilian in the Later Roman Empire* [Cambridge, Mass. 1963] 17) points out that not every *gentilis* was a *limitaneus*.

⁹ Th. Mommsen, "Das römische Militärwesen seit Diocletian," *Hermes* 24 (1889) 240 f. (= *Gesch. schr.* VI, 248).

¹⁰ The marriages are listed below. For ownership of property see, e.g. Libanius, *Ep.* 898 (Hellebich, *mag. mil.* 383-88): Theodoret, *Ep.* 18.23 (Areobindus, *mag. mil.* 434-49). Ammianus (15.5.6) says of Silvanus and Malarich, both Franks or of Frankish descent, that they were *homines dicati imperio*. This is usually, and probably correctly, taken to mean something like "dedicated to the Empire" (cf. 17.13.30; 30.10.1). But it is worth noting that Cicero, in *Pro Balbo* 11.28 (a speech known to Ammianus -- cf. 20.2.3 / *Pro Balbo* 25.56; 14.6.5 / *Pro Balbo* 13.31; 25.3.17 / *Pro Balbo* 6.15) *dicatus civitati* is used of Balbus' receipt of Roman citizenship. E. Léotard, *Essai sur la condition des barbares établis dans l'empire romain au IV^e siècle* (Paris 1873), argues that marriages between Romans and non-Romans would have been fairly common (pp. 89-93, with evidence) and that senior German officers would have been given citizenship (pp. 170 f.).

¹¹ *Loc. cit.*

¹² Sherwin-White, *op. cit.* (at n. 5) 311 ff., discusses the example of an African *gentilis* who retained his native obligations after receiving citizenship. The late-Roman evidence on the possession of citizen status is often so vague that confusion is the rule in individual cases. For instance,

M. Waas, *Germanen im römischen Dienst im 4 Jhdt. n. Christ* (Bonn 1965) 47 f., lists the Sarmatian *mag. equ.*, Victor, as an example of a barbarian who married a Roman in the fourth century. This seems inappropriate both on a narrowly legalistic and on a broader view of what a barbarian was. Victor married the daughter of the Saracen queen Mavia. In the broader sense she was just as much a barbarian as he was. Waas, taking the narrow view, says that Mavia's daughter probably received citizenship after the peace of 372 between the Romans and the Saracens. But Victor, who was *mag. equ.* from 363 to about 379, was just as probably a Roman citizen. Thus, depending on the point of view taken, the marriage was likely to have been either barbarian-barbarian or Roman-Roman.

¹³ A fifth-century example is Aegidius, who while *mag. mil.* in Gaul also acted as ruler for eight years (454-62) of the Franks, who had exiled their king Childeric in disgrace (*PLRE* II "Aegidius"). One could expand the list with German and other kings and chiefs of the fifth century (such as Alaric and Theoderic the Ostrogoth) who held Roman military office but were clearly not regarded as Romans.

¹⁴ These examples could be multiplied. But it is important also to note how often the sources soften their reference to national identity by identifying the *magistri* with phrases such as *Vandalorum . . . gentis genere editus* (Orosius, *Adv. Pag.* 7.38.1, of Stilicho) and *ortus barbaris parentibus* (Victor, *Caes.* 42.15, of Silvanus).

¹⁵ Cf. Sherwin-White, *op. cit.* (at n. 5) 451-60, on the cultural implications of citizenship.

¹⁶ Waas, *op. cit.* (at n. 12) 35, in a wider discussion of the socialization of German officers (pp. 33-37), says of Silvanus that for him "war das Reich keine 'Karrriere' mehr, sondern bereits Heimat."

¹⁷ In the following list I have restricted myself to only the necessary references. Where there are many, I have referred to Soraci or to *PLRE*, the second of which has been of great value throughout. Some marriages, which I might have included, I have omitted, for instance that of a certain Silvanus to a woman who might have been a Saracen (*PLRE* II "Silvanus" 8). It will be noted that I ignore the old legalese for non-Roman, *peregrinus*, which in the late Empire had lost its force and now usually denoted a citizen of another city within the Empire (Gaudemet, *art. cit.* [at n. 2] 209-15).

¹⁸ If Magnentius' father was a Briton, he might have been a Roman citizen or one of the non-Roman Brittones. In the first case Magnentius would have been regarded as a barbarian because *conubium* did not exist between his

parents and he took the status of his mother (see J. Bidez, "Amiens, ville natale de l'empereur Magnence," *REA* [1925] 312-18). Zosimus (2.46.3) calls him a *laetus*, a non-citizen status. But this, and other such statements about Magnentius, might reflect hostile propaganda.

¹⁹ J.B. Bury, *A History of the Later Roman Empire from the Death of Theodosius I to the Death of Justinian* (Oxford 1923; rpr. 1958) I, 108.

²⁰ Fravitta should probably be added to Soraci's list of "databili" since it is clear from Eunapius that he had only recently entered the Empire with his followers and thus is unlikely to have yet held an official position in the Roman army, which would have given him citizenship.

²¹ This is assumed by K.F. Stroheker, "Zur Rolle der Heermeister frankischer Abstammung im späten vierten Jahrhundert," *Historia* 4 (1955) 316 ff.

²² See E. Vetter, "Das Grab des Flavius Merobaudes in Trier," *RhM* 103 (1960) 366-72.

²³ T. Kotula, "Firmus, fils de Nubel, était-il usurpateur ou roi des Maures?" *Act. Ant. Hung.* 18 (1970) 137-46.

²⁴ M. Schönfeld, *Wörterbuch der altgermanischen Personen- und Volkernamen* (Heidelberg 1911) s.v. "Alatancus."

²⁵ Sidonius Apollinaris, *Paneg. in Mai.* 203-06 (cf. Merobaudes, *Carm.* 4 17) indicates that the mother of Aetius' son Gaudentius was of the Gothic nobility. This led Loyen ("L'Oeuvre de Flavius Merobaudes et l'histoire de l'occident de 430 à 450," *REA* 74 [1972] 171-73) to conjecture a third wife for Aetius, a daughter of Theoderic I, king of the Visigoths. More likely, Pelagia was the mother of Gaudentius (so F.M. Clover, *Flavius Merobaudes* [Philadelphia 1971] 30 f.).

²⁶ This contrasts with Soraci's sample of 16:15 in favour of Roman women.

²⁷ Discussed by M. Pavan, *La politica gotica di Teodosio nella pubblicistica del suo tempo* (Rome 1964) esp. 14 ff. Eunapius (*Frr.* 55 and 60) and Zosimus (4.30-31; 33.3; 39.4-5; 40) are particularly bitter over what they see as the Emperor's excessive friendliness towards the barbarians.

²⁸ Inevitable, given the large number of barbarian enclaves within the Empire under military control (see R.A. MacMullen, "Barbarian Enclaves in the Northern Roman Empire," *Ant. Class.* 32 [1963] 554 ff.).

²⁹ Ambrose, *Ep.* 24.48.

³⁰ In 512 during an insurrection against Anastasius (Bury, *op. cit.* [at n. 19] I, 439).

³¹ See especially the lines of Claudian, which follow a disquisition upon Gildo's (typically barbarian) lust:

media Carthagine ductore
barbara Sidoniae subeunt conubia matres;
Aethiopem nobis generum, Nasamona maritum
ingerit; exterret cunabula discolor infans.

(*Bell. Gild.* l. 190-93),

and *C.Th.* 14.10.2 and 3 (A.D. 399) and 4 (A.D. 416), which ban the wearing of German dress at Rome. This anti-Germanism is addressed by Soraci, *op. cit.* 7-26.

³² Cf. especially the lines of Prudentius (*Contra Symm.* 613-17):

distantes regione plagae divisaque ponto
litora conveniunt, nunc per commercia et artes
ad coetum celebrem, nunc per genialia fulcra
externi ad ius conubii; nam sanguine mixto
textitur alternis ex gentibus una propago.

Léotard (*op. cit.* [at n. 10] 92) is wrong to use this as evidence for current Roman-barbarian marriages. Prudentius is speaking of the historic growth of Rome through the incorporation of non-Roman peoples within the Empire and the Roman community.

³³ See I. Opelt, "Das Nationalitätenproblem bei Eunapios van Sardes," *Wiener Studien* 3 (1969) 28-38.

³⁴ That Fravitta's paganism was Greco-Roman and not German is clear from *Suda* s.v. φράβιθος, where he is called a Hellene.

³⁵ Quoted at n. 31.

³⁶ Priscus, *Fr.* 30. Ataulf might base his claim to citizenship upon having been *comes domesticorum equitum* under the usurper Attalus (409-10). The titles of his appointees (perhaps as honorifics) may have been later confirmed by Honorius (Sozomen *HE* 9.8 -- the Greek is unclear).

³⁷ Priscus, *Fr.* 15.

³⁸ For Germans the best example is the family of the Ostrogoth Theoderic. One of his sisters married the Vandal king Thrasamund; his second wife was a sister of the Frankish king Clovis; two of his daughters married the Burgundian king Sigismund and the Visigoth Alaric II: and his niece married the Thuringian king Herminifrid (*PLRE* II "Theodericus" 7 and stemmata 37 and 38). For Persians

see Priscus, *Fr.* 33 (proposed marriage between a sister of Firuz and the ruler of the Kidarites) and Procopius, *BP* 1.6.10 (Kawad marries a daughter of the ruler of the Ephthalites).

³⁹ Malchus, *Fr.* 16. The offer was refused, and Juliana later married Fl. Areobindus (no. 25 in my list of marriages).

⁴⁰ Jordanes, *Get.* 289 (adoption of Theoderic, cf. Malchus, *Fr.* 17). Priscus, *Fr.* 16 (adoption of the son of the Frankish king). Thus they would have become Roman citizens, though Theoderic probably already was, since he had held the post of *mag. mil.*

⁴¹ Theophanes, *Chron. a.m.* 6013; Zonaras 14.5.22-23. The report is usually accepted (cf. A. Christensen, *L'Iran sous les Sassanides* [2nd ed., Copenhagen 1944] 355).

⁴² Orosius, *Adv. Pag.* 7.43.5-7; Olympiodorus, *Fr.* 26.

⁴³ Jordanes, *Get.* 314: "in quo [i.e. their son Germanus] coniuncta Aniciorum genus cum Amali stirpe spem adhuc utriusque generi domino praestante promittit." On the propagandistic aspect of this statement in the context of the Romano-Ostrogothic conflict, see A. Momigliano, "Cassiodorus and the Culture of his Time," *Proc. Brit. Acad.* 41 (1955) 207-45. The great-grandson of the union was the Germanus who was offered the imperial throne towards the end of Maurice's reign (Theophylactus Simocatta 8,9-10). That the marriage of Huneric and Eudocia was regarded by the Vandals as having political overtones is indicated both by the interference of Gaiseric in the succession of the Western Empire (Priscus, *Fr.* 29; John of Antioch, *Fr.* 204) and the message of conciliation sent later to the eastern Emperor Zeno by Huneric when he had succeeded his father (Malchus, *Fr.* 13).

⁴⁴ Personal contact was always important. One thinks of the venerable Roman policy of taking noble hostages and educating them in the Roman manner. Other peoples acted similarly. The Sassanian royal house at times sent its favoured sons to be brought up elsewhere in safety. For instance, the son of Yezdegerd I, Vararanes, was brought up by the Lakhmid Naaman I, the ruler of the Arabs allied to Persia, circa 400-circa 418 (Th. Nöldeke, *Geschichte der Perser und Araber zur Zeit des Sasaniden, aus der arabischen Chronik des Tabari* [Leyden 1879] 79 ff.). Under such circumstances the story in Procopius (*BP* 1.2.1-10) that Yezdegerd, at the request of the Emperor Arcadius, acted as guardian of the infant Emperor Theodosius II may or may not be a fable, as most modern scholars take it to be. But at the time it was probably quite plausible.