

Universitatea „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași
Facultatea de Istorie • Centrul de Studii Clasice și Creștine

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FACULTATEA DE ISTORIE
CENTRUL DE STUDII CLASICE ȘI CREȘTINE

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2026

Convegno Internazionale (XIV Convegno romeno-italiano)
Crisi e declino nell'antichità greco-romana
(Iași, 17-19 settembre 2025)

a cura di

Nelu ZUGRAVU

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ISIDOR DE SEVILLA, *Etimologii. XIII-XIV*, ediție bilingvă, ediție îngrijită, traducere din limba latină, studiu introductiv, cronologie și note de Anca CRIVĂȚ, Editura Polirom, Iași, 2025 (*Nelu ZUGRAVU*) / 389; Catherine NIXEY, *Erezie. Isus Cristos și ceilalți fii ai lui Dumnezeu*, traducere din limba engleză de Radu CUCUTEANU, Editura Humanitas, București, 2025 (*Alexandru Eusebie TOMIUC*) / 393; Peter BROWN, *Augustin de Hippona. O biografie*, traducere din limba engleză de Ionela GANEA și Cristian STOICA, Editura Polirom, Iași, 2025 (*Ștefan PUȘCAȘU*) / 397; Peter HEATHER, John RAPLEY, *De ce se prăbușesc imperiile. Roma, America și viitorul Occidentului*, traducere de Alexandru CORMOȘ, Editura Litera, București, 2025 (*Alecsandru VOICU*) / 401

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SIGLE ȘI ABREVIERI / SIGLE E ABBREVIAZIONI*

<i>ActaMN</i>	<i>Acta Musei Napocensis</i> , Cluj-Napoca.
<i>BHAC</i>	<i>Bonner Historia-Augusta-Colloquium</i> , Bonn.
<i>BHL</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina</i> , Bruxelles.
<i>EDR</i>	<i>Epigraphic Database Rome</i> .
<i>EDCS</i>	Epigraphische Datenbank Claus-Slaby, Eichstätt-Ingolstadt.
<i>EN</i>	<i>Ephemeris Napocensis</i> , Cluj-Napoca.
<i>FHDR</i> , II	<i>Fontes ad historiam Dacoromaniae pertinentes</i> , II, <i>De la anul 300 până la anul 1000</i> , București, 1970.
<i>MGH</i>	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica</i> .
<i>Occidente/Oriente</i>	<i>Occidente/Oriente. Rivista internazionale di studi tardoantichi</i> , Pisa-Roma.
<i>PIR</i>	<i>Prosopographie chrétienne du Bas-Empire</i> , éd. par A. Mandouze et al., 4 voll., Paris-Rome 1982-2013.
<i>PLRE</i> , I	<i>The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire</i> , I, A.D. 260-395, by A. H. M. Jones, J. R. Martindale, J. Morris, Cambridge, 1971.
<i>RE</i>	<i>Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> .
<i>RIC</i>	<i>The Roman Imperial Coinage</i> .
<i>RRMAM</i>	D. French, <i>Roman Roads and Milestones of Asia Minor</i> , Vol. III, British Institute at Ankara, 2012-2016.
<i>SCIVA</i>	<i>Studii și Cercetări de Istorie Veche și Arheologie</i> , București.
<i>TD</i>	<i>Thraco-Dacica</i> , București.
<i>ThLL</i>	<i>Thesaurus linguae Latinae</i> .

* Cu excepția celor din *L'Année Philologique* și *L'Année Épigraphique* / Escluse quelle segnalate da *L'Année Philologique* e *L'Année Épigraphique*.



UNIVERSITATEA
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din IAȘI



Centrul de Studii
Clasice și Creștine



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ISTORIE

CONVEGNO INTERNAZIONALE

(XIV CONVEGNO ROMENO-ITALIANO)

COLOCVIU INTERNAȚIONAL

(AL XIV-LEA COLOCVIU ROMÂNNO-ITALIAN)

CRISI E DECLINO NELL'ANTICHITÀ
GRECO-ROMANA

CRIZĂ ȘI DECLIN ÎN ANTICHITATEA
GRECO-ROMANĂ

IAȘI

17-19 SETTEMBRE / SEPTEMBRIE 2025

SALA H, FACULTATEA DE ISTORIE





**CONVEGNO INTERNAZIONALE
(XIV CONVEGNO ROMENO-ITALIANO)
*Crisi e declino nell'antichità greco-romana***

**INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM
(XIV ROMANIAN-ITALIAN COLLOQUIUM)
*Crisis and Decline in Greco-Roman Antiquity***

**COLLOQUE INTERNATIONAL
(XIV COLLOQUE ROUMAIN-ITALIEN)
*Crise et déclin dans l'Antiquité gréco-romaine***

**COLOCVIU INTERNAȚIONAL
(AL XIV-LEA COLOCVIU ROMÂNNO-ITALIAN)
*Criză și declin în antichitatea greco-romană***

**Iași, 17-19 settembre / septembrie 2025
Sala H₁ (Facoltà di Storia / Facultatea de Istorie)**

Organizzatori / Organizatori

**Nelu ZUGRAVU, Roxana-Gabriela CURCĂ
(PN-IV-P1-PCE-2023-1560)**

**COLOCVIU FINANȚAT DE PRIMĂRIA MUNICIPIULUI IAȘI
PRIN H.C.L. NR. 98/27.03.2025**

PROGRAMMA / PROGRAM

Mercoledì / Miercuri, 17 settembre / septembrie 2025

13.45-14.00

Moderatore / Moderator:

Nelu ZUGRAVU

13.45-14.00: Saluti istituzionali e introduzione ai lavori / Salutul organizatorilor Mihai CHIRICA, Primarul Municipiului Iași / Sindaco del Comune di Iași Liviu MAHA, Rectorul Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași / Rettore dell’Università «Alexandru Ioan Cuza» di Iași Lucrețiu-Ion BÎRLIBA, Decanul Facultății de Istorie, Universitatea „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași / Preside della Facoltà di Storia, Università «Alexandru Ioan Cuza» di Iași Nelu ZUGRAVU, Directorul Centrului de Studii Clasice și Creștine, Facultatea de Istorie, Universitatea „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași / Direttore del Centro di Studi Classici e Cristiani, Facoltà di Storia, Università «Alexandru Ioan Cuza» di Iași

14.00-14.45

Moderatore / Moderator:

Roxana-Gabriela CURCĂ

14.00-14.30: Relazione inaugurale / Comunicare inaugurală: Anne VIAL-LOGEAY, *Décadence de Rome, crise(s), ou phénomène cyclique ? Quelques observations sur l’Histoire naturelle de Pline l’Ancien*

14.30-14.45: Discussioni / Discuții

14.45-15.00: Pausa / Pauză

15.00-17.00

Moderatore / Moderator:

Dumitru Dănuț APARASCHIVEI

15.00-15.30: Lucrețiu-Ion BÎRLIBA, *La cohors III Collecta : origine et rôle stratégique*

15.30-16.00: Roxana-Gabriela CURCĂ, *L’épigraphie honorifique latine durant la crise en Mésie Inférieure* (PN-IV-P1-PCE-2023-1560)

16.00-16.30 (RO) / 15.00-15.30 (ES): M.a Pilar GONZÁLEZ-CONDE PUENTE, *Les témoignages épigraphiques de Trebonianus Gallus et Volusianus en Hispanie* (online)

16.30-17.00: Discussioni / Discuții

17.00-17.15: Pausa caffè / Pauză de cafea

17.15-18.30

Moderatore / Moderator:

Lucrețiu-Ion BÎRLIBA

17.15-17.45: Dan MATEI, *The reuse of lithic spolia in the interventions to the structures of the castra from Dacia in the period of the “military anarchy” (AD 235 - the Aurelianic retreat)*

17.45-18.15: Dumitru Dănuț APARASCHIVEI, *Crisis and decline of urban life in the border province of Scythia. The case of the city of Ibida*

18.15-18.45: Miguel Pablo SANCHO GÓMEZ, *The Roman army of Aurelian and Probus in the Historia Augusta*

18.45-19.00: Discussioni / Discuții

19.00: Cena / Cina

Giovedì / Joi, 18 settembre / septembrie 2025

9.00-10.15

Moderatore / Moderator:

Immacolata ERAMO

9.00-9.30: Dragoș HĂLMAGI, *Civic crisis and private aid: revisiting the epigraphic evidence on shortages and loans in Hellenistic Istros* (online)

9.30-10.00: Giusto TRAINA, *The Mithridatic crisis*

10.00-10.15: Discussioni / Discuții

10.15-10.30: Pausa caffè / Pauză de cafea

10.30-12.30

Moderatore / Moderator:

Luigi PIACENTE

10.30-11.00: Nelu ZUGRAVU, «*Cuncta ad extremum reciderant*»: *retorica della crisi nelle fonti latine tardoantiche*

11.00-11.30: Beatrice GIROTTI, *Lessico della resilienza: restitutor*

11.30-12.00: Manuela MONGARDI, *Magnia Urbica: l'ultima “Soldatenkaiserin”*

12.00-12.30: Discussioni / Discuții

12.30-15.00: Pausa pranzo / Pauză de prânz

15.00-16.15

Moderatore / Moderator:

Giusto TRAINA

15.00-15.30: Immacolata ERAMO, *La crisi dopo Adrianopoli: strategie narrative*

15.30-16.00: Antonella BRUZZONE, *Dal Cosmos al Chaos. Lo spettro della catastrofe in Claudiano*

16.00-16.15: Discussioni / Discuții

16.15-16.30: Pausa caffè / Pauză de cafea

16.30-18.30

Moderatore / Moderator:

Juan Ramón CARBÓ GARCÍA

16.30-17.00: Dan DEAC, *Isism after the Severans in the Danubian-Balkan region of the Roman world*

17.00-17.30: Sorin NEMETI, *Religious Strategies in an Age of Anxiety. Votive Dedications from Roman Dacia from the time of Barrack Emperors*

17.30-18.00: Moisés ANTIQUEIRA, *Accompanied by the gods: Diana and Hercules on the imperial coinage of Aemilian (253)* (online)

18.00-18.30: Discussioni / Discuții

18.30: Cena / Cina

Venerdì / Vineri, 19 settembre / septembrie 2025

9.00-10.45

Moderatore / Moderator:

Miguel Pablo SANCHO GÓMEZ

9.00-9.30: Lucian MUNTEANU, *Monetary “crises” in the Roman world and coin finds from Barbaricum. The case of Western Moldavia (Romania) in the first half of the 3rd century*

9.30-10.00: Juan Ramón CARBÓ GARCÍA, *Ignorantia de barbaris. Complacency, boast-fulness and security in the Roman worldview in the face of the new bordering peoples in the mid-third century A.D.: from contempt to bewilderment*

10.00-10.30: Florica MIHUȚ-BOHÎLȚEA, *The decline of personal freedom in Tacitus’ Annals thought the testamentary practices* (online)

10.30-10.45: Discussioni / Discuții

10.45-11.00: Pausa caffè / Pauză de cafea

11.00-12.15

Moderatore / Moderator:

Claudia-Dorina TĂRNAUCEANU

11.00-11.30: Emanuel GROSU, *Do ut des: la crisi della fede. Il patto col diavolo o l'estremo pragmatismo di un principio giuridico nel poema Lapsus et conversio Theophili vicedomini (Hrotsvita di Gandersheim, X secolo)*

11.30-12.00: Rino MODONUTTI, *Il declino della latinità classica nella riflessione dei primi Umanisti: il caso di Sicco Polenton*

12.00-12.15: Discussioni / Discuții

12.15-12.30 : Pausa / Pauză

12.30-13.00

Moderatore / Moderator:

Nelu ZUGRAVU

Presentazioni libri

Luigi PIACENTE presenta: MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO, *Hortensius sive de philosophia. Hortensius sau despre filosofie*, a cura di Constantin-Ionuț MIHAI, Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași, 2025

Flavian-Pavel CHILCOȘ presenta: CLAUDIU-COSTEL LUCA, *Cronologia istoriei Romei în istoriografia latină păgână din a doua jumătate a secolului al IV-lea*, Editura PIM, Iași, 2024

Emanuel GROSU presenta: Claudio LEONARDI *et al.*, *Literatura latină medievală (secolele VI-XV). Un manual*, traduzione e edizione in lingua rumena a cura di Emanuel GROSU, Editura Polirom, Iași, 2025

14.30-14.45

Nelu ZUGRAVU

Conclusioni e chiusura lavori / Concluzii; închiderea colocviului



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THOMAS COLE, *THE COURSE OF EMPIRE* (1836): *THE CONSUMMATION OF EMPIRE, DESTRUCTION*

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IGNORANTIA DE BARBARIS. COMPLACENCY, BOASTFULNESS AND SECURITY IN THE ROMAN WORLDVIEW IN THE FACE OF THE NEW BORDERING PEOPLES IN THE MID-THIRD CENTURY A.D.: FROM CONTEMPT TO BEWILDERMENT

Juan Ramón CARBÓ GARCÍA*
(Universidad Católica de Murcia)

Keywords: *Goths, Getae, Dacians, otherness, barbarians, identities, Roman mentality.*

Abstract: *In the 3rd century AD, new barbarian peoples appeared on the frontiers of the Roman Empire. They pressed to establish themselves within the territories controlled by Rome, thus escaping the pressure they themselves were receiving from other peoples. This was a test of adaptation for the traditionally conservative Roman mentality. We will analyze the case of the Goths in Dacia and the administrative and military abandonment of this province by Emperor Aurelian. Then we will be able to see how the Roman attitude evolved from the complacency, boastfulness and sense of security so common in the Roman worldview to a total sense of bewilderment. To deal with this situation, the Roman sources investigated their origins and, by confusing and assimilating them with those of the ancient Getae and Dacians, they laid the foundations for a phenomenon of confusion and appropriation of long-lasting identities. From the 4th century onwards, this reached different geographical areas and political and cultural realities in the European sphere.*

Cuvinte-cheie: *goți, geți, daci, alteritate, barbari, identități, mentalitate romană.*

Rezumat: *Ignoranția de barbaris. Autosuficiență, lăudăroșenie și sentimentul de siguranță în viziunea romană asupra lumii în fața noilor populații de la granițe la mijlocul secolului al III-lea d.Hr.: de la dispreț la nedumerire. În secolul al III-lea d.Hr., noi populații barbare au apărut la frontierele Imperiului Roman. Ele au încercat să se stabilească în teritoriile controlate de Roma, scăpând astfel de presiunea exercitată asupra lor de alte popoare. Aceasta a reprezentat un test de adaptare pentru mentalitatea romană tradițional*

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conservatoare. Vom analiza cazul goșilor din Dacia și abandonarea administrativă și militară a acestei provincii de către împăratul Aurelian. Apoi vom putea observa cum atitudinea romană a evoluat de la autosuficiență, lăudăroșenie și sentiment de siguranță, atât de caracteristice viziunii romane asupra lumii, la o stare profundă de nedumerire. Pentru a face față acestei situații, sursele romane le-au investigat originile și, confundându-le și asimilându-le cu cele ale vechilor geți și daci, au pus bazele unui fenomen de confuzie și de însușire a unor identități de lungă durată. Începând cu secolul al IV-lea, acest fenomen s-a extins în diferite spații geografice și realități politice și culturale din sfera europeană.

1. Introduction

In the mid-third century AD, Imperial Rome had to face the first serious attacks by many so-called and considered barbarian peoples. Of course, there were others, centuries earlier – *Galli, Cimbri, Teutones* –, but the essential point is that these barbarians from the third century were new peoples to the Romans, who lacked information about them and were therefore caught off guard. Among them, the Goths stood out, subsuming and dragging other peoples already settled in the northern reaches of the Empire into their confrontation with Rome.

Rome had always shown open contempt for the northern barbarians, inheriting this supremacist cultural trait from the Greeks without changing it in the slightest. Since the end of the 2nd century BC, Roman writers had been expressing an attitude opposed to migratory peoples and invaders in general, characterising them as uncivilised and comparing them to wild beasts. They were not even considered worthy of study in history. And several centuries would still have to pass, until the 5th century AD, before this perspective acquired positive elements of value from a religious, human and social organisational point of view. The emergence of a Latin historiography dedicated to the study and description of the various barbarian kingdoms established in the territories that formerly belonged to the Roman Empire did not occur until the fall of the Western Empire itself. The focus of interest was placed on the names of the villages, their meaning and their identification, while the objective was the acceptance and historiographical legitimisation of these settlements¹. However, the situa-

¹ Walter Pohl, *Identität und Widerspruch: Gedanken zu einer Sinngeschichte des Frühmittelalters*, in W. Pohl (ed.), *Die Suche nach den Ursprüngen. Von der Bedeutung des frühem Mittelalters*, Wien, Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2004, 23-36.

tion in the 5th century AD was not the same as it had been in the mid-3rd century, when those barbarian peoples were on the other side of the Rhine and the Danube, or north of Hadrian's Wall in Britain, and they did not disturb the peaceful life of the Empire: Romans lived complacently in their *Pax Romana*. Their worldview of the Roman ecumene was close to boastfulness and absolute security, all of which is well described in the preface of Appian's *Roman History*². Consequently, it should come as no surprise that the Romans were so ignorant about the barbarian peoples, their origins, their movements, their idiosyncrasies, their cultures, or the different degrees of development they had achieved in military and other fields.

Rome knew nothing of the Goths, who by then were already a military power. It also had to contend with a confederation of Franks and Alamanni. And the situation was a new reality because the attacks by those barbarian peoples were not aimed at conquering Roman territory, the only purpose Rome could understand for wars. Rather they pretended to settle within the Empire's borders without disputing Roman ownership, or obtaining booty from attacks on Roman communities located in those same border areas. Certainly, this new reality was disconcerting.

From the year 238 onwards, the Goths began to make their presence felt on the shores of the Black Sea. This *de facto* event marked a breach of the Danubian-Pontic frontier for what was to come, penetrating as far as Asia Minor and the Aegean, which were sacked as soon as 253 and later³. Trebonianus Gallus was forced to make a pact with them after their incursion into the lower Danube⁴. But pressure soon mounted again, and the Empire was threatened, not only by the Goths, but also by the Jazyges, Roxolani, Asdingi Vandals, Sarmatians and Alamanni, who were closing in on Illyria and Gaul. Between 266 and 268, the Goths and Heruli attacked the Balkan Peninsula and pillaged various cities, including Athens itself⁵. When the Vandals threatened

² Appian, *Roman History*, Preface, 7.

³ Jordanes, *Getica*, XX, 107.

⁴ I. E. S. Edwards, A. Bowman, P. Garnsey, A. Cameron, *The Cambridge Ancient History: Volume 12, The Crisis of Empire, AD 193-337*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1970, 38.

⁵ Moschonas, Nikos, Η τοπογραφία της Αθήνας στη βυζαντινή και μεταβυζαντινή εποχή [The topography of Athens during the Byzantine and post-Byzantine period]. In Eleni Grammatikopoulou (ed.), *Αρχαιολογία της πόλης των Αθηνών: Επιστημονικές*

even the Italian Peninsula, as did the Alamanni, Aurelian found it necessary to wall up the Urbs itself⁶. The previous complacency, boasting and sense of security had given way to confusion and, finally, fear. Nothing, not even the capital of the Empire, was safe from danger.

Although Aurelian was able to defeat the Juthungi Alamanni in the north of the Italian Peninsula in 270 – after the Romans were inflicted a severe defeat at Placentia – and defeated the rest of the Alamanni in Pannonia in the same year⁷, the Empire lost some territories along the way: the *Agri Decumates* became a no man's land until around the turn of the century, when they finally fell under the control of the barbarians; and in 271, the same year that construction began on the wall around Rome, Aurelian ordered the withdrawal of the Roman administration and army from Dacia, after it had existed as a Roman province – or various provinces – for almost 170 years⁸.

2. *Romans' lack of knowledge about the Goths*

The difference between Visigoths and Ostrogoths probably dates back to the early 3rd century, but it remains difficult to pinpoint, and the historiographical problem remains open. In any case, the Visigoths settled west of the Black Sea, while the Ostrogoths settled to the north. Thus, the Visigoths settled in the forested regions between the Dniester and Danube rivers, in the eastern Carpathians and the plains of what is now Wallachia, but they also occupied territories in Dacia, around the upper reaches of the Mures River. When the Roman army and administration withdrew from Dacia, the western borders of the Visigothic territory possibly reached as far as the Apuseni Mountains. From that time onwards, the Visigothic and Ostrogothic territories were referred to in sources as *Gothia*, and Emperor Aurelian recognized their possession of those territories⁹. The settlement of the Visi-

επιμορφωτικές διαλέξεις [*Archaeology of the City of Athens: Scientific-educational lectures*]. Athens, National Research Foundation, 1996, 137-156.

⁶ Aurelius Victor, *De Caesaribus*, 35, 7.

⁷ Zosimus, 1, 48f.; Eutropius, IX; Dexippus, FGrH IIA 460 F7; *SHA, Aur.*, XXI, 1-3 and XVIII, 2.

⁸ Watson, Alaric, *Aurelian and the Third Century*, London, Routledge, 1999, 284-286.

⁹ The situation in the Dacian provinces worsened from the middle of the 3rd century AD onwards, and between 253 and 268 there was a sharp decline in the supply of coins, which has been interpreted as a loss of imperial control over the province

goths in the same geographical area that the Getae had occupied long before – and also the Dacians, with whom they had been identified in some sources – probably led to the phonetic identification between Getae and Goths. Nevertheless, the term *Gothia* referred to all the territories occupied by the Visigoths and Ostrogoths together¹⁰.

The Romans' lack of knowledge about the Goths was compounded by their poor geographical comprehension. Awareness of geography in Late Antiquity, as later transmitted in the Early Middle Ages, was based on an imperfect and clearly incomplete understanding of ancient geographers such as Strabo, Pomponius Mela, and Ptolemy, due to the intermediation of authors such as Solinus, Marcianus Capella, and Paulus Orosius. The real or mythical peoples of Scythia were displaced northwards and acquired the characteristics of the Nordic peoples – barbaric, strong, large in size... – and this action did not remain without effect in the geographical sphere, where the confusion created would develop even further in the Middle Ages based on the statements made by Orosius and repeated by Isidore of Seville, thereby doubling the supposed authority of this information¹¹.

Orosius's map of the world shows the territories and peoples of the Lower Danube and the Ukrainian steppes located in the northern

during the reign of Gallienus. See Cristian Găzdac, *Monetary circulation in Dacia and the provinces from the middle and lower Danube from Trajan to Constantine I (AD 106-337)*, Cluj-Napoca, Mega Publishing House, 2003, 106. Aurelius Victor (22-23) and Orosius (VII, 22, 7) confirm this assumption. Eutropius (9, 8), Rufius Festus (8) and Jordanes (*Romana*, 217) speak rather of the loss of territory under Gallienus, followed by a final retreat in the time of Aurelian. This is recorded in the *Historia Augusta*, where it is noted that in the face of fierce barbarian attacks in Illyricum and Moesia, Aurelian rejected the possibility of retaining Dacia as a province within the Empire, abandoning it definitively around 271 AD. All ancient literary sources on the abandonment of Dacia in Dan Ruscu, *Provincia Dacia în istoriografia antică*, Cluj-Napoca, Nereamia Napocae, 2003, 162-233; *Idem*, *L'abandon de la Dacie romane dans les sources littéraires (I)*, *AMN*, 35/1, 1998, 235-254; *Idem*, *L'abandon de la Dacie romane dans les sources littéraires (II)*, *AMN*, 37/1, 2000, 265-275. Some authors emphasise the idea of recovering territory in Dacia after a certain degree of abandonment during the reign of Gallienus and before the general retreat ordered by Aurelian. See i.e. Doina Benea, *Dacia sud-vestică în secolele III-IV*, Timișoara, Editura de Vest, 1996, 22.

¹⁰ Constantin C. Petolescu, *Varia Daco-Romana (VI): Confuzia între geți și goți în antichitatea târzie*, *TD*, 4, 1983, 147-149 (cit. 149).

¹¹ Juan Ramón Carbó García, *Apropiaciones de la Antigüedad. De getas, godos, Reyes Católicos, yugos y flechas, Anejos de la Revista de Historiografía III*, Madrid, Instituto de Historiografía "Julio Caro Baroja" – Dykinson, 2015, 56.

most part of Europe, so that he called the Northern Ocean the *Sarmaticus Oceanus*, on whose shores, from east to west, lay Alania – the territory of the Alans – *Dacia ubi et Gothia* – identifying the Getae, Dacians and Goths – and Germania. But, of course, Orosius is referring to the north of the Roman Empire, not northern Europe, which at that time was nothing more than a somewhat abstract concept of what lay beyond the Roman ecumene. But in the period after Orosius – Isidore of Seville follows him point by point, adding some details – and especially in the Middle Ages, it would become a total equivalence that would condition all geographical knowledge of northern Europe¹². For example, literature from the classical period included the notion that the Dacians were related to the Getae, or even that they were the same people, but with slight differences, including their name. This conception would be passed on to authors of Late Antiquity and later to those of the medieval period, especially in their identification of the Danes (*Dani*) and Dacia with Denmark (*Dania*)¹³.

Thus, in a process whose first manifestations can be found in the 4th century, the Goths were identified with the ancient Getae and Dacians due to confusion arising from ignorance. The primary causes could be found in the forced phonetic similarity of the two names: *Gothi* and *Getae*; but also in the aforementioned geographical and historical reasons. They had nothing in common, apart from being barbarian peoples and having occupied, albeit in very different periods, the northern territory of the lower Danube and the Carpathians, which in previous centuries had been the territory of the Getae and Dacians. However, the term *Getae* began to be used in Late Antiquity as a poetic name for the Goths for many centuries, while for historians it became the ancient name for the Goths¹⁴.

¹² Leake, Jane Acomb, *The Geats of Beowulf. A Study in the Geographical Mythology of the Middle Ages*, Madison-Milwaukee-London, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1967, maps between 68 and 69.

¹³ Carbó García, Juan Ramón, *Apropiaciones de la Antigüedad. De getas, godos, Reyes Católicos, yugos y flechas, Anejos de la Revista de Historiografía III*, Madrid, Instituto de Historiografía “Julio Caro Baroja” – Dykinson, 2015, 91-92.

¹⁴ Some direct or indirect previous studies on the confusion between Getas and Goths: H. Von Sybel, *Zu dem Aufsatz: Geten und Gothen*, *Zeitschrift für Geschichte*, 7, 1847, 288-296; K. K. Klein, *Die Gothen-Geten-Daken-Sachsengleichung in der Sprachentwicklung der Deutschen Siebenbürgens*, *Südost-Forschungen*, 11, 1946-1952, 84-154; Jane Acomb Leake, *The Geats of Beowulf. A Study in the Geographical Mythology of the Middle Ages*, Madison-Milwaukee-London, The Univer-

As we have already said, Roman writers of the fourth century AD expressed an attitude opposed to invading peoples in general. They characterised them as uncivilised ones, comparing them to wild beasts. If the image that remained of the Getae and Dacians in the final centuries of Antiquity was that of barbarians exalted for their heroism, nobility and moral virtues, at the same time, being confused with the Scythians, they also had a negative side, that of the “true barbarians”: hairy – *hirsute* –, dressed in furs – *pelliti* –, unkempt – *intonsi* –, etc.; and these attributes would also be passed on to the Goths by Late Antiquity writers. To begin with, Claudian uses the adjectives *pellitus* and *criniger* to refer to the fact that they were dressed in skins and had long hair¹⁵. Later, Rutilius Namatianus, Sidonius Apollinaris and Ennodius also use the term *pellitus*¹⁶.

3. *The identification between the Getae and the Goths*

Possibly the first Greek-speaking author to reflect the identification between the Getae and the Goths is Eusebius of Caesarea, at the beginning of the 4th century. In the *Constantine's speech to the assembly of the saints*, he mentions the death of Emperor Decius in the battle of Abritus, against the invading Goths in 251 AD. And he refers to them as Getae. The territory, northeast of Bulgaria, if referred to as Scythia: «... when you have fallen with your entire army on the Scythian plains, leading the highly decorated Roman troops to battle against the Getae»¹⁷. However, when he refers in his *Chronicle* to the attacks by the Goths in the Black Sea, Asia Minor and Greece, he does use the correct identification as *Gothos*¹⁸.

sity of Wisconsin Press, 1967; J. Svennung, *Zur Geschichte des Goticismus*, Upsala, 1967; R. Iordache, *La confusion “Gètes-Goths” dans la “Getica” de Jordanes*, in *Corollas philologicas in honorem J. Guillén Cabañero*, Salamanca, 1983, 317-337 (= *Helmantica*, 34, 1983, 317-331); Constantin C. Petolescu, *op. cit.*, 147-149; Juan Ramón Carbó García, *Godos y getas en la historiografía de la Tardoantigüedad y del Medievo: un problema de identidad y de legitimación socio-política*, *SHHA*, 22, 2004, 179-206; *Idem*, *Apropiaciones de la Antigüedad...*

¹⁵ Claud., *De Bell. Goth.*, 481.

¹⁶ Rut. Namat., *De Reditu*, II, 49; Sid. Apoll., *Paneg. Avit.*, 219 y 349, y *Paneg. Maiorianus*, 563; Magnus Felix Ennodius, *Vita Epifani*, 67.

¹⁷ Euseb., *Κωνσταντινος τω των αγιων συλλογω*, 24, 1 (*FHDR*, II, 17).

¹⁸ Euseb., *Chronicon*, 220, 25 (*FHDR*, II, 10).

Emperor Julian is considered by other scholars to be the first to identify the Getae and the Goths in some of his writings, although in other parts he uses the term Getae correctly to refer to the Dacians. Given his deep admiration for all Greek things and his extensive rhetorical education, it is not surprising that he would have written about the Getae when referring to a victory over the Goths: «But your mother, while in accordance with our laws she kept pure and unsullied those ties of kinship, was actually the daughter of one emperor, the wife of another, the sister of a third, and the mother not of one emperor but of several. Of these one aided your father in his war against the tyrants; another conquered the Getae and secured for us a lasting peace with them». Certainly, he refers to Constantine II, who in 332 AD obtained the *Gothicus* title¹⁹. However, as we were saying, he uses the correct application of the term in a satirical dialogue when he puts the following words into the mouth of Trajan, conqueror of the Dacians, in a fictional speech by him: «We have destroyed the nation of the Getae, the most warlike people in the world, not only because of their physical courage, but also because of the beliefs introduced by Zalmoxis, whom they honour. Believing that they do not die, but only change the place where they live, they are more willing to face death than others are to travel»²⁰.

Another early testimony from the 4th century is a passage from the *Historia Augusta* in the biography dedicated to Emperor Caracalla: «When he took the names *Germanicus*, *Parthicus*, *Arabicus*, and *Alamannicus* (because he had defeated the Alamanni), it is said that Helvius Pertinax, son of Pertinax, said mockingly: ‘Add, if you please, also that of *Geticus Maximus*,’ because he had killed his brother Geta, and the Goths, whom he defeated in some unexpected battles on his way to the East, are also called Getae»²¹. This particular testimony is especially revealing, as it refers to the specific fact that confusion in the naming and identification of Goths and Getae was commonplace. However, attributing this phrase to Helvius Pertinax at the beginning

¹⁹ Julian., *Paneg. Const.*, 9D (FHDR, II, 30).

²⁰ Julian., *De Caes.*, 327 D (FHDR, II, 30).

²¹ *SHA, M. Ant.*, 10, 5-6 (FHDR, II, 100): *Nam cum Germanici et Parthici et Arabici et Alamannici nomen adscriberet (nam Alamannorum gentem devicerat), Helvius Pertinax, filius Pertinacis, dicitur ioco dixisse : ‘Adde, si placet, etiam Geticus Maximus’, quod Getam occiderat fratrem et Gothi Getae dicerentur, quos ille, dum ad orientem transit, tumultuariis proeliis devicerat.*

of the 3rd century seems too early in terms of the identification with the Goths, in what appears to be yet another example of the unreliability of the *Historia Augusta* and, most likely, a later construction, rather typical of the period in which the work was written. In any case, it does not hide the equally later confusion between the ancient Getae and the newly arrived Goths.

The Latin poet and rhetorician Ausonius wrote in his *Epigrammata* a eulogy to Emperor Gratian in which there is a reference to the Getae, mixed with the Sauromatae and the Huns, in a context referring to the Goths. When the Emperor Gratian managed to contain them together with Theodosius, between 379 and 383 AD, Ausonius refers to the Getic Mars²².

In two of the speeches by the statesman, philosopher and rhetorician Themistius, we can again detect the confusion between the Getae, Goths and Scythians when he refers to the Goth Athanaric as a Scythian ruler or Getae chieftain²³. Or when he again refers to the Goths as Getae when recounting the military successes of Gratian: «...They have repelled the Germani, terrorised the Achaemenids (the Persians), prevailed over the Getae and the Sarmatians, and established a brilliant peace from ridge to ridge among all the peoples of the lands between them...»²⁴.

The Christian bishop Epiphanius of Salamis, considered one of the Fathers of the Church, also uses the term *Geta* on one occasion in his *Adversus haereses* to refer to the Goths. But in all other cases he uses the term *Goth* correctly, placing them in the Scythian region²⁵.

Also within the framework of these testimonies from the late 4th century AD we can find several examples in the writings of the Latin poet Claudius Claudianus. The first is related to Theodosius I's campaigns against the Goths in 391 AD: «I have also stained the Odrysian Hebro with Getae blood»²⁶. The second, to Stilicho's victory over the Goths in 405-406 AD, whom he calls *Geticae catervae*, and referring

²² Auson., *Epigram.*, XXVI, 5-10: *Bellandi fandique potens Augustus honorem bus meret, ut geminet titulos, qui proelia Musis temperat et Geticum moderatur Apolline Martem. Arma inter Chunosquie truces furtoque nocentes Sauromatas, quantum cessat de tempore belli, indulget Clariis tantum inter castra Camenis.*

²³ Them., *Or.*, XI (*FHDR*, II, 67).

²⁴ Them., *Or.*, XIII (*FHDR*, II, 69).

²⁵ Epiph., *Adv. Haeres.*, III, 1, 14 (*FHDR*, II, 172).

²⁶ Claud., *Paneg. tert. cons. Honor. Aug.*, 147 (*FHDR*, II, 168).

to Promotus of Thrace, who fell in battle against the Bastarnae in 391 AD: «When your right hand crushed the Getae bands, it avenged the death of the commander of the army that accompanies you»²⁷.

But these are just two examples of the approximately fifty times Claudian uses the terms *Getae* and *Geticus* instead of the correct terms, *Gothi* and *Gothicus*, more prosaic ones, colourless and uninspired, from a poetic point of view. So, this designation is established as a poetic, even a pedantic name – as Leake pointed out²⁸ – to refer to the Visigoths first, and then to the Goths as a whole. If we consider that Claudian's poems were widely circulated at the time, many other authors may have realised that it was a sign to learn to use the term *Getae* when referring to the Goths²⁹.

From the same period was the grammarian Servius, who wrote a book of commentaries on Virgil's works in which he collects variants of the ethnonym *Getae* three times: In the first of these, in his commentary on the *Aeneid*, he identifies the Getae as Thracians³⁰; in the second one, however, in his commentary on a passage from the *Georgics*, he states that the Getae are the Goths³¹. Considering this second clarification, we can understand the reference to the Getae as already known in earlier times, again in the commentaries on the *Aeneid*: «For the savage tribe of the Getae was known even among our ancestors: for they are the Mysians, who, Sallust says, were vanquished by Lucullus»³². In this case, it is another mistake or misidentification of the peoples of the area, confusing the Misians – from Misia, in the northwest of the Anatolian peninsula – with the Mesii – from Moesia, the

²⁷ Claud., *In Rufinum Lib. I*, 316 (*FHDR*, II, 166): *nam tua cum Geticas stravisset dextra catervas, ulta ducis socii letum, parsque una maneret debilior facilisque capi, tunc impius ille proditor imperii coniuratusque Getarum ...*

²⁸ Jane Acomb Leake, *The Geats of Beowulf. A Study in the Geographical Mythology of the Middle Ages*, Madison-Milwaukee-London, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1967, 25-26.

²⁹ On the dissemination and influence of Claudian's poems, see M.-F. Guipponi-Gineste, *Claudian: poète du monde à la cour d'Occident*, Collections de l'Université de Strasbourg. Études d'archéologie et d'histoire ancienne, Paris, 2010; Catherine Ware, *Claudian and the Roman Epic Tradition*, Cambridge-New York, Cambridge University Press, 2012.

³⁰ Serv., *In tria Virgilio Opera Expositio, Aeneid*, III, 35.

³¹ Serv., *In tria Virgilio Opera Expositio, Georgics*, IV, 462.

³² Serv., *In tria Virgilio Opera Expositio, Aeneid*, VII, 604.

region in northern Thrace whose territory would be identified with that of the Getae.

A contemporary of those above mentioned is the geographer Rufus Festus Avienus, who mentions the Getae in his work, but perhaps referring to the Goths. Although he uses as sources classical writers who refer to the Getae of Thrace of his own period, the influence of the new meaning to refer to the Goths may already be noticeable, as we have been seeing until now³³.

A Latin inscription that has been preserved thanks to its reproduction in a 9th century manuscript also refers to the Goths as Getae on the occasion of Stilicho's victory over them at Pollentia in 405 AD: *Imppp(eratoris) clementissimis felicissimis toto Orbe victoribus, Ddd(ominis) nn[n](ostris) Arcadio Honorio Theodosio Auggg(ustis) ad perenne indicium, triumpho[rum] quod Getarum nationem in omne aevum doc[u]ere exti[ngui], arcum cum simulacros forum tro-paeisq(ue) decora[tum] S(enatus) p(opulus)q(ue) R(omanus) totius opere splendore...*³⁴.

Given that another inscription from the same period, found in Rome, mentions this same victory by the Roman general of Vandal origin, noting that it had been won against the Goths – *Gothicum bellum* –, it has been suggested that the identification in the first inscription may have been a simple mistake by the stonemason³⁵. However, if we consider what was mentioned above in relation to the spread of this poetic fashion with Claudian, it seems much more logical to think that this is an extension of that incorrect identification in the epigraphic field of the same period. So, we no longer find the confusion and equivalence between Getae and Goths only in ancient literary sources, but also in epigraphy.

Also directly related to Claudian would be the testimony of Jerome of Stridon, as the poet seems to have followed this other Church Father in his identification of the Getae and Goths. Jerome used the term to refer to the Goths in a scholarly or poetic manner, noting that “*Getae*” is the cultured version of “*Gothi*”: «And certainly, all the learned men of the past have been accustomed to call the Goths the Getae rather than “Gog and Magog”»³⁶. The fact is that, at the beginning of the

³³ Rufus Festus Avienus, *Descriptio Orbis Terrae*, 442.

³⁴ *CIL* VI, 1196 = *ILS*, 798.

³⁵ Constantin C. Petolescu, *op. cit.*, 147-149 (cit. 148).

³⁶ Jer., *Liber quaestionum Hebraicarum in Genesim*, 10, 2.

4th century, there was such a confusion that it existed a duality in the way the Goths were referred to. This developed in a situation that led to clashes between the two positions and, on occasions, confusion between them: on the one hand, the classic common name of Getae would be preferred, and at other times, that of Scythians; on the other hand, some Christian authors invoked biblical names, those of Gog, as the ancestor of the Goths, and Magog, as the ancestor of the Scythians, although sometimes they all end up intermingling³⁷. But returning to Jerome, the reference to the Goths as Getae also appears in his epistles: «The Armenians have also cast aside their quivers, the Huns are learning the Psalter, the cold climate of Scythia is warmed by the splendour of faith, the ruddy army of the Getae is gathering around the churches»³⁸.

In Prudentius, the Latin poet, rhetorician and lawyer of Hispanic origin, we find further evidence of this confusion and misidentification, which should come as no surprise given his ornate style and profuse use of imagery and rhetorical figures. His work would have a notable influence in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages. For him, “Geticus” would be equivalent to “Gothicus”, and he would even describe the Gothic king Alaric as “tyrannus Geticus”³⁹.

At the end of the 4th century and the beginning of the 5th, this brings us to one of the leading figures in the consolidation and transmission of the identification between Visigoths and Goths: the Hispanic historian, priest and theologian Paulus Orosius. There are two statements he makes in two passages of his historical work that will have a very significant impact on later writings on the subject at hand:

³⁷ A study of this issue at different times in Juan Ramón Carbó García, *La venida de Gog y Magog. Identificaciones de la prole del Anticristo entre la tradición apocalíptica, la Antigüedad Tardía y el Medievo*, in *Idem* (ed.), *El final de los tiempos. Perspectivas religiosas de la catástrofe en la Antigüedad* in *ARYS. Antigüedad: Religiones y Sociedades* 10, Huelva-Madrid, Publicaciones de la Universidad de Huelva-Instituto de Historiografía Julio Caro Baroja (Universidad Carlos III de Madrid), 2012, 381-408. See also W. Brandes, *Gog, Magog und die Hunnen: Anmerkungen zur eschatologischen Ethnographie der Völkerwanderungszeit*, in W. Pohl, C. Gantner and R. E. Payne (eds.), *Visions of Community in the Post-Roman World: The West, Byzantium and the Islamic World, 300-1100*, Farnham-Burlington, VT, Taylor & Francis, 2012, 477-498.

³⁸ Jer., *Ep.*, 107, 2. See also 106, 1 (*FHDR*, II, 186): *Deposuit faretras Armenius, Hunni discunt Psalterium, Scythae fervent frigora calore fidei, Getarum rutilus et flavus exercitus Ecclesiarum circumfert tentoria.*

³⁹ Prudent., *C. Symm.*, 2. 696; 2, 730.

«...but those who are now the Goths were also once the Getae»⁴⁰. And the other one: «To the east lies Alania, in the middle Dacia, where Gothia is also located, then Germania, most of which is occupied by the Suevi»⁴¹.

It was precisely Orosius, from his African refuge in Hippo before the barbarian advance, who would give rise to the prelude to the total identification of the Getae and Goths in Hispania. Most likely he was following Augustine of Hippo, who used the geographical term “*Gothia*” in his work⁴², and also the Claudian fashion, based on Claudian’s epic poem, *De bello Getico*. Orosius’ work would have major consequences in the Iberian Peninsula, as his identification of the Getae and Goths was later taken up directly by Isidore of Seville⁴³.

From the late 4th and early 5th centuries, other authors apart from those already mentioned also contributed to establishing the tradition of calling the Goths the “Getae”: the historian Philostorgius, the Christian bishop Paulinus of Nola, the Latin poet of Gallic origin Claudius Rutilius Namatianus, the chronicler and disciple of Augustine of Hippo, Prosper of Aquitaine, and the Byzantine historian Ablabius. This last one wrote a history of the Goths at the same time, now lost but used as a source by later authors Cassiodorus and Jordanes, with the aim of lending greater respectability to the questionable constructions of a Gothic prehistory⁴⁴. In the case of Prosper of Aquitaine, there is a distinction in the use of both terms, since “*Getae*” appears in his poetic works, but not in his prose works, where only “*Gothi*” appears.

After this series of authors clearly situated in the 4th century, or between the end of that century and the beginning of the next, the only

⁴⁰ Oros., *Hist.*, I, 16, 2 (FHDR, II, 188): *Modo autem Getae illi qui et nunc Gothi*.

⁴¹ Oros., *Hist.*, I, 2, 53 (FHDR, II, 188): *Ab oriente Alania est, in medio Dacia ubi et Gothia, deinde Germania est ubi plurimam partem Suebi tenent; quorum omnium sunt gentes*.

⁴² August., *De civ. Dei*, XVIII, 52.

⁴³ Isid., *Etym.*, IX, 2, 89.

⁴⁴ Philostorg., *Hist. Eccles.*, II, 5. Paul. Nola, *Carmina*, 17, 249; 21, 20; 26, 22. Rut. Namat., *De Reditu*, I, 40; I, 142; I, 336; II, 51. Prosp. Aquit., *Carmen de Providentia Divina*, 34; 57; 143; 905. On Ablabius as a source for Cassiodorus and Jordanes, see A. Gillet, *Jordanes and Ablabius*, in C. Deroux (ed.), *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History*, Brussels, 2000, 479-500. As a general reference for the historiography of the period, see D. Meyer (ed.), *Philostorge et l'historiographie de l'Antiquité tardive / Philostorg im Kontext der spätantiken Geschichtsschreibung*, Stuttgart, 2011.

author we can precisely place within the time frame of the 5th century is the Gallo-Roman Christian bishop of Clermont, Sidonius Apollinaris. In his poems and letters we detect the same distinction made by Prosper of Aquitaine. Sidonius only accepts “*Getae*” instead of “*Gothi*” as a poetic term, and as such it appears 29 times in his poems, while the second term appears only once, but in his letters⁴⁵.

Following the scarce presence of the confusion and misidentification in 5th century sources, the next testimony belongs to the end of that century and the beginning of the 6th century and comes to us from the Latin grammarian Priscian of Caesarea. As with Rufus Festus Avienus, in his verse translation of Dionysius’ *Periegesis* he mentions the *Getae*, but it is impossible to say with complete certainty that he is referring to the Goths. In any case, he also uses as sources classical writers who refer to the *Getae* of Thrace of his own time. But given the tradition of this misidentification, which was consolidated in the 4th and early 5th centuries, it is very likely that he uses the term “*Getae*” with the meaning of “*Gothi*”⁴⁶.

A *Cosmographia* by an anonymous compiler, sometimes falsely associated with the work of Aethicus Ister, a 4th century Christian writer, may also date from the late 5th or early 6th century⁴⁷. This compiler places the *Getae* among other Germanic peoples, such as the Alamanni, the Franks and the Tolosantes, associating them with the Visigothic kingdom of Toulouse and characterising them as “*Populus Narbonenses*”⁴⁸. This would lead to these territories being referred to as *Gothia* from the early Middle Ages onwards by writers in the Carolingian sphere.

As the use of the identification of *Getae* and Goths had become widespread in poetry, especially since Claudian, it did not take long before it also passed into prose in this period at the end of the 5th century and beginning of the 6th century AD. We can see this in the

⁴⁵ Sid. Apoll., *Carm; Epist*. The quotations are listed in the index of Loyen’s edition, volume 3, 237.

⁴⁶ Priscian., *Periegesis*, 295.

⁴⁷ This can be seen in the 1575 edition of the so-called *Aethici Cosmographia*, produced by Josias Simler. However, this work is normally dated to the late 7th or early 8th century. See the works by M. W. Herren, *The ‘Cosmography’ of Aethicus Ister: Speculations about its date, provenance, and audience*, in A. Bihrer y E. Stein (eds.), *Nova de Veteribus*, Munich, 2004, 79-102; *Idem*, *The Cosmography of Aethicus Ister*, Edition, Translation, and Commentary, Turnhout, Brepols, 2011.

⁴⁸ *Aethici Cosmographia*, II, II, 1, 6.

references made by the Christian bishop and father of the Church, of Gallo-Roman origin, Ennodius of Pavia when he refers to the Visigoths of the kingdom of Toulouse as Getae in his hagiographic work on the life of Epiphanius of Pavia. And then he does the same with the Goths in general in the panegyric he composed dedicated to the Ostrogoth king Theodoric I⁴⁹. For his part, Avitus of Vienna, a Christian bishop of Gallo-Roman origin, also referred to the Visigoth king of Toulouse as «*Rex Getarum*» in an episcopal letter⁵⁰.

In the 6th century, the Byzantine chronicler Marcellinus Comes wrote a chronicle that was a continuation of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*. Focusing on the eastern part of the Empire and Constantinople, he curiously uses the term "Getae" to refer to the Slavic barbarians when recounting events from the year 529 AD. He does it in a clearly antiquarian sense, as we saw in the early uses of the term to refer to the barbarian invaders of the 3rd century, the Goths: «During the consulship of Lampadius and Orestes, Mundus, commander of the cavalry and infantry of Illyria, the toughest of all Roman commanders, attacked the Getae, who had long roamed Illyria, and put them to flight after killing many of them. A little later, still during the time of these consuls, the same commander came like the wind to Thrace, driven by his courage, and fought successfully against the Bulgarians who were raiding there. After killing 500 enemies, he too fell in battle»⁵¹.

The idea that the Goths were the Getae was widely accepted in the 6th century, so much so that, as Procopius of Caesarea recounts, Roman patricians extracted an oracle from the Sibylline Books about the Getae and applied it to the Goths during the wars with Justinian, justifying its relevance because «the Goths are of the Getic race»⁵². The Byzantine historian uses the terms "Getae" and "Gothi" in a broad sense. It seems to be a generic designation with a geographical meaning, placing the Goths as the most numerous and important of the invading

⁴⁹ Magnus Felix Ennodius, *Vita Epifani*, 64; 67; 80. *Panegyricus Dictus Theoderico*, 83.

⁵⁰ Sextus Alcimus Ecdicius Avitus, *Epistulae*, 87.

⁵¹ Marcellin., *Annales*, Continuatio Editionis Secundae, B, 530 (*FHDR*, II, 366): *Lampadii et Orestis. Mundo Illyricianae utriusque militiae ductor dudum Getis Illyricum discursantibus primus omnium Romanorum ducum incubuit eosque aut paucis eorum interemptis fugavit. His autem deinde consulibus idem dux audaciae suae secundus in Thraciam quoque advolans praedantes eam Bulgares felicior pugnans cecidit, quingentis eorum in proelio trucidatis.*

⁵² Procop., *De bellis*, V, 24, 28-31.

barbarian nations, and also the oldest one due to their assimilation with the Getae. Following that, the other barbarian peoples would be considered offshoots of this central Germanic people, the Getae/Goths. For this reason, other Germanic peoples who had never been in Scythia or Dacia were also considered to be derived from the Getae, especially if they could claim some kind of connection to the Goths⁵³. Procopius also records this list of Gothic nations: «There were many Gothic nations in ancient times, as there are today, but the largest and most important of all are the Goths, Vandals, Visigoths, and Gepids. In ancient times, however, they were called Sauromatae and Melanchlaeni; and there were also some who called these nations Getae. All of these, although they are distinguished from one another by their names, as has been said, do not differ in any way (...) and it seems to me that they all originally came from one tribe and were later distinguished by the names of those who led each group»⁵⁴.

If, in the middle of the 5th century, the virtual absence of sources seems to indicate that the Goths took a back seat due to the prominence of the Hun invasions, in the 6th century the misidentification of the *Getae* and Goths regained importance. After the testimonies we have already reviewed, it would come to the fore thanks to Cassiodorus and Jordanes, but its character changed significantly.

Up to this point, we can speak of an identification produced by the geographical coincidence we have already discussed, by phonetic proximity, by imperial interests, the myth of the noble and heroic *Getae* that was later transferred to the Goths, and simply the transmission of confusion and misidentification from one author to another over time, a sort of fashion that strengthened the identification between the *Getae* and the Goths with a poetic, cultured, even pedantic value. With Cassiodorus and Jordanes, who follow this established tradition, we observe a different character in the identification: when we find the term «*Getae*» in the preface to Jordanes' *History of the Goths*⁵⁵ – and we think that the same would be true in Cassiodorus' lost work

⁵³ Constantin C. Petolescu, *op. cit.*, 147-149 (cit. 148). For the issue at this time in the Byzantine Empire, see A. Kaldellis, *Ethnography after Antiquity: Foreign Lands and Peoples in Byzantine Literature*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013.

⁵⁴ Procop., *De bellis*, III, 2, 2-5 (*FHDR*, II, 434-435).

⁵⁵ Iord., *Get.*, pref. 1: *suades ut nostris verbis duodecim Senatoris volumina de origine actibusque Getarum ab olim et usque nunc... coartem.*

– the poetic value seems to be confirmed. However, a socio-political legitimisation of the Goths is already being sought by evoking the distant and more or less legendary origins of the Goths by referring to the history of the ancient *Getae* and Dacians. The identity and ancient history of these, as well as that of other peoples interconnected with them in that real/mythical space known as Scythia, was appropriated and used in the invention of the historical tradition of the Goths, in the shaping of their identity and in their legitimisation. This appropriation and intentional use began with Cassiodorus and Jordanes. To substitute *Getae* for *Gothi* was no longer a confusion, neither a conscious pedantry, a deliberate antiquarism: it had become an accepted fact that *Getae* were Goths and vice versa.

4. Conclusions

When attempting to reconstruct the process of contact, confrontation and subsequent integration of the barbarian peoples into the contemporary socio-political structures of the Roman Empire and, later, the Byzantine Empire, reliance on written sources by (Latin or Greek-speaking) Roman authors presents an interesting methodological problem: the testimonies presented can be considered as evidence of the self-identification of the rulers and elites of those kingdoms or as perceptions which, as Walter Pohl pointed out⁵⁶, do not necessarily correspond to any strong self-identification. They may simply represent an ethnographic or political classification that uses outdated or misunderstood ethnonyms, bearing in mind that circumstances caused the importance of these ethnonyms to vary in their coexistence with different registers of identity, such as geographical or civic ones.

Legends, myths and epic poetry exist as ‘remembered history’ within the collective memory, surviving as long as their capacity to adapt to the incorporation of any unforeseen events and new developments allows. Despite these variations, myths retain a core of historical ‘truth’ without which they would lose their ability to link the past and the present, and to organise the latter. The period of migrations, in this respect, was a time of great and rapid change with a need to create a new socio-cosmological order. Certain ancient stories were

⁵⁶ Pohl, Walter, *Archaeology of identity: introduction*, in W. Pohl and M. Mehofer (eds.), *Archäologie der Identität – Archaeology of identity*, Vienna, 2010, 9-23.

used for new purposes in the invention of traditions that became the heritage of groups of people with a wide variety of pasts and identities, serving as that central core of historical ‘truth’ in the creation of that new socio-cosmological order.

It is not difficult to realise that the identity and ancient history of the Getae and Dacians, as well as that of other peoples interconnected with them in that real/mythical space known as Scythia, would be appropriated and used in the invention of the historical tradition of the Goths, in the shaping of their identity and in their legitimisation. However, for this deliberate appropriation and use to take place, there was previously a whole phenomenon of confusion and misidentification between the Getae and the Goths. What we have attempted to present here are the earlier identifications between the Getae and the Goths that led to that confusion and misidentification, as well as their transmission and generalisation from the 4th to the 6th century AD. And this happened in the context of the turmoil in which the Romans found themselves when, from the middle of the 3rd century, these new barbarian peoples came knock, knock, knocking on the Empire’s doors.

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