

Latin (and Greek) Interference in Late Gothic. Personal Names and other Linguistic Evidence from sixth Century Italy

1. Gothic Names from Italy

The total number of Late-Gothic personal names recorded in sixth-century written sources from Ostrogothic and post-Ostrogothic Italy amounts to a quite considerable corpus of about three hundred names. Most of these were transmitted through Latin or Greek texts, such as Cassiodorus' letters and chronicle, Jordanes' history, Procopius' *Gothic War*, Ennodius' works, and also legal transactions, epitaphs and other inscriptions, and many other minor sources.¹ In two instances, Gothic names were also written down in the Gothic language by five members of the Arian clergy of Ravenna: this is the case of the so-called „documents of Naples and Arezzo“, two bilingual papyri of the mid-sixth century containing original Gothic subscriptions with autograph signatures intermingled with the Latin text.² Very seldom do the sources allow us to know about family relationships and the genealogy of people bearing Gothic names. In some cases however we do get to know the office or status of such persons, and in the Ostrogothic kingdom there were positions that were typically held by Goths and their associates, such as military service, administrative supervisors, aristocratic *comites*, Arian clergy, court nobility and high standing functionaries, and such police-like officials as the *saiones*.³ Generally speaking, Arian believers can also be expected to be of Gothic

¹ The personal names here mentioned are recorded in the following historical sources: Italian 6th-century papyri (ed. Tjäder and Marini); inscriptions published in *CIL, ILCV*, Rugo, Fiebigger, Mastrelli, Bierbrauer and Donati-Susini. Latin authors: Orosius' *Historiae*, Cassiodorus' *Variae* and *Chronica*, Jordanes' *Getica*, Anonymus Valesianus, Marcellinus Comes, Gregory of Tours' *Historia Francorum*, Flodoard of Reims; *Epistolae* of pope Gelasius and Pelagius I, *Epistolae* of Avitus of Vienne, Ennodius' *Epistolae* and *Panegyricum*, Gregory the Great's *Epistolae* and *Dialogi*; *Continuatio Havniensis*. Greek historians: Procopius' *Bellum Gothicum*, Malalas' *Chronographia*, John of Antiochia's *Chronicle*.

² According to the edition of Jan-Olof Tjäder (1954-1982), the two legal deeds were written down in Faenza in 538 (Tjäder †8, the so-called „Arezzo deed“) and in Ravenna in 551 (Tjäder P34, „Naples deed“). Their previous edition was by G. Marini (1805) and the first linguistic study by H.F. Massmann (1838); cp. P. Scardigli 1973. About their Gothic names see also H. Penzl 1977 and N. Francovich Onesti 2005.

³ Amory 1997, p. 348.