Doležal, Stanislav

The Battle of the Frigidus from a military and political perspective

Graeco-Latina Brunensia. 2024, vol. 29, iss. 1, pp. 5-29

ISSN 1803-7402 (print); ISSN 2336-4424 (online)

Stable URL (DOI): https://doi.org/10.5817/GLB2024-1-1
Stable URL (handle): https://hdl.handle.net/11222.digilib/digilib.79992

Graeco-Latina Brunensia 29 / 2024 / 1
https://doi.org/10.5817/GLB2024-1-1

The Battle of the Frigidus from a Military and Political Perspective

Stanislav Doležal
(University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice)

Abstract

This article argues that the Battle of the Frigidus was, from a military perspective, a far more important engagement than is usually assumed. The battle depleted the available military reserves of the empire to such an extent that, in the following years, the nascent Western empire found itself unable to conduct any large-scale military operations, or indeed to fend off attackers in its very core – Italy. On the other hand, the religious importance of the battle, traditionally highlighted in scholarly publications, should be downplayed. It can be argued that had the outcome of the battle been any different, no major religious changes to the empire would have occurred. While the political short-term outcome of the battle is obvious (Theodosius' reassertion of claim to power and the establishment of his dynasty), the long-term political changes resulting from this battle primarily involved the beginning of the decline of the Western empire and its ultimate demise. The article analyses the known data on Roman military strength, its organization, and especially the available operational reserves in the 4th century and compares them with the state of the Roman army at the beginning of the 5th century. Although our sources deny us any data on the strength or losses of either army at the Frigidus, a thorough analysis of all available information and a comparison with other internal wars in the late Roman empire seems to lead to an inescapable conclusion: the battle was a massacre that deprived the empire in its western part of its last hope of holding its entire territory in the following period.

Keywords

Battle of the Frigidus; Theodosius I; late Roman army; Later Roman Empire

The battle of the Frigidus in 394 C.E. is often presented in Czech scholarly publications as the last symbolic showdown of paganism and Christianity.[1] The political and especially the military aspect is somewhat neglected. The battle may have been symbolic, but symbols can be seen in everything and their language can easily be overestimated. Moreover, this approach can be misleading – it can lead to a superficial approach to understanding and interpreting historical facts. The struggle for power was, of course, the sole reason for the conflict at the Frigidus and should not be obscured by other factors. The author intends to avoid all symbolic interpretations and wishes nothing more than to examine the significance of the battle from a military and political point of view, taking into consideration the subsequent history of the empire, especially in its western part, during the following 15-odd years. It can be argued – and will be shown – that the result of the battle, apart from reassertion of Theodosius' claim to power, was the depletion of the empire's military forces, which had serious consequences both in the East and, primarily, in the West. Also, it can be argued that even if Arbogast had won the battle and the dynasty of Theodosius had not been established, it would have made no difference to the religious development of the empire. As noted above, scholarly publications dealing with the battle of the Frigidus usually are not interested in its military and political implications, summarizing that the battle further degraded the military capabilities of the empire as a whole.[2] What were these capabilities in the first place? Let us glance at the military situation of the empire during the 4th century.

David Potter judged that the 4th-century army was either roughly the same size as or even smaller (!) than the army of the Severan dynasty, and that it numbered just 240–360,000 men.[3] Most scholars, however, assume that Diocletian actually increased the number of soldiers, though they vary considerably in their calculations. Averil Cameron concluded that Diocletian's army had "not much more than four hundred thousand" men, while according to Stephen Williams it had "over 500,000 men".[4] A. D. Lee estimated the total number of soldiers in the early 4th-century army at 500,000 (and the population of the empire at 50 million).[5] A. H. M. Jones, focusing on the same period, estimated that there were approximately 350,000 soldiers in the Eastern Roman army (and 250,000 in

1 See e.g. Češka (2000: p. 168), Burian and Oliva (1984: p. 498) or Bednaříková (2003: p. 82). These evaluations obviously derive from a very long tradition, see e.g. Seeck and Veith (1913: p. 467). However, a number of modern scholars note that contemporary literary sources did not, for the most part, see this war as a struggle between Christianity and paganism (see for example Salzman 2010), and point out that many Christians served in Eugenius' army and many pagans served in Theodosius' army, some of them in high places (Cameron 2011: p. 99: "Eugenius himself was certainly a Christian, and so were most members of his court and many of his troops. As for the implication that Theodosius's entire army was Christian, that cannot be true either."). The matter is best summed up by Hebblewhite (2020: pp. 134–137).

2 See e.g. Southern (2006: 247): "In 378, the disastrous battle of Adrianople between Goths and Romans resulted in the near destruction of the eastern army, and in 394 the western army was very badly mauled." Similarly Southern and Dixon (2014: p. 39). Halsall (2007: p. 188) uses even stronger language for the impact of the battle of Frigidus ("the western army was slaughtered").

3 Potter (2004: p. 457).

4 Cameron (1993: p. 35); Williams (2000: p. 97).

5 Lee (2007: p. 77).

the Western Roman army).[6] Warren Treadgold believed that Diocletian increased troop numbers enormously, arguing that the Roman army had about 200,000 men in the Eastern half of the empire alone in around 235 and before 285, and that Diocletian increased this to some 250,000. There was subsequent modest growth under Constantine, who had about 280,000 men in the East in around 324. Treadgold deduces that, by 395, the Eastern Roman Empire's army numbered about 335,000 men.[7] Jones and Treadgold thus assumed steady growth, at least in the East. As is evident from the above, however, we can only resort to estimates. On what sources are these calculations based?

The Byzantine historian Agathias observes that, in his time (under Justinian), the army had a paltry 150,000 men and was no longer capable of defending the vast East Roman Empire, whereas „under the earlier emperors" the empire had had 645,000 men at its disposal.[8] The problem with this, of course, is that we do not know which „earlier emperors" are meant here (he is probably thinking of the 4th century, and perhaps specifically the Constantinian dynasty). The value of this account is further diminished by its polemical nature,[9] which may have compelled the Byzantine historian to exaggerate the size of the army „under the earlier emperors".[10]

Agathias' contemporary Joannes Lydus (i.e. John the Lydian) very briefly, but accurately, noted that under Diocletian the Roman army numbered 389,704 soldiers and 45,562 sailors, and that Constantine increased these numbers by tens of thousands after his conquest of the East (i.e. after 324).[11] These figures are so remarkably precise that it is tempting to think that Lydus (who held high state offices in Constantinople) copied them from some well-informed source. We must also take into account that the public servant Lydus, unlike Agathias, evidently had no reason to inflate his numbers.[12] The figure he has recorded looks like it pertains to a specific time in Diocletian's reign, but which particular moment would that be? It may refer to the beginning of his reign (when the emperor, needing to know how many men he had at his disposal, would have commissioned an accurate census), to the tail end (when he was handing over the empire to the other augusti), or to 293 (when the formation of the four-man imperial college meant that the precise size of the armies needed to be ascertained before they could be divided).

6 Jones (1964: p. 683).

7 Treadgold (1995: pp. 58–59).

8 Agathias V, 13, 7. Agathias' figure of 150,000 men would be plausible if he meant only the mobile army, but excluded the frontier troops, the *foederati*, the palace guard, the *bucellarii* (the personal guard in the service of military leaders), and the navy; see Treadgold (1995: pp. 59–63).

9 Agathias is critical of Justinian not just on account of his weak army, but also because he neglected much of the empire's defence capabilities late on in his reign. For example, in 559 the Kutrigur chieftain Zabergan was able to menace the suburbs of Constantinople with just 7,000 horsemen. See Cameron (1970: p. 125).

10 Lee (2007: p. 75).

11 Ioannes Lydus, *De mensibus* I, 27.

12 Whitby (2008: p. 292); Lee (2007: p. 75).

We can therefore surmise that the empire may have had about 450,000 soldiers at the end of the first tetrarchy, and perhaps somewhat more under Constantine.[13]

Organisation of the Roman army in the 4th century

We may therefore take as a reasonable estimate of the total strength of the Roman army at the beginning of the 4th century half a million men. How was this mass of manpower organized? Under Diocletian, the command of military units in the provinces was given to commanders with the title *dux* (plural *duces*). Their area of responsibility did not always coincide with the boundaries of the provinces, and some of them commanded units in more than one province. Probably in the second half of Constantine's reign, perhaps after 324, these *duces* were no longer responsible to the praetorian prefects but to two generals whose office Constantine introduced: *magister peditum* and *magister equitum* (general of infantry and general of cavalry). The two generals actually commanded both infantry and cavalry; hence the neutral term *magister militum* was also used.[14] These generals commanded not only (through *duces*) the troops in the provinces, but also the newly formed mobile or field army – the corps *comitatenses*.

The question of whether the division of the Roman army into *comitatenses* and border troops (*limitanei* or *ripenses*) is the work of Diocletian or of Constantine is disputed, since the first references to this division date from the second half of Constantine's reign.[15] In any case, the *comitatenses* played the role of a central reserve, which was subordinate to the two generals, who were directly responsible to the emperor. In addition, regional armies of *comitatenses* soon arose, stationed in different parts of the empire.[16] As a result of these changes, the two generals came to be called "the generals in the presence of the emperor" (*magistri militum in praesenti* or *praesentales*), as the were supposed to be present at the imperial court, just as their "praesental armies" would be located near the capital. Thanks to the document *Notitia Dignitatum*, we can learn more.

The *Notitia Dignitatum* is essentially a comprehensive list that describes the civil and military structure of the Roman Empire as it existed in the late 4th century in the eastern part and early 5th century in the western part.[17] Thus, in the East, by the time Theodosius was preparing for war with Eugenius, we have, in addition to the two chief generals

13 For a detailed analysis, see Doležal (2022: pp. 419–442).

14 Zos. II, 33. See Elton (2007: p. 331); Potter (2004: p. 454).

15 Constantine's law CTh VII, 20, 4 (of the year 325) speaks of *comitatenses* et *ripenses milites*. Zosimus (II, 34) claims that this was a decision of Constantine. If he is right, then the question arises at what stage of his reign this decision was made. Some have suggested that the most appropriate occasion may have been the period after the battle of Mulvian Bridge in 312 (Jones 1964: p. 97; Southern 2004: pp. 157 and 271–272), while others are inclined to think that it was more likely to have occurred after the victory over Licinius in 324 (Elton 2007: p. 331), and still others attribute this decision to Diocletian (Potter 2004: pp. 453–454; Pohlsander 2004: p. 10; Češka 2000: p. 36; Barnes 2014: p. 154). The undecided are represented by Campbell (2008: pp. 121–122).

16 Southern and Dixon (2014: p. 250).

17 Kelly (2004: p. 40).

(*magistri equitum et peditum in praesenti duo*), three other regional generals: the *magister equitum et peditum per Orientem*, the *magister equitum et peditum per Thracias*, and the *magister equitum et peditum per Illyricum*.[18]

They commanded 36, 36, 31, 28 and 26 units, respectively – a grand total of 157 units of the *comitatenses*, called *legiones*, *vexillationes* or *auxilia*. Opinions vary as to their paper strength. For example, according to Goldsworthy, legions could number 1,000–1,200 men, *vexillationes* probably 600, *auxilia* perhaps 500–600.[19] Lee gives 1,000 men for legions, 500 for *vexillationes*, and 500–800 for *auxilia.*[20] Treadgold reckons simply 1,000 for legions and 500 for both *auxilia* or *vexillationes.*[21] Jones assigned 1,000 men to legions, 500 to *vexillationes*, and 600–700 to *auxilia*. Thus, Jones arrived at a figure of 104,000 men in the East for the field army only.[22] It is obvious, however, that reliable figures cannot be arrived at and we must be content with approximate estimates. If we stick more to Treadgold's model, we come up with approximately 20,000 men for each of the two "praesental" armies. As a basis for further discussion, then, let us assume a number of about 40,000 men as the approximate strength of the army under the two generals-in-chief, that is to say, a corps that was readily available for a campaign whenever the Emperor in the East chose to lead the army in person.[23] This does not mean, however, that the army following the Emperor to war could not have been larger. The emperor Julian for his Persian campaign in 363 probably added to the two "praesental armies" a regional army of the East, which may have numbered 20,000 men, and after adding the palace troops (*scholae palatinae*, 3,500 men in total) we approach the figure of 65,000 given by Zosimus.[24] We may assume, however, that the standard strength of the army of *comitatenses* personally led by the emperor was about 40,000 men. Can such a hypothesis be supported by evidence?

The "Emperor's Army" of the 4th century

In 312, Constantine invaded Italy. The size of his invading army, as well as the total number of troops Constantine had at his disposal in his territories, is unknown. However, it seems reasonable to conclude that although Constantine must have had to leave a considerable force in Britain and Gaul, he could still afford to allocate 35–40,000 troops to

18 *Notitia Dignitatum*, *Or*. I, 5–8.

19 Goldsworthy (2003: p. 206).

20 Lee (2008: p. 214).

21 Treadgold (1997: p. 106).

22 Jones (1964: p. 682).

23 Elton (2018: pp. 98–100).

24 Zos. III, 12–13; Elton (2018: p. 81); Doležal (2022: p. 427). Zosimus' text can even be interpreted to mean that the invading army originally numbered 83,000 men, from which a portion of 18,000 men was detached and the remaining 65,000 were further divided into two parts (cf. Eutr. X, 16). The division of the army into several parts was probably necessitated by supply difficulties.

the Italian campaign.[25] This is the figure that emerges from an analysis of our sources. In a panegyric to Constantine, delivered in 313 at Trier after Constantine's victory over Maxentius, an unknown author says that Constantine led "scarcely a quarter of his army" across the Alps against Maxentius' 100,000 troops; elsewhere in the same work it is said that Constantine had less than 40,000 soldiers with him.[26] This actually makes sense. This is the army that can be moved quickly and kept supplied on the go. Let's provisionally call this force "an emperor's army".

In 357, *caesar* Julian (according to Ammianus Marcellinus) had only 13,000 men at the battle of Argentoratum.[27] However, this was not an army of the reigning *augustus*, only of his representative in Gaul who, forced by circumstances, embarked on a dangerous enterprise. By contrast, the general of infantry Barbatio, who was to cooperate with Julian, had 25,000 men at his disposal at the time.[28] But Julian had no choice but to give battle alone and understandably, Ammianus captures his fears of having to engage the enemy "with only a small number of soldiers, however brave."[29] Libanius gives somewhat higher numbers – 30,000 for Barbatio and 15,000 for Julian.[30] These 38,000 to 45,000 men can be seen as the operational reserve of the West at the moment, and this figure is consistent with the assumption presented earlier. We have also seen above that Julian was later able to gather together an unusually large number of troops for his Persian campaign; but this was clearly an exceptional situation, necessitated by requirements of a grand campaign against an external enemy.[31]

It is known that the size of the Roman army at the battle of Adrianople is unknown. We must content ourselves with the dry statement of Ammianus Marcellinus that "it is known that scarcely a third of the army escaped".[32] Peter Heather wrote that he could not imagine how this battle could have been any bloodier than the battle of the Somme, when the British lost 21,000 men in a single day; and he estimated Roman losses at 10–15,000 men.[33] That would mean an army of 15,000–22,000 men. But Valens hardly went into Thrace with such a weak army, and Roman history gives us numerous examples of Roman armies being virtually annihilated on the battlefield in a single day, and

25 I agree (Doležal 2022: p. 425) with this estimate by Timothy Barnes (2014: p. 81). Elliott (1996: p. 58) and Pohlsander (2004: p. 20) estimate the number of Constantine's soldiers at 40,000; Odahl (2013: p. 100) calculates that Constantine marched no more than 25–40,000 men into Italy. Češka (2000: p. 53) assigned Constantine for his Italian campaign "only about 30,000" soldiers.

26 *Pan. Lat.* XII (9), 3, 3 (*vix enim quarta parte exercitus contra centum milia armatorum hostium Alpes transgressus es*); 5, 1–2 (*Alexander... numquam tamen maiores quadraginta milium copias duxit ... tu vero etiam minoribus copiis bellum multo maius aggressus es*).

27 Amm. Marc. XVI, 12, 2. Drinkwater (2007: p. 238) concurs with this estimate.

28 Amm. Marc. XVI, 11, 2.

29 Amm. Marc. XVI, 12, 6 (*cum paucis, licet fortibus*).

30 Libanius, *Or.* XVIII, 49.

31 For detailed discussion of the strength of Roman armies in 4th to 6th centuries, see Jones (1964: pp. 684–685).

32 Amm. Marc. XXXI, 13, 18.

33 Heather (1996: p. 135). Elsewhere (1991: p. 147), he estimates the losses at 10–12,000 (from a not very sizeable army of 15–20,000).

those were entire consular armies – tens of thousands of men – as at Arausio in 105 BC, or at Cannae in 216 BC.[34] Although Ammianus does not directly mention the size of Valens' army, the phrases *cum abundante milite* ("with a large force") and *ducebatque multiplices copias nec contemnendas nec segnes* ("he led a great force that was neither despicable nor opposed to fighting") strongly suggest that it was a substantial contingent, which explains both Valens' confidence and his belligerence when, before the battle, his scouts brought him the news – quite unsubstantiated news, as it soon turned out – that the enemy numbered no more than 10,000.[35] It is inconceivable that Valens' army would be anything less than 30,000 men, and probably numbered as many as 40,000.[36] The losses, therefore, must have been in a region of 22,000–27,000 men, and it will not be unreasonable to put them at 25,000. In short, a veritable military catastrophe.

In the same year (378), at the battle of Argentaria or Argentovaria, the emperor Gratian's soldiers certainly did not face 40,000 Alamanni Lentienses outnumbered.[37] Again, we are led to believe that the number of 40,000 soldiers was the standard size of a moving army under the leadership of an emperor in the 4th century. In other words, such was approximately the immediately available reserves of the East or West, which could be deployed at any time into battle without compromising the protection of the empire.

Of course, it must be reckoned that the two eastern "praesental armies" numbered about 40,000 men only from the time of their creation (probably about the end of Constantine's reign or the beginning of the reign of Constantius II) until the battle of Adrianopole, i.e. 337–378 or about 40 years. After this battle, we may assume a sharp decline in its numbers (down to 15,000 men, as we have seen above), which were probably never replenished to their full strength; the numbers of troops calculated by the document *Notitia Dignitatum* can only be regarded as paper figures. Otherwise, it is impossible to explain why, merely ten years later, Theodosius, for his campaign against Maximus (388), would have had to gather "all the Scythian peoples", of whom there were supposedly so many that no Roman soldiers seemed to be present in his army! Pacatus even enumerates the Goths, Huns and Alans, talking about the size of the army and the supply difficulties.[38] Also, Zosimos confirms that Theodosius was very keen to include the Goths from the failed Odotheus' invasion in his army for the campaign against Maximus.[39]

---

34 Cannae: Goldsworthy (2003: p. 41) mentions 48,200 Roman casualties. According to Livy, the Romans lost 80,000 legionnaries at Arausio (*periochae* 67).

35 Amm. Marc. XXXI, 11, 2; 12, 1; 12, 3.

36 Kulikowski (2007: p. 140) also arrives at a figure of 30,000–40,000 for Valens' army; Williams and Friell (1994: p. 159) are more cautious (25,000–30,000).

37 Ammianus even gives two figures here – a figure of 40,000 Alamanni, which he apparently considers reliable, and 70,000, which is said to have been given by "some" (probably Gratian's courtiers, in a later attempt to flatter the emperor by exaggerating the number of enemies: *cum quadraginta armatorum milibus vel septuaginta, ut quidam laudes extollendo principis iactarunt*). Amm. Marc. XXXI, 10, 5; see the discussion in Drinkwater (2007: pp. 311–315).

38 *Pan. Lat.* II (12), 32.

39 Zos. IV, 39. In 386, the general Promotus succeeded in repelling a great invasion of the Goths, commanded by the chief Odotheus, in Thrace, near the mouth of the Danube. See Doležal (2008: pp. 141–142).

Roman losses in internal wars

Whenever a Roman army faced an external enemy, it was frequently able to achieve a convincing victory with minimal losses of its own. For example, the battle of Mount Graupius in northeastern Scotland in 83[40] resulted in a crushing victory for the Romans, who lost only 360 men to the Britons' 10,000, according to Tacitus.[41] By contrast, internal wars within the Roman Empire were usually utterly devastating for the Roman army, especially when the forces were evenly matched. Battles usually involved large numbers of soldiers, and regardless whether it was a civil war of the Republic, or a clash between claimants to the imperial throne, or a war between a usurper and a legitimate emperor, the result was often a horrific massacre.[42]

Therefore, it is understandable that soldiers sometimes tried to avoid such senseless bloodshed, such as in 253, when a certain Aemilianus had his soldiers proclaim him emperor. He marched into Italy against the legitimate emperor Trebonianus Gallus, and the two armies met at Interamna (now Terni, about 100 km north of Rome). However, the battle never took place, because Gallus was killed by his own soldiers, who (according to Zosimus) realised that they were outnumbered or (according to Aurelius Victor) expected a reward from Aemilianus.[43] But Aemilianus soon met the same fate – he was killed at Spoletium (now Spoleto, about 120 km north of Rome) by his own soldiers, who learned that the able general Valerianus was marching against them with a large army. Similarly, after the death of Emperor Claudius II in 270, Claudius' younger brother Quintillus and the experienced army commander Aurelian clashed in a struggle for the throne. Quintillus marched his troops out of Rome against Aurelian; the latter resolutely marched out of Sirmium with a larger army. But there was no battle. When Quintillus reached Aquileia, his soldiers murdered him (or Quintillus himself committed suicide).[44] When Aurelian marched against Tetricus, the last emperor of the so-called „Gallic Empire", in 274, it is said that a secret negotiation took place, on the basis of which Tetricus was to capitulate with his entire army shortly before the battle. If some sort of secret agreement was made, something obviously went wrong; the two armies actually clashed in battle which, although victorious for Aurelian, was apparently very bloody.[45] Several

40 On the date: Jones (1992: p. 132).

41 Tac. *Agr*. 37.

42 We are usually not fully informed of the casualties or the size of the armies involved, but we do have some hints. For example, at the battle of Mutina in 43 B.C., both sides suffered fifty percent casualties (Appian, *Bellum civile,* III, 72); at the battle of the Colline Gate in 82 B.C., there were 50,000 dead on both sides (Appian, *Bellum civile*, I, 93); the two battles of Bedriacum (in A.D. 69) cost the Roman state 40,000 dead in total (Cassius Dio, LXIV, 10: ἔπεσον δὲ τέσσαρες μυριάδες ἀνδρῶν ἑκατέρωθεν ἐν ταῖς μάχαις πρὸς τῇ Κρεμῶνι γενομέναις); the battle of Munda in 45 B.C. cost the Pompeians nearly half of their army (30,000 dead, according to *De bello Hispaniensi* 31), and so on.

43 Zos. I, 28, 3; Aur. Vict. 31, 2. See also Southern (2004: p. 78).

44 As to the manner of death, suicide is mentioned by Zosimus (I, 47) and *Historia Augusta* (*Aurel*. 37, 6); killed by the soldiers: *Historia Augusta*, *Claud*. 12, 5. The place of death is given by Jerome (*Chron*. s. a. 271).

45 The battle took place, according to Eutropius (IX, 13), in the Catalaunian fields (*apud Catalaunos*); near

more times in the 3rd century, the Roman army, in an instinct of self-preservation, tried to avoid a massacre, preferring instead to remove its commander.[46]

We also find examples of betrayal by subordinate commanders – during the battle of Margus in 285, for example, when Carinus' praetorian prefect Aristobulus switched sides and was duly rewarded by Diocletian for it, or during the battle of Nakoleia in Phrygia in 366, when the general Agilo betrayed his leader, the usurper Procopius, and defected to the side of emperor Valens together with many of his soldiers.[47] The battle of the Frigidus had its traitor, too – on the night after the first day, one of Eugenius' commanders, named Arbitio, surrendered to Theodosius with his men.[48] As we shall see below, his betrayal was not the decisive moment of the battle, but it probably contributed to Theodosius' decision not to retreat from the battlefield and face the enemy the next day.

But the most common culmination of internal war in the empire does seem to be a regular battle, which both sides entered determinedly, hoping for the best possible outcome. The end of the battle was defined by the willingness of one side to retreat after the fight and leave the battlefield to its opponent, or to surrender to his mercy. In either case, the battle routinely resulted in heavy casualties, usually on both sides. Let us now discuss the individual cases of the numbers of Roman soldiers involved and killed in the internal wars of the 4th century.

In 313, a showdown took place between the last two tetrarchs of the East, Licinius and Maximinus Daia. Maximinus is said to have had 70,000 troops at his disposal, while Licinius had barely 30,000, as he was unable to muster all his troops. Yet Maximinus Daia was defeated in Thrace on 30 April 313, and supposedly half his army fell in battle; the rest fled or surrendered. That means 35,000 dead (Licinius' losses are unknown).[49] At the battle of Cibalae in 316, during the first war between Licinius and Constantine, Licinius reportedly lost 20,000 men, mostly infantry.[50] Yet Licinius is said to have had a stronger army: the anonymous *Origo Constantini imperatoris* speaks of 35,000 soldiers on Licinius' side and mere 20,000 on Constantine's side, claiming that after Licinius lost 20,000 of his soldiers, he saved himself with most of his cavalry by fleeing. For the second war with Licinius in 324, Constantine is said to have amassed 200 warships and more than 2,000 transports, as well as 120,000 infantry and 10,000 cavalry. Licinius had

Châlons-en-Champagne. Heavy losses (on Tetricus' side) are indicated by Aur. Vict. 35, 3 (*Tetrici caesae legiones*); cf. *Pan. Lat.* V (8), 4, 3 (*clade Catalaunica*). In contrast, *Historia Augusta* (*Aurel.* 32, 3) says that Tetricus' legions surrendered to Aurelian (*deditas sibi legiones optinuit*). See Doležal (2020: pp. 140–141).

46 In 276, the emperor Florus was removed in this way by his soldiers before a battle could take place; in 282, under similar circumstances, Probus died; and in 285, Carinus was killed by his own soldiers even during the battle with Diocletian.

47 Amm. Marc. 26, 9, 7.

48 Orosius VII, 35, 16; other sources do not mention his name (Soz. *HE* VII, 24, 5; Rufinus, *HE* XII, 33).

49 Lact. *mort. pers.* 45, 7–8; 47, 4.

50 *Origo* 5, 16 (*Licinio XXXV milia peditum et equitum fuere: Constantinus XX milia peditum [et] equitum duxit. Caesis post dubium certamen Licinianis viginti peditum milibus et equitum ferratorum parte Licinius cum magna parte equitatus noctis auxilio pervolavit ad Sirmium*).

150,000 infantry and 15,000 cavalry.[51] Zosimus tells us that at the battle of Adrianople (July 3) "about 34,000" men fell on the side of Licinius. In the following naval battle of the Hellespont, Licinius lost another 5,000. Finally, at the battle of Chrysopolis (18 September), "barely 30,000" of the men Licinius still had escaped.[52] If we believe Zosimus, Licinius would have lost 139,000 soldiers during this war.[53] Of course, these figures cannot be true, at least as far as the number of dead is concerned. In the space of eleven years (313–324) the Roman army as a whole actually *may have lost* about 200,000 soldiers – just mostly not on the battlefield. Tens of thousands of men were retiring from the army every year;[54] to this we must add losses due to desertions, disease and the effects of wounds, and then of course the actual dead on the battlefields.

We have detailed data for the battle of Mursa (28 September 351) between Constantius II and the usurper Magnentius. Mursa, more correctly Aelia Mursa maior, is today's Osijek; it lay on the important *Via Militaris* road leading from Sirmium.[55] Although the battle ended with the victory of Constantius (who was not present on the battlefield), it did not end the civil war – which lasted until 353 – and, above all, it caused great losses to the Roman army as a whole. Although the battle is mentioned by a number of authors, only the Byzantine author Zonaras gives numbers: Constantius II had about 80,000 men at his disposal, and lost about 30,000 in the battle; Magnentius had 36,000, and lost 24,000. That would mean 54,000 dead.[56] The large number of dead on both sides is also mentioned by Zosimos and hinted at by Julianus.[57] As we saw above, such numbers are not implausible and if they are true, the battle of Mursa was probably the bloodiest battle of the 4th century. Some authors, however, pass over the battle without much interest.[58] Only the evaluation by Eutropius and the *Epitome de Caesaribus* is of note. The former complains of the number of casualties of the Roman army as a whole and grimly concludes that those soldiers who perished "would have been suitable for any external war, and would have brought many triumphs and greater security to the empire".[59] The latter source is even more pessimistic: "In this battle, more than ever, the

51 Zos. II, 22, 1–2.

52 Zos. II, 22, 7; 24; 26, 3.

53 A correction is offered by the *Origo* (5, 27) which states that 25,000 of Licinius' soldiers fell at Chrysopolis.

54 Estimates of the number of recruits needed to replenish the Roman army in the period of the Tetrarchy each year vary widely: according to Williams (2000: p. 97) we are looking at 90,000 men, but Stephenson (2010: p. 98) suggests the figure was as low as 20,000.

55 The town should be distinguished from the neighbouring town of Mursa minor, which was located near the present-day town of Petrijevci, about ten kilometres to the west, on the Drava in Croatia. Date: *Consularia Constantinopolitana*, s. a. 351 (Burgess 1993: p. 237).

56 Zon. XIII, 8; cf. *The History of Zonaras (from Alexander Severus to the death of Theodosius the Great)*, trans. by T. M. Banchich and E. N. Lane, Taylor and Francis e-Library 2009, p. 165. See Potter (2004: pp. 456–457). Crawford (2016: p. 78) lists, for unclear reasons, only 60,000 troops present on Constantius' side.

57 Zos. II, 50, 4; Jul. *Or*. I. 36a–37b.

58 Philost. *HE* III, 26; Socr. *HE* II, 32; Soz. *HE* IV, 7; Aur. Vict. 42, 10.

59 Eutr. X, 12, 1 (*non multo post Magnentius apud Mursam profligatus acie est et paene captus. Ingentes Romani imperii vires ea dimicatione consumptae sunt, ad quaelibet bella externa idoneae, quae multum triumphorum possent securitatisque conferre*).

Roman forces were consumed and the fortunes of the whole empire were thrown into ruin."[60]

The size of armies at the Frigidus

If we turn our attention to what our sources have to say about the size of the two armies at the Frigidus, we will not be satisfied. There are simply no figures pertaining to the size of either army. Theodoret suggested that Theodosius' army was weaker; Orosius, on the other hand, suggested that the forces were balanced, and this view is supported by other sources.[61] The only source that tells us at least some specific number is Jordanes. He speaks of the participation of the Gothic federates, settled on Roman soil: "From these the emperor led more than twenty thousand soldiers, knowing that they were friends loyal to him, against the usurper Eugenius, who had killed Gratian and occupied Gaul."[62] Obviously, Jordanes here mixed up Theodosius' campaign against Eugenius with that against Maximus, being dependent on Orosius, whom he probably read rather carelessly and confused the two events; Orosius, however, only says that 10,000 of these Gothic federates fell in the battle.[63] It is possible that Jordanes judged that the Goths had 50 percent losses, and adjusted the figure he found in Orosius accordingly.[64]

Some scholars trust the Jordanes' figure without question,[65] but it is unlikely, not least because Jordanes is frequently quite generous with the numbers. For example, he tells us that in the reign of the emperor Philippus Arabs in 248 or 249 the Romans faced the Gothic king Ostrogotha, who had more than 300,000 men with him; or that the Gothic king Cniva made an invasion of Roman territory in 250 with more than 70,000 men; that Attila had half a million men in arms; that 180,000 men fell on both sides on the Catalaunian fields in 451; and even that the battle between the Lombards and the Gepids in Pannonia, which occurred in his lifetime, in 551[66] or 552[67], had more than 60,000 dead.[68]

60 *Epitome* 42, 4 (*Hoc tempore Constantius cum Magnentio apud Mursiam dimicans vicit. In quo bello paene nusquam amplius Romanae consumptae sunt vires totiusque imperii fortuna pessumdata*).

61 Thedoret. *HE* V, 24 (τῶν δὲ στρατηγῶν ὀλίγους εἶναι τοὺς συμπαραταττομένους φησάντων); Oros. *Hist*. 7, 34, 13.

62 Jord. *Get*. 145 (*e quibus imperator contra Eugenium tyrannum, qui occiso Gratiano Gallias occupasset, plus quam viginti milia armatorum fideles sibi et amicos intellegens secum duxit*); translation: Van Nuffelen and Van Hoof (2020: pp. 289–290); cf. Doležal (2012: pp. 69 and 214).

63 Oros. *Hist*. 7, 34, 19.

64 In the *Romana*, however, Jordanes asserts that Theodosius killed 10,000 of Eugenius and Arbogast's soldiers in the battle (see note 69 below).

65 Češka (2000: p. 168); Bednaříková (2007: p. 83); Mitchell (2015: p. 94).

66 Van Nuffelen and Van Hoof (2020: p. 12).

67 Heather (1991: p. 48). Cf. Doležal (2012: p. 283).

68 Jord. *Get*. 91 (Ostrogotha); *Get*. 101 (Cniva); *Get*. 182 (Attila); *Get*. 217 (Catalaunian fields). The Lombards and Gepids: *Rom*. 386. Jordanes also emphasizes that this was a one-day battle (*una die*). Procopius (*bell*. VIII, 25, 11–15) merely speaks of a hard battle in which very many Gepids fell. See also Paulus Diaconus, *Historia Langobardorum* I, 23 (*caesisque quam plurimis*); see Curta (2001: p. 87).

Orosius, as we have seen above, tells us the number of the fallen Gothic federates – 10,000. Not only is this number problematic, but Orosius also asserts that Theodosius had no other casualties; he literally says that "the civil war was quenched by the blood of two men", meaning Arbogast and Eugenius. Orosius considers the loss of 10,000 Goths not only acceptable but even a great advantage to the empire: "their loss was our great gain, and their defeat was our victory." On the other hand, the *Epitome de Caesaribus* tells us that Arbogast's side lost 10,000 warriors.[69] If we were to take these figures seriously, this would mean a loss of 20,000 soldiers in a two-day hard battle. Other sources, which will be discussed later, indicate that the losses were probably much higher. This brings us finally to the data on the composition of the armies involved.

The composition of armies at Frigidus

Eugenius' army should theoretically correspond to the entire Western corps of *comitatenses*, i.e. primarily the "praesental army" under the supreme general present at the imperial court at Milan (*magister utriusque militiae praesentalis*); we can also assume the presence of units of the regional general in charge of Gaul (*magister equitum per Gallias*); however, we must assume that many units of *comitatenses* remained in Britain, Africa and Hispania. Taken together, therefore, the total number (at least on paper) of Eugenius' army was perhaps 60,000 men, but in reality the number was probably lower. Apart from the fact that we have to reckon with the considerable losses of Western troops in the war between Theodosius and Maximus – not counting other military campaigns – the question arises whether some of the troops mentioned in the *Notitia Dignitatum*, which was not compiled for the West until sometime around 420, even existed at the time of Eugenius' war with Theodosius.

As a confirmation of our suspicion that the Western units of the *comitatenses* were at least undermanned, we have the information that Arbogast recruited many Franks into his army.[70] Errington includes the Alamanni, which is still plausible; Crawford adds the Burgundians as well, which appears unlikely and remains pure speculation.[71] We also have the testimony of Ambrosius' biographer Paulinus, who recounts a war of Arbogast against his fellow-tribesmen, i.e. the Franks, in which many Franks fell; with the remaining ones Arbogast is said to have made a treaty, inviting the Frankish kings to a banquet on that occasion. We do not know what the exact content of the treaty was, but the provision of recruits for the Roman army seems logical.[72] Similarly, Arbogast may have

69 *Epitome* 48, 7 (*Eugenium quoque tyrannum atque Arbogasten superavit deletis eorum decem milibus pugnatorum*); Jordanes (*Rom.* 317) closely follows this source (*Eugenium quoque tyrannum atque Arbogasten divino auxilio praeditus vicit deletis eorum decem milibus pugnatorum*).

70 Orosius VII, 35, 11–12.

71 Errington (2006: p. 54); Crawford (2012: p. 40).

72 Paulinus, *Vita sancti Ambrosii* 30: *Per idem tempus Arbogastes comes adversum gentem suam, hoc est, Francorum, bellum paravit, atque pugnando non parvam multitudinem manu fudit, cum residuis vero pacem firmavit. Sed cum in convivio a regibus gentis suae interrogaretur, utrum sciret Ambrosium; et respondisset nosse se virum, et diligi ab*

negotiated contracts with other Rhenish tribes to replenish his army or to create new units. This is all that can be said about the state of Eugenius' army. Yet if we are to commit ourselves to any estimate, we may put its size (including the recruited Germans) at 50,000 men; and Theodosius' army was probably similarly large.[73]

As for the army of his adversary, we are somewhat better informed at least as to its composition. Zosimus[74] explains that while the regular Roman army (i.e., those detachments of *comitatenses* which the emperor had managed to assemble) was commanded by Timasius, with Stilicho acting as his deputy (or perhaps chief of staff), the barbarian allies were commanded by Saul, Gainas, and Bacurius. This division, though it says nothing about the ratio of Romans to non-Romans in Theodosius' army, indicates the emperor's desperate efforts to obtain contingents from all the barbarians who could be approached for help. The impression we get regarding the preparations for war is that both sides frantically tried to strengthen their forces, summoning any Roman or non-Roman militants within their power.[75]

Let's start with the first named commander, Saul, because we do not know much about him. One source mentions the ethnicity of the warriors Saul commanded – they were Alans.[76] Zosimus is the only other source that names Saul, but he gives us nothing except that Saul commanded part of Theodosius' barbarian allies. Saul survived the battle (see below) and later apparently joined the Western army, as a certain Saul fought for Honorius at Pollentia against Alaric in April 402. However, we cannot be quite sure whether this Saul is identical with the commander at the Frigidus. If so, he was fighting against his former comrade-in-arms, because Alaric took part in the battle of the Frigidus, too.[77]

How the Alans came into the Roman service in the East we do not know, but it is not difficult to guess. After 376 groups of Alans appeared in the Balkans and took part in battles with the Romans; the emperor Gratian, marching in 378 to the aid of his uncle Valens towards Thrace, was suddenly ambushed at Castra Martis (in the province

eo, atque frequenter cum illo convivari solitum, audivit: Ideo vincis, Comes, quia ab illo viro diligeris, qui dicit soli: Sta, et stat. Quod ego ideo posui, ut cujus famae fuerit vir sanctus etiam apud barbaras gentes, legentes agnoscant. Nam et nos, referente juvene quodam Arbogastis admodum religioso, cognovimus, qui tunc interfuit; erat enim in tempore, quo haec loquebantur, vini minister.

73 See Crawford (2012) for a detailed discussion (with unconvincing arguments) of the maximum numbers of the two armies involved; for the battle of Frigidus he reckons with over 150,000 soldiers on both sides, a highly exaggerated number at any case. Hebblewhite (2020: p. 138) does not give any numbers but opines that the two armies "were evenly matched" or perhaps Theodosius enjoyed "a slight numerical advantage".

74 Zos. IV, 57–58.

75 This impression is reinforced by Claudianus (*de III cons. Hon.* 102nn.), who speaks of the participation of "many tribes from the East" (*gentes remotas Aurorae*) on Theodosius' side (namely, from Asia Minor, Syria, Arabia, or Armenia).

76 Joannes Antiochenus, fr. 187: ἐξ Ἀλανῶν δὲ τὸν Σαοὺλ.

77 Saul at Pollentia is mentioned only by Orosius (*Hist*. VII, 37, 2) who describes him as a barbarian commander and pagan; he even ascribes to him the supreme command in this battle, which suggests that this Saul had at least the rank of *comes rei militaris*. See *PLRE* II (p. 981, Saul); cf. *PLRE* I (p. 809, Saul).

of Dacia ripensis) by the Alans.[78] Indeed, a few years later Gratian recruited some Alans into his (Western) army.[79] Many Alans also took part in the Rhine crossing on 31.12.406.[80] It is reasonable to assume that in addition to many Goths, Theodosius also recruited many Alans into the Eastern army in the 80s or 90s of the 4th century, and put Saul in command of them.

Gainas commanded mainly the Gothic federates, settled in the Balkans as a result of the treaty of 382, who allegedly formed a kind of vanguard of the whole army. But, as we shall see below, we have in fact no certainty that Gainas did not also command barbarians other than those Goths who were bound by the treaty with Theodosius; nor is it clear what position his men occupied in the battle arrangement. Event the rank of Gainas in the battle escapes us; as leader of the federates he may have had none. He did, however, survive the battle and in the following year, he is attested as a *comes* (*rei militaris*?); still later, at the time of the great internal crisis of the Eastern Empire in 399, he briefly became a general.[81] Zosimus claims that Gainas hailed from beyond the Danube, not from the Roman Empire.[82] Alaric, who also took part in the battle of the Frigidus, was born on the Peuce island, a large area at the mouth of the Danube.[83]

Socrates Scholasticus specifically speaks of a large number of barbarians residing across the Danube, who joined Theodosius in 394 (᾽Απιόντι δὲ αὐτῷ ἐπὶ τὸν κατὰ Εὐγενίου πόλεμον πλεῖστοι τῶν πέραν τοῦ ῞Ιστρου βαρβάρων ἐπηκολούθουν, συμμαχεῖν κατὰ τοῦ τυράνου προαιρούμενοι).[84] We may therefore assume contacts between Theodosius' commanders of Gothic origin, such as Gainas and Alaric, with the barbarians living beyond the Danube. Tempted by the reward, the barbarians crossed the Danube and reported for duty.[85] Needless to say, these were not just the Goths. Joannes Antiochenus says that at Frigidus, there were also present "many Huns from Thrace with their tribal leaders" (πολλούς τε τῶν Θρᾳκῶν Οὔννων, σὺν τοῖς παρεπομένοις φυλάρχοις), and that "the Scythian army was commanded by Gainas". Obviously, the term "Scythian" is used very loosely here – the author describes even Stilicho himself as being of Scythian descent (ὃς ἦν μὲν καὶ αὐτὸς ἀνέκαθεν τοῦ Σκυθικοῦ γένους).[86] Sozomenus, too, affirms that Theodosius' army was joined by "a number of allies living by the Danube" without disclosing their

78 Amm. Marc. XXXI, 11, 6.

79 Zos. IV, 35.

80 On the history of the Alans at this time, see Bachrach (1973: pp. 27–29).

81 *PLRE* I (pp. 379–380, Gainas).

82 Zos. V, 21, 9.

83 Alaric's birthplace: Claud. *de VI cons. Hon.* 105–106; his participation in the battle is attested by Zos. V, 5, 4; Socr. *HE* VII, 10.

84 Socr. *HE* 5,25

85 Also, the Goth Tribigildus, later infamous for his rebellion in Asia Minor, may have been a relative of Gainas, as suggested by *PLRE* II (p. 1125, Tribigildus, "relative of Gainas"), since Socrates' expression (*HE* VI, 6, 5) Τριβιγίλδου δὲ ἑνὸς τῶν αὐτοῦ συγγενῶν can be translated as "one of his relatives"; but, according to Sozomen (*HE* VIII, 4, 2), it seems that Tribigild only "belonged to the same tribe" (ὃς αὐτῷ γένει προσήκων). In any case, it can be assumed that he, too, came from the Transdanubian regions.

86 Joannes Antiochenus, fr. 187. See Maenchen-Helfen (1973: pp. 49–51) for a discussion of the Huns in this reference.

ethnicity (συνείπετο δὲ αὐτῷ καὶ πλῆθος συμμάχων τῶν παρὰ τὸν Ἴστρον βαρβάρων).[87] In any case, Theodosius' barbarian allies at Frigidus came from both sides of the Danube and certainly included more than just the Gothic federates.

These and other barbarians suffered the full brunt of the attack on the first day. Zosimus testifies that "a large part of the barbarian allies" of Theodosius were destroyed, and that Bacurius, who fought at the head of his troops, fell after a brave fight.[88] Bacurius came from a royal family in Iberia (modern Georgia),[89] joined the ranks of the Roman army, and took part in the battle of Adrianople.[90] Apparently, he was still young then, because 16 years later he was still serving, and even personally fought at the head of his troops at Frigidus. Sometime between 378 and 394 he served as provincial commander of Palestine (*dux Palaestinae*), after which he became a *comes domesticorum*; however, we do not know his official position at the battle of the Frigidus and it is just possible that he was a *magister militum vacans*.[91] At Frigidus, he was given command of part of Theodosius' barbarian allies, and according to Zosimus, he bore the brunt of the enemy pressure during the first day (Zosimus lumps the two days of the battle into one, dividing the battle into two phases). It even seems that by tying the enemy's forces to himself he enabled the others, that is, Gainas and Saul, to retreat and save themselves unexpectedly (τοὺς δὲ ἄλλους παραλόγως ἅμα τοῖς περιλειφθεῖσι διαφυγεῖν).[92] Rufinus and Socrates Scholasticus both affirm that Bacurius saved the day at a critical moment, when he rushed into the middle of the battle, broke the enemy's ranks, and made the enemies to retreat.[93] Another ecclesiastical historian, Theodoret, confirms that Theodosius lost many of his barbarian allies in the battle (στρατεύσας ὁ βασιλεὺς πολλοὺς μὲν τῶν ἐναντίων παρατταττόμενος κατηκόντισε, πολλοὺς δὲ τῶν ἐπικουρούντων αὐτῷ βαρβάρων ἀπέβαλε),[94] and also Philostorgius says that the battle was severe and the losses on both sides were

87 Soz. *HE* VII, 24.

88 Zos. IV, 58, 3.

89 According to Zosimus (IV, 57, 3) he came from Armenia, which must be an error, since other sources (Ammianus Marcellinus, Rufinus and Socrates Scholasticus) speak of Iberia.

90 Amm. Marc. XXXI, 12, 16 (*sagittarii et scutarii, quos Bacurius Hiberus quidam tunc regebat et Cassio*).

91 *PLRE* I (p. 144, Bacurius). See Rufinus, *HE* I, 10 (*Haec nobis ita gesta, fidelissimus vir Bacurius, gentis ipsius rex, et apud nos domesticorum comes (cui summa erat cura et religionis et veritatis) exposuit, cum nobiscum Palaestini tunc limitis dux, in Jerosolymis satis unanimiter degeret*). Socrates Scholasticus (*HE* I, 20) picked up the story: Ταῦτα φησὶν ὁ Ῥουφῖνος παρὰ Βακουρίου μεμαθηκέναι, ὃς πρότερον μὲν ἦν βασιλίσκος Ἰβήρων, ὕστερον δὲ Ῥωμαίοις προσελθὼν, ταξίαρχος τοῦ ἐν Παλαιστίνῃ στρατιωτικοῦ κατέστη· καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα στρατηλατῶν τὸν κατὰ Μαξίμου τοῦ τυράννου πόλεμον τῷ βασιλεῖ Θεοδοσίῳ συνηγωνίσατο. Τοῦτον μὲν τὸν τρόπον καὶ Ἴβηρες ἐχριστιάνισαν ἐπὶ τῶν Κωνσταντίνου χρόνων.

92 Zos. IV, 58, 3.

93 Socr. *HE* 5, 25 (Βακούριος γὰρ ὁ στρατηλάτης αὐτοῦ τοσοῦτον ἐπερρώσθη, ὥστε σὺν τοῖς πρωταγωνισταῖς εἰσδραμεῖν, καθ' ὃ μέρος οἱ βάρβαροι ἐδιώκοντο· καὶ διαρρήσσει μὲν τὰς φάλαγγας, τρέπει δὲ εἰς φυγὴν τοὺς πρὸ βραχέως διώκοντας); Ruf. *HE* II, 33 (*et praecipue Bacurius, vir fide, pietate, virtute et animi et corporis insignis, et qui comes esse et socius Theodosii mererentur, proximos quosque conto, telis, gladio passim sternit, agmina hostium conferta et constipata perrumpit. Iter per milia ruentium ad ipsum tyrannum, ruptis agminibus, et acervatim fusis stragibus, agit*).

94 Theodoret. *HE* V, 24, 3.

heavy (μάχης καρτερᾶς γενομένης καὶ πολλῶν ἑκατέρωθεν ἀπολλυμένων).[95] Rufinus, who wrote the last book of his *Ecclesiastical History* only a few years after this battle, describes the massacre of Theodosius' barbarians in the battle, whereupon he relates that Theodosius prayed on high ground in sight of both armies during the battle; his prayer is said to have encouraged his commanders, and especially Bacurius, who rushed into the fiercest battle to try to kill Eugenius himself.[96]

The two-day battle, therefore, seems to have been very costly to both sides, brought no resolution, and made Theodosius hesitant about how to proceed. It should be noted at this point that most sources simplify the plot considerably and summarize all events in a single day; also, not all of them mention the betrayal and defection of Eugenius' commander Arbitio (see above) or other details. About half of our sources, however, agree on the curious ending of the battle. After Bacurius had saved the day and averted disaster from Theodosius' army, a violent wind arose and blew against Eugenius' soldiers, making it impossible for them to fight; the thrown spears were said to have come back, piercing the unfortunate combatants.[97]

This element of the narrative seems to be quite authentic, as the so-called bora is a well-known natural phenomenon in Slovenia. It is particularly common in the Vipava valley, where it can reach speeds of over 17 m/s, and gusts may reach values larger than 50 m/s.[98] On the Beaufort scale, the higher value means the twelfth, strongest degree; the effects of the wind can be devastating, and it is easy to imagine that sudden gusts could make it impossible for soldiers not only to fight man-to-man, but also to walk.[99] And it is also easy to imagine the religious imagery that both sides associated with this natural phenomenon; Theodosius' army was probably greatly emboldened, and the sol-

95 Philostorg. *HE* XI, 2.

96 Rufinus *HE* XII, 33 (*fundebantur auxilia barbarorum et terga iam hostibus dabant. Sed fiebat hoc non ut Theodosius vinceretur, sed ne per barbaros vicere videretur ... Bacurius, vir fide, pietate, virtute et animi et corporis insignis, et qui comes esse et socius Theodosii mererentur*). Other sources try to document Theodosius' piety in the midst of battle in an absurd way, see e.g. Ambrosius, *de obit. Theod.* 7, according to which the emperor jumped off his horse during the battle and stood in front of the battle line of his soldiers to pray.

97 Rufinus, *HE* XII, 33; Oros. *hist*. VII, 35, 17–19; Augustine, *de civ. Dei* V, 26; Theodoret. *HE* V, 24; Socr. *HE* V, 25; Soz. *HE* VII, 24. Other sources do not mention it, and Zosimus (IV, 58, 3) speaks of a solar eclipse instead, which is obviously impossible because there was no eclipse between 16 May and 11 October 394, see https://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/SEcat5/SE0301-0400.html.

98 Belušić and Klaić (2004: p. 296).

99 It is unnecessary to argue (like Hebblewhite 2020: p. 139) that the actual effects of bora on the fighting were probably overstated for narrative effect. Nor can we seriously consider this phenomenon to be a mere literary topos. Not only is bora a frequent guest in today's Vipava valley, especially in autumn and winter, but some of our sources seem to be well informed about how this phenomenon affected the outcome of the battle – especially Claudian, who wrote two years after the battle (*Panegyric on the Emperor Honorius' Third Consulate* 93–95: *te propter gelidis Aquilo de monte procellis / obruit adversas acies revolutaque tela / vertit in auctores et turbine reppulit hastas*), and Augustine, who refers both to Claudian's *Panegyric* and to eyewitnesses: "Soldiers who were there have told me that the missiles which they were hurling were snatched from their hands by a strong wind blowing from the direction of Theodosius against his enemies. Not only did this increase the velocity of the missiles which were being hurled at them: it even turned their own missiles back against them, to pierce their own bodies" (*de civ. Dei* V, 26, trans. by Dyson 1998).

diers could effortlessly hurl spears or shoot arrows with great impact and range against an enemy who was unable to react in any way. The demoralized remnants of Arbogast's army surrendered and Eugenius was executed; Arbogast escaped his fate by only a few days, committing suicide while fleeing in the mountains.

How costly was the battle for the Roman army as a whole? Let us shortly sum up a few comparable civil wars discussed earlier. In a battle with Licinius, on 30 April 313, Maximinus Daia lost 50% of his troops. On 8 October 316, at the battle of Cibalae, 20,000 of Licinius' soldiers fell, which is 57% attrition rate. In the second war with Constantine in 324, Licinius lost 34,000 men at the battle of Adrianople alone; at Chrysopolis, there were at least 25,000 more dead. Attrition rates are unknown in these cases but must have been horrible. At the battle of Mursa, Constantius II lost about 30,000 men, Magnentius 24,000 men; that constitutes 37% and 66% attrition rates, respectively. And we know that at the battle of Hadrianopolis, Roman casualties were about 67%. We also briefly analysed some of the battles of various civil wars in the 1st century B.C. and 1st century A.D., and arrived at similar attrition rates. Under extreme conditions at Frigidus, 50% attrition rate for both armies is a reasonable conclusion. We have seen that it is not unreasonable to suppose that the armies at Frigidus had about 100,000 soldiers between them. Therefore, the number of about 50,000 dead on the battlefield during this two-days hard battle is plausible.

After 378, there was increasingly difficult for any Emperor to muster 40–50,000 soldiers for a campaign; but after 394, it was impossible, at least in the West. Indeed, if the famous term "Pyrrhic victory" can be applied to any battle of late antiquity, it is the battle of the Frigidus. That there must have been considerable loss of life was shown by the next 15 years in the West: we shall see that by 394–410 the strength of the Western army had degraded to the point where even Italy itself was no longer a safe part of the Empire.

The consequences of the battle of the Frigidus

First of all, let us address the alleged high losses of the Gothic federates. There is an obvious problem here: if most of the Goths were slaughtered in the battle, it is hard to see how Alaric and the remaining Goths could have posed any serious threat to either of the two empires just a few years after the battle. Besides, we know of other Gothic commanders who were operating with their Gothic troops in the East at the same time, and who had nothing to do with Alaric and in any case did not join his rebellion; the contingent of Gothic federates with which Gainas and Alaric went into battle at Frigidus could not therefore have suffered such heavy losses.[100]

Our sources, as we have seen, otherwise speak in general terms of the heavy losses of Theodosius' barbarian allies, and give no figures at all or at least no indication of the total number of dead or of the military impact of the battle. Nor, of course, can we

100 See *PLRE* I (p. 283, Eriulfus; he died shortly before the battle of the Frigidus), then *PLRE* II (pp. 1125–1126, Tribigildus) and *PLRE* I (pp. 372–373, Fravitta); perhaps also Sarus (*PLRE* II: pp. 978–979). See also Doležal (2008: pp. 228–230, 241–244 and 246–248).

expect them to do so. What mattered to Orosius, church historians, or other Christian sources was the victory of the orthodox emperor, not the defensibility of the empire ten years after the battle.

And the empire was really under threat, especially in the West. We have indications of manpower shortages in the army already at the beginning of the 5th century, even for the frontier and for the defence of Italy itself.[101] Field armies also seem to suffer from this problem. O'Flynn argued that recruiting recruits for the Roman army was the main purpose of Stilicho' Rhine campaign in 396.[102] When Mascezel was sent by Stilicho to Africa in 398 to put down the rebellion of his own brother Gildo, he was given a totally inadequate number of men to accomplish his task – no more than 5,000.[103] It is possible, however, that most of the Western *comitatenses* were still unavailable for the African campaign because of Stilicho's expedition against Alaric in the Balkans in the previous year. And it is true that in 402 the Western army still fought satisfactorily when Stilicho defeated Alaric directly on Italian soil at Pollentia and Verona.[104]

The invasion of Radagaisus in 405 represented a much more serious crisis. It must be emphasized that it took Stilicho more than half a year to gather enough troops to confront the Germanic leader at all. According to Zosimus, Stilicho gathered only 30 units (*arithmoi*) of the regular army (not counting the Alannic and Hunnic federates) against Radagaisus in August 406.[105] A. H. M. Jones judged that these 30 units meant approximately 20,000 men, while Burns and Heather lean more towards the figure of 15,000.[106] Anytime in the course of the 4th century this would have been a ridiculous force, while at the beginning of the fifth century, it was clearly the maximum number of soldiers Stilicho could muster in the West, at the cost of recruiting slaves into his army[107] and ruthlessly withdrawing units from the Rhenish *limes*. Needless to say, the latter decision backfired on the Western Empire later that year, as the Rhenish frontier, now only weakly protected by Frankish federates, was overrun by the invasion of Gaul by the Vandals, Alans and Suebi (Prosper gives the exact date as 31 December 406).[108] And even before

101 Burns (1994: p. 164): "The archaeological data make it manifest that the passes in the Julian Alps were never again systemically defended after their denudation in 394."

102 O'Flynn (1983: p. 33): "Now he was left with western troops alone, the remnant of the army that Theodosius had defeated at the Frigidus, and his first concern was recruiting more troops. For this purpose, he made an expedition along the Rhine in 396."

103 Southern and Dixon (2014: p. 56; Source: Orosius VII, 36, 6).

104 Kulikowski (2007: p. 170). Burns (1994: p. 192) judged that each side amassed about 10,000 troops for this war.

105 Zos. V, 26. Heather (1995: pp. 12–13): "Radagaisus was executed on 23 August 406; four months later, on 31 December, groups from a number of different peoples crossed the Rhine into Gaul."

106 Jones (1964: p. 684; "perhaps 20,000 men"); Burns (1994: p. 198; "something less than 15,000 men"); Heather (2010: p. 175; "plausibly fifteen thousand-plus men"). For further details, see Wijnendaele (2016: p. 270).

107 On this, see Wijnendaele (2016: p. 271).

108 Prosper, *Chronicon*, s. a. 406 (*Vandali et Alani Gallias traiecto Rheno ingressi II. k. Ian.*). Zosimus (VI, 3, 1) confirms the year 406. The date 31.12.406 is not doubted by Drinkwater (1998: p. 271) and Thompson (1977: p. 303), although the latter thought that the transport of very many men, women and children certainly did not take place in the single day; he took the day of the beginning of the invasion. Kulikowski

this invasion, in 406, there was a revolt of the legions in Britain, when a certain Marcus was proclaimed emperor, followed early in 407 by a certain Gratianus, and finally, probably in May 407, by Constantine III.

Although Stilicho succeeded in crushing Radagaisus' forces, his first concern was to replenish the thinning ranks of his army. Olympiodorus claims that after the victory over Radagaisus, Stilicho incorporated 12,000 prisoners into his army. In this, Olympiodorus seems to disagree with Zosimus, according to whom Radagaisus' horde of 400,000 men (!) was almost completely destroyed and only very few survivors were incorporated into Stilicho's army.[109] Prosper and Augustine also speak of large number of barbarians who were killed.[110] Another version of events is offered by Orosius, followed by Marcellinus Comes and Jordanes: 200,000 barbarians surrendered without a fight and were sold into slavery.[111] Jeroen Wijnendaele shows convincingly that Orosius' version is to be ignored: there was indeed a regular battle with losses on both sides; Radagaisus may have had some 40,000 warriors (taken together with women and children, he could perhaps have led 200,000 souls into Italy), but he divided his warriors into three groups, which Stilicho and his commanders were able to handle individually, even though the Roman forces were clearly outnumbered 2:1.[112]

But even if the victory over Radagaisus was relatively bloodless for the Western Roman army, the Romans clearly needed to replenish their forces. This became apparent in the following years, when war again raged on Italian soil: in 409 only 6,000 men (5 *tagmata* according to Zosimus) could be sent for the defence of Rome; these soldiers came from Dalmatia, and were to reinforce the garrison in Rome.[113] Similarly, in 410 the emperor Honorius had to make do with 4,000 soldiers (6 *arithmoi* according to both Sozomen and Zosimus) who were sent to his aid from the East to Ravenna.[114] Stilicho, it seems, had

(2000: pp. 326–332), on the other hand, argued in favour of changing the date to 31 December 405, but his arguments are not convincing, and later Kulikowski himself (2007: p. 171) partially retreated from them: "on the last day of either 405 or 406".

109 Olympiodorus, frg. 9 (ἅπαν τὸ πολέμιον πανωλεθρίᾳ διέφθειρεν, ὥστε μηδένα σχεδὸν ἐκ τούτων περισωθῆναι, πλὴν ἐλαχίστους ὅσους αὐτὸς τῇ Ῥωμαίων προσέθηκεν συμμαχίᾳ), cf. Zos. V, 26. But Zosimus is generally unreliable as to the reported numbers of barbarians in battles. For example, he tells us (III, 3, 3) that at the battle of Argentoratum in 357, Julian's army slew 60,000 Alamanni, and the same number of his enemies are said to have drowned in the Rhine, while according to much more reliable Ammianus Marcellinus (XVI, 12, 63) the number of Alamanni dead on the battlefield was counted at 6,000, and other unestimable numbers were carried away by the river, while the Roman losses were only 247 men (*ex Alamannis vero sex milia corporum numerata sunt in campo constrata et inaestimabiles mortuorum acervi per undas fluminis ferebantur*).

110 Prosper, *Chronicon*, s. a. 406 (*multis Gothorum milibus caesis*); Augustine, *civ. Dei* V, 23 (*multo amplius quam centum milium prosterneretur*).

111 Orosius VII, 37, 4–16; Marcellinus Comes, s. a. 406; Jord. *Rom*. 321.

112 Wijnendaele (2016: p. 271).

113 Zos. V, 45.

114 Zos. VI, 8; Soz. *HE* 9,8. On the basis of these and similar data, it can also be concluded that a legion or comparable unit of a mobile army had approximately 1,000 men (see discussion above). Jones (1964: p. 682) judged it to be more like 600–700, but these particular units mentioned by Zosimus may have been understaffed.

no choice in 406; he had to reinforce his army and the 12,000 captured barbarians were a significant help at the time.

Conclusion

This dismal state of the Western Empire's military forces just 15 years after the battle of the Frigidus clearly points to the culprit. We have seen above that the casualties of the Roman armies in the civil wars of the 4th century, according to our sources, seem to have been in principle anywhere between a third and a half of the troops involved, at least in the case of the defeated army (however, we have seen that Mursa, for example, was costly to both sides, and the total casualties in this case were 46%). The battle of the Frigidus was apparently a horrific massacre that probably reduced the operational reserves of the entire empire by as much as 50%.[115] For either part of the Empire after 395 and over the next few decades, it was not possible to fight two wars simultaneously, nor to send large expeditionary armies against external or internal enemies, nor to effectively defend the borders of the Empire against major invasions. And for the Western part of the empire, an imaginary clock began ticking, inexorably counting down the time until its collapse.

Bibliography

Primary sources

Agathias = Keydell, R. (Ed.). (1967). *Agathiae Myrinaei Historiarum libri quinque*. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Ambrosius = Faller, O. (Ed.). (1955). *Sancti Ambrosii Opera* (Vol 7: De obitu Theodosii). Wien: Hoelder-Pichler-Tempsky.

Amm. Marc. = W. Seyfarth (Ed.). (1978). *Ammiani Marcellini rerum gestarum libri qui supersunt*. Leipzig: Teubner.

Appian = Mendelssohn, & Viereck, L. P. (Eds.). (1905). *Appiani Historia Romana*. Leipzig: Teubner.

Augustine, *de civ. Dei* = Walsh, P. G. (Ed.). (2009). *De civitate Dei* (Book V). Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.

Aur. Vict. = Pichlmayer, F., & Gruendel R. (Eds.). (1961). Aurelius Victor, *Liber de caesaribus*. Leipzig: Teubner.

Cassius Dio = Boissevain, U. P. (Ed.). (1955). *Cassii Dionis Cocceiani Historiarum Romanarum quae supersunt*. Berlin:Weidmann.

Claud. *de VI cons. Hon.* = Platnauer, M. (Trans.). (1922). *Claudian* (Vol. 2; Loeb Classical Library 136). Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press.

CTh = Mommsen,Th., & Meyer, P. (Eds.). (1905). *Theodosiani libri XVI cum constitutionibus Sirmondianis et leges novellae ad Theodosianum pertinentes consilio et auctor*. Berlin: Weidmann.

115 Heather (2010: p. 175) agrees that "close to 50 per cent of the western Roman field army" disappeared between 395 and 410.

Consularia Constantinopolitana = Burgess, R. W. (Ed.). (1993). *The Chronicle of Hydatius and the Consularia Constantinopolitana*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Epitome = Pichlmayr, F., & Gruendel, R. (Eds.). (1970). *Sexti Aurelii Victoris Liber de caesaribus: praecedunt Origo gentis Romanae et Liber de viris illustribus urbis Romae*; *subsequitur Epitome de caesaribus*. Leipzig: Teubner.

Eutr. = Droysen, H. (Ed.). (1879). *Eutropi breviarium ab urbe condita* (MGH, AA II). Berlin: Weidmann.

Historia Augusta = Hohl, E., Seyfarth, W., & Samberger, Ch. (Eds.). (1965). *Scriptores Historiae Augustae* (Vol. 1–2). Leipzig: Teubner.

Jerome, *Chron*. = Helm, R. (Ed.). (1956). *Die Chronik des Hieronymus*. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Joannes Antiochenus = Mariev, S. (Ed.). (2008). *Ioannis Antiocheni fragmenta quae supersunt omnia* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae – Series Berolinensis, 47). Berlin – New York: De Gruyter.

Joannes Lydus = Wünsch, R. (Ed.). (1967). *De mensibus* (Ed. stereot. ed. primae). Leipzig: Teubner.

Jord. *Rom*. = Mommsen, Th. (Ed.). (1882). *Iordanis Romana et Getica*. Berlin: Weidmann.

Jord. *Get*. = Giunta, F., & Grillone, A. (Eds.). (1991). *Iordanis De Origine Actibusque Getarum*. Roma: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medioevo.

Jul. *Or*. = Wright, W. C. (Trans.). (1913). *Julian* (Vol. 1: *Orations 1–5*; Vol. 2: *Orations 6–8. Letters to Themistius, To the Senate and People of Athens, To a Priest. The Caesars. Misopogon*). Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press.

Lact. *mort. pers*. = Creed, J. (Ed.). (1984). Lactantius, *De mortibus persecutorum*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Libanius, *Or.* = Norman, A. F. (Trans.). (1969). *Libanius: Selected Works* (Vol. 1; Loeb Classical Library 451). Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press.

Livy = W. Weissenborn (Ed.). (1864). *Titi Livi ab urbe condita libri*. Berlin: Weidmann.

Marcellinus Comes = Croke. B (Ed.). (1995). *The chronicle of Marcellinus: a translation and commentary (with a reproduction of Mommsen's ed. of the text)*. Sydney: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies.

Notitia Dignitatum = Seeck, O. (Ed.). (1876). *Notitia dignitatum*. Berlin: Weidmann.

Olympiodorus = Blockley, R. C. (Ed.). (1983). *The fragmentary classicising Historians of the later Roman Empire: Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus and Malchus*. Liverpool: Cairns.

Origo = Mommsen, Th. (Ed.). (1892). Origo Constantini imperatoris: sive, Anonymi valesiani pars prior. In Th. Mommsen (Ed.), *Chronica minora saec. IV. V. VI. VII.* (Vol. 1; pp. 1–11). Berlin: Weidmann.

Paulinus, *Vita sancti Ambrosii* = J.-P. Migne (Ed.). (1845). *Paulini diaconi opuscula: 1. Vita Sancti Ambrosii Mediolanensis episcopi a Paulino ejus notario ad B. Augustinum conscripta; 2. Libellus adversus Coelestium, Zosimo papae abbatus; 3. De benedictionibus patriarchorum libellus*. Paris.

Oros. *Hist*. = Zangemeister, C. (Ed.). (1882). *Pauli Orosii Historiarum adversum paganos, libri VII. Accedit eiusdem Liber apologeticus* (CSEL 5). Wien: Gerold.

Pan. Lat. = Nixon, C. E. V., & Rodgers, B. S. (Eds.). (2015). *Praise of Later Roman Emperors: The Panegyrici Latini*. Berkeley – Los Angeles – Oxford: University of California Press.

Paulus Diaconus = Bethmann L. K., & Waitz, G. (Eds.). (1878). *Pauli Historia Langobardorum*. Hannover: Hahn.

Philost. *HE* = Bidez J. (Ed.). (1981). *Philostorgius. Kirchengeschichte* (Winkelmann, F., Bearb.). Berlin: Akademie Verlag.

PLRE I = Jones, A. H. M., Martindale, J. R., & Morris, J. (1971). *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire* (Vol. 1: A.D. 260–395). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

PLRE II = Martindale, J. R. (1980). *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire* (Vol. 2: A.D. 395–527). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Procopius = Wirth, G., & Haury, J. (Eds.). (1962–1963). *Procopii Caesariensis opera omnia*. Leipzig: Teubner.

Prosper, *Chronicon* = Mommsen, Th. (Ed.). (1892). Prosperi Tironis epitoma chronicon ed. primum a. CCCCXXXIII, continuata ad a. CCCLV. In Th. Mommsen (Ed.), *Chronica minora saec. IV, V, VI, VII* (Vol. 1; pp. 341–499). Berlin: Weidmann.

Rufinus, *HE* = Schwartz, E., & Mommsen, Th. (Eds.). (1903–1908). *Eusebius Werke* (Vol. 2, Teil 1–2: *Historia ecclesiastica*). Berlin: De Gruyter.

Socr. *HE* = Bright, W. (Ed.). (1893). *Sōkratus Scholastiku ekklēsiastikē istoria*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Soz. *HE* = Bidez, J., & Hansen, G. C. (Eds.). (1960). *Sozomenus Kirchengeschichte*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag.

Tac. *Agr.* = Furneaux, H. (Ed.). (1922). *Cornelii Taciti de Vita Agricolae* (2nd ed., revised and largely rewritten by J. G. C. Anderson). Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Theodoret. *HE* = Parmentier, L. (Ed.). (1954). *Theodoret Kirchengeschichte* (2. Aufl., Scheidweiler, F., Bearb.). Berlin: Akademie Verlag.

Zon. = Banchich, T. M., & Lane, E. N. (Trans.). (2009). *The History of Zonaras: from Alexander Severus to the death of Theodosius the Great*. Oxon – New York: Routledge.

Zos. = Paschoud, F. (Ed., trans.). (1971–1989). *Zosime, Histoire Nouvelle*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres.

Secondary sources

Bachrach, B. S. (1973). *A History of the Alans in the West: from their first appearance in the sources of classical antiquity through the early Middle Ages* (Minnesota Monographs in the Humanities, 7). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Barnes, T. D. (2014). *Constantine. Dynasty, Religion and Power in the Later Roman Empire*. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.

Bednaříková, J. (2003). *Stěhování národů*. Praha: Vyšehrad.

Belušić, D., & Klaić, Z. B. (2004). Estimation of bora wind gusts using a limited area model. *Tellus A: Dynamic Meteorology and Oceanography, 56*(4), 296–307.

Burian, J., & Oliva, P. (1984). *Civilizace starověkého Středomoří*. Praha: Svoboda.

Burns, Th. S. (1994). *Barbarians at the Gates of Rome: A Study of Roman Military Policy and the Barbarians, ca. 375–425 A.D.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Cameron, Alan (2011). *The Last Pagans of Rome*. New York – Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cameron, Alan (1969). Theodosius the Great and the Regency of Stilico. *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology, 73,* 247–280.

Cameron, Averil (1993). *The Later Roman Empire AD 284–430.* Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press.

Cameron, Averil (1970). *Agathias.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Campbell, B. (2008). *The Army*. In A. K. Bowman, P. Garnsey, & A. Cameron (Eds.), *The Cambridge Ancient History* (Vol. 12, The Crisis of the Empire A.D. 193–337; pp. 110–130). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Crawford, P. (2016). *Constantius II: Usurpers, Eunuchs and the Antichrist*. Barnsley: Pen & Sword Books.

Crawford, P. (2012). The Battle of Frigidus River. *The Ancient World, 43,* 33–52.

Croke, B. (1976). Arbogast and the death of Valentinian II. *Historia, 25,* 234–244.

Curta, F. (2001). *The Making of the Slavs: History and Archaeology of the Lower Danube Region c. 500–700*. Cambridge – New York: Cambridge University Press.

Češka, J. (2000). *Zánik antického světa*. Praha: Vyšehrad.

Doležal, S. (2008). *Interakce Gótů a římského impéria ve 3.–5. století n. l.* Praha: Karolinum.

Doležal, S. (Ed.). (2012). *Jordanes: Gótské dějiny a římské dějiny*. Praha: Argo.

Doležal, S. (2022). *The Reign of Constantine, 306–337: Continuity and Change in the Late Roman Empire*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Drinkwater, J. F. (2007). *The Alamanni and Rome 213–496 (Caracalla to Clovis).* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Drinkwater, J. F. (1998). The Usurpers Constantine III (407–411) and Jovinus (411–413). *Britannia, 29,* 269–298.

Dyson, R. W. (Ed., trans.). (1998). *Augustine, The City of God against the Pagans*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Elton, H. (2018). *The Roman Empire in Late Antiquity. A Political and Military History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Elton, H. (2007). *Warfare and the Military*. In N. Lenski (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine* (pp. 325–346). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Errington, R. M. (2006). *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Frye, R. N. (1983). *The History of Ancient Iran*. München: C. H. Beck.

Goldsworthy, A. (2003). *The Complete Roman Army*. London: Thames & Hudson.

Halsall, G. (2007). *Barbarian Migrations and the Roman West 376–568*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Heather, P. (1991). *Goths and Romans 332–489*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Heather, P. (2010). *Empires and Barbarians. The Fall of Rome and the Birth of Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Heather, P. (1995). The Huns and the End of the Roman Empire in Western Europe. *The English Historical Review, 110*(435), 4–41.

Heather, P. (1996). *The Goths.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hebblewhite, M. (2020). *Theodosius and the Limits of the Empire*. London – New York: Routledge.

Jones, A. H. M. (1964). *The Later Roman Empire 284–602. A Social Economic and Administrative Survey* (3 vols). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jones, B. W. (1992). *The Emperor Domitian*. London – New York: Routledge.

Kelly, Ch. (2004). *Ruling the Later Roman Empire.* Cambridge (Mass.) – London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Kulikowski, M. (2007). *Rome's Gothic Wars*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kulikowski, M. (2000). Barbarians in Gaul, Usurpers in Britain. *Britannia, 31,* 325–345.

Lee, A. D. (2008). *The Army*. In A. Cameron, & P. Garnsey (Eds.), *The Cambridge Ancient History* (Vol. 13, The Late Empire, A.D. 337–425; pp. 211–237). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lee, A. D. (2007). *War in Late Antiquity: A Social History.* Malden (Mass.) – Oxford: Blackwell Pub.

Maenchen-Helfen, O. (1973). *The World of the Huns*. Berkeley – Los Angeles – London: University of California Press.

Mitchell, S. (2015). *A History of the Later Roman Empire AD 284–641*. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.

O'Flynn, J. M. (1983). *Generalissimos of the Western Roman Empire*. Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press.

Paschoud, F. (1997). Pour un mille six centième anniversaire: Le Frigidus en ebullition. *Antiquité tardive, 5,* 275–280.

Pohlsander, H. A. (2004). *The Emperor Constantine*. Taylor and Francis e-Library.

Potter, D. S. (2004). *The Roman Empire at Bay AD 180–395*. London – New York: Routledge.

Salzman, M. R. (2010). Ambrose and the Usurpation of Arbogastes and Eugenius: Reflections on Pagan-Christian Conflict Narratives. *Journal of Early Christian Studies, 18*(2), 191–223.

Seeck, O., & Veith, G. (1913). Die Schlacht am Frigidus. *Klio, 13,* 451–467.

Southern, P. (2004). *The Roman Empire from Severus to Constantine*. Taylor and Francis e-Library.

Southern, P. (2006). *The Roman Army: A Social and Institutional History*. Santa Barbara – Denver – London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Southern, P., & Dixon, K. R. (2014). *The Late Roman Army*. Hoboken: Taylor and Francis.

Stephenson, P. (2010). *Constantine: Roman Emperor, Christian Victor.* New York.: Overlook Press.

Thompson, E. A. (1977). Britain, A. D. 406–410. *Britannia, 8,* 303–318.

Treadgold, W. (1995). *Byzantium and Its Army 284–1081.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Treadgold, W. (1997). *A History of the Byzantine State and Society*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Trout, D. E. (1991). The Years 394 and 395 in the "Epitoma Chronicon": Prosper, Augustine and Claudian. *Classical Philology, 86*(1), 43–47.

Van Nuffelen, P., & Van Hoof, L. (2020). *Jordanes: Romana and Getica* (Translated with an introduction and notes). Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.

Whitby, M. (2008). The Army, c. 420–602. In A. Cameron, B. Ward-Perkins, & M. Whitby (Eds.), *The Cambridge Ancient History* (Vol. 14, Late Antiquity: Empire and Successors, A.D. 425–600; pp. 288–314). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wijnendaele, J. W. P. (2016). Stilicho, Radagaisus, and the So-Called "Battle of Faesulae" (406 CE). *Journal of Late Antiquity, 9*(1), 267–284.

Williams, S. (2000). *Diocletian and the Roman Recovery.* New York – London: Routledge.

Williams, S., & Friell, G. (1994). *Theodosius: the Empire at Bay*. London: Batsford.

PhDr. Stanislav Doležal, Ph.D. / romanus@ff.jcu.cz

Institute of History, Faculty of Arts
University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice
Branišovská 31a, 370 05 České Budějovice, Czech Republic