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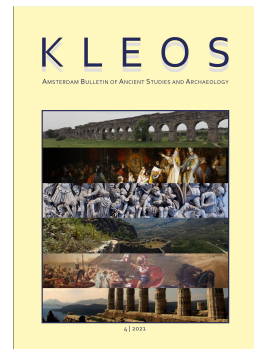
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# Becoming Roman? Romanness, Non-Romanness, and Barbarity in Pacatus' Panegyric on Theodosius

Daan van Diemen

## ABSTRACT

This paper analyses the use of the stereotypical concepts of Romanness and barbarity in Pacatus' *Panegyrici Latini* 2(12), delivered in 389 AD. The Gallic panegyrist had to address the Eastern Roman emperor Theodosius' employment of Gothic troops against his Roman adversary, Magnus Maximus, who was stationed in the Western Empire, which could have been grounds for the Western elite to question his legitimacy. This speech is an early example of the deteriorating dichotomy between Romans and non-Romans, a trend which would continue in the fifth century. The speech provides us with a singular Roman perspective on the changing ethnic composition and hierarchy within the Empire.

By analysing Pacatus' descriptions of the Goths, it becomes clear that they are ascribed more positive, almost Roman traits, while at the same time still corresponding to the prevailing barbarian stereotype to some degree. Moreover, by simultaneously suggesting that Maximus' soldiers have lost their Roman identity, Pacatus problematises the distinctions between Romans and non-Romans, Goths and barbarians, and consequently the idea of civil war itself, even further. These conclusions are compared to E. S. Gruen's theory on the classical perspective on the 'Other', after which it is observed that despite the many inconsistencies in Pacatus' treatment of ethnic groups, the aims and conventions of panegyric insist on a strict distinction in ethnic terminology between Romans and 'Others'.

The systematic study of this speech's views on ethnicity thus provides a new perspective on the changing conventions of the genre of panegyric due to the inconsistent attribution of stereotypical ethnic characteristics, and a point of reference for later, even more complex views on Romanness.

## INTRODUCTION

The last quarter of the fourth century was marked by great wars within the Roman Empire, both as a result of civil strife and

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conflicts with foreign enemies.<sup>1</sup> In 378, a war between the Romans and the newly migrated Goths led to the defeat of the Roman army in the Battle of Adrianople, after which Theodosius seized the Eastern throne.<sup>2</sup> Peace was established four years later through treaties between the Roman and Gothic leaders.<sup>3</sup> In 387, Theodosius marched with the Eastern army and a large amount of Gothic troops, many of whom had also been present at Adrianople, against the Western usurper Maximus, who was defeated, captured and executed on 28 August 388.<sup>4</sup>

One year later, a panegyric – *Panegyrici Latini* 2(12) – was read by the Gallic orator Pacatus in Rome before the emperor and the senate in celebration of this victory. The celebration of the triumph over a usurper was common practice in the fourth century to restore relations between cities and emperors and to secure their loyalty.<sup>5</sup> This panegyric, consisting of 45 paragraphs, starts with praise of Theodosius (4-22), followed by a portrait of Maximus as an inhuman monster (23-31).<sup>6</sup> Theodosius' campaign against Maximus itself comprises a relatively small part of the speech (31-45). Within the account of the campaign, a surprising amount of space (32.2-33) is devoted to the description of the non-Roman troops. As the conventions of the panegyric did not allow Pacatus to criticise the emperor, he had to justify the employment of men who had been responsible for the disastrous Roman defeat ten years earlier against a Roman enemy: after all, an Eastern emperor at the head of a largely non-Roman army defeated the ruler of the Western Empire, therefore his legitimacy would likely have been questionable in the eyes of the Roman elite.<sup>7</sup>

Keeping silent on such a controversial subject, which is usual in panegyrics, was not an option for Pacatus, as Maximus had presumably exploited criticism on his predecessor Gratian's fondness of his Alanic bodyguard during his usurpation, and had

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1 All dates are AD, unless otherwise specified.

2 The group at Adrianople consisted of "Goths from many different backgrounds, as well as all sorts of provincial malcontents" (Kulikowski 2007, 136); Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae* 31.16 mentions the inclusion of Alans and Huns after the battle, cf. *Panegyrici Latini* 2(12).32.4. I will use the term 'Goths' to refer to this heterogenous group. For a historical overview of individual 'barbarian' peoples and their relationships with the Roman Empire, see Geary 1999.

3 Rather than through a single treaty (Halsall 2007, 180-185).

4 Kulikowski 2007, 153.

5 McCormick 1986, 80-83; Leppin 2015, 198-199, 211-214.

6 Pacatus closely follows the rules of the genre regarding structure and contents as formulated by Menander Rhetor in the third century, especially in the first half of the panegyric. With the invective against Maximus, Pacatus tries to disassociate Gaul from the usurper (Nixon/Rodgers 1994, 446-447). The account of the war is more topical for this celebration, as the panegyrics of Late Antiquity became instruments of propaganda, presenting a political situation in a specific way to a specific audience (MacCormack 1981, 3-10). 'Late Antiquity' indicates here the period between the mid-third and mid-eighth century AD.

7 Nixon/Rodgers 1994, 447.

succeeded in instigating revolts among sections of Theodosius' Gothic troops, which had to be suppressed. These events caused criticism on Theodosius among the Roman elite, which Maximus likely used in his own propaganda against Theodosius.<sup>8</sup> Pacatus therefore had to address the issue in front of a sceptical Western audience. This firstly raises the question how Pacatus justified Theodosius' use of non-Romans against Maximus, and secondly, what role employment and complication of the ethnic stereotypes on the one hand, and acknowledgement and denial of Roman identity on the other play in this justification.

Recently, R. Stone has analysed Theodosius' shift in policy regarding the Goths as depicted in Orations 14, 15, and 16 by the Greek panegyrist Themistius, from 379, 381, and 383 respectively, using a similar approach as I will apply in this paper. In the first two panegyrics, Themistius dehumanises the non-Roman invaders through disaster metaphors.<sup>9</sup> Oration 16 marks a shift in Themistius' standpoint. As peace had been established in 382, Themistius had to justify Theodosius' decision to integrate the Goths into the Empire by assuring the audience of Theodosius' ability to 'tame' the barbarians, and comparing them with the historical, successful integration of the Galatians.<sup>10</sup>

While mainly focussing on the presentation of Theodosius' policy in Constantinople, Stone also compares Themistius' speeches with Pacatus' *Panegyrici Latini* 2(12), highlighting the comparable need to reassure the audience of the wisdom of Theodosius' decision by showing that the barbarians fulfilled Roman roles.<sup>11</sup>

However, I believe more nuance is required in Stone's conclusions that Pacatus and Themistius employ largely the same techniques to justify Theodosius' policy. As I will point out, the emphasis on the emperor as a transformer of people in Pacatus' panegyric is stronger with Maximus' men, who Theodosius seemingly transforms into Romans, than with the Goths, who do not turn into Romans.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, Themistius' insistence on the positive precedent of the Galatians contrasts with Pacatus' exemplum of Antonius, which makes clear that this form of positive cooperation with barbarians is actually unprecedented. Stone's conclusion, that Themistius' continuation and development of certain themes throughout the speeches aided the audience in accepting the idea of Gothic settlement, fits the situation in

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8 Ibid., 476, notes 76, 497; 117; Kulikowski 2007, 158-159.

9 Stone 2020, 239-244.

10 Ibid., 247-249.

11 Ibid., 250-251.

12 Ibid., 253.

Constantinople. In the West, however, where the Goths arrived with the invading Theodosius only one year before Pacatus' speech, the implementation of these ideas would be too sudden and alienating for the Western audience, something Pacatus had to avoid. His focus on the unchanged but controlled nature of the Goths fits his purpose better, namely to present Theodosius as a true Roman ruler, not as an Eastern invader leading an army of barbarians.

In this paper, I will analyse the use of ethnic identification and the characteristics ascribed to those identities in Pacatus' argumentation. I will also distinguish four different ways in which Pacatus defends the employment of 'barbarian' soldiers against the Roman adversary, complicating the traditional dichotomy between Romans and non-Romans, as described and discussed by B. Isaac.<sup>13</sup> To do this, I will compare these complications to E. S. Gruen's conclusions on the presentation of relationships between Romans and 'Others'. I will first explore Gruen's concepts of ethnic identity and stereotyping. Next, I will apply these concepts to the groups Pacatus mentions in the order in which they are introduced into his panegyric. These include first the Gothic soldiers of Theodosius, who are explicitly described as behaving in a Roman way, counter to the prevailing stereotype, due to Theodosius' influence. Next I will discuss the Egyptian troops of Antony in a historical exemplum. They are negatively compared to Theodosius' Gothic troops by Pacatus in order to distance his subject from an unwanted comparison, while at the same time emphasising the necessity of employing barbarians against the greater evil of Maximus. Finally, the followers of Maximus will be discussed, who are said to have lost their Romanness through their refusal to follow Theodosius, thus negating the notion of employing barbarians against Romans by Theodosius. However, they seemingly regain their identity once more after switching sides, as Theodosius "bade them become Romans".<sup>14</sup> Pacatus does not apply this shift in identity on the Gothic soldiers, despite their loyalty and Roman behaviour, therefore one wonders what it means to 'become Roman'. The inconsistent reliance on and employment of ethnic stereotypes will therefore prove to be the core element of Pacatus' argumentation in this matter.

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<sup>13</sup> Isaac 2004; cf. Dench 2005, on Roman self-definition. However, Dench' study, like Isaac's, does not include Late Antique texts, in which the definitions and terminology of Roman identity differ, Dench 2005, 30-31; I use the term barbarian to refer to the Roman view on certain peoples, areas and concepts which they considered to be inferior and 'non-Roman' in certain ways, but, as this study will show, this term was not used in a consistent manner. When considering the peoples etc., which the Romans called 'barbarian', in historical context, I will refrain from using this term.

<sup>14</sup> *Panegyrici Latini* 2(12).36.3. Quotations and translations are taken from Nixon/Rodgers 1994.

## ETHNIC STEREOTYPING IN PANEGYRICS

In order to understand the complex negotiation that Pacatus undertakes, it is important to establish the prevailing ethnic stereotypes in Antiquity. The Roman people presumed a common identity based on a certain kinship: *Romanitas* or 'Romanness'. This allowed them to distinguish themselves ethnically from others.<sup>15</sup> These 'others' usually exist in the form of a generalised idea characterised by particular stereotypes. These are described by Isaac, for instance, as 'the Easterners', such as Persians, Egyptians or Greeks, who allegedly suffered from *mollitia* ('softness'), luxury, effeminacy, and moral, physical, and military decay, and as 'the barbarians', often Germanic tribes, who are described as untrustworthy and brutish, but also as ferocious in battle.<sup>16</sup> While these stereotypes were developed centuries earlier, their employment remained common practice throughout Late Antiquity, despite their anachronistic nature due to changing practices of and relations with non-Roman peoples. There was only limited variation possible in the presentation of these stereotypes.<sup>17</sup>

The use of stereotypes supposedly emphasised Roman superiority over these peoples.<sup>18</sup> Among the explanations given for the characteristics that Isaac lists which are used in the sources, the classical 'environmental theory' is the most relevant for the present case study: this theory implies that group characteristics are influenced or determined by one's natural surroundings, for example, people from a harsh climate are by nature stronger than those from warmer climates.<sup>19</sup>

Gruen provides a more nuanced image of the relation between Romans and the 'Other', i.e., those who they are contrasted to, through many examples in which the adaptation of the 'Other' proved to be more important than creating an alienating dichotomy.<sup>20</sup> However, A. J. Quiroga Puertas analyses the attitude towards 'Others' in the works of another panegyrist from the fourth century, Libanius, as an example which contradicts Gruen's view. Libanius maintains a strict contrast between barbarism and (classical) civilisation, making the barbarians the antithesis of the

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15 I follow the definition of ethnicity as given in Eriksen 2010, 16-17, as "a social identity (based on a contrast vis-à-vis others) characterised by metaphoric or fictive kinship"; see also Pohl 2013, for an overview of the complexity of ethnic identification of late Antique and early Medieval groups.

16 Isaac 2004, on the Easterners: 285-286, 291-292, 305-308, 312-313, 405; on the barbarians: 430-431, 433-436.

17 Woolf 2011, 108-113.

18 Isaac 2004, 55-56.

19 Ibid.

20 Gruen 2011, 352.

ideal emperor.<sup>21</sup>

Likewise, the panegyric on Theodosius insists on the distinctiveness of the non-Roman troops, but at the same time downplays the alienating character of the Goths by ascribing an almost Roman behaviour to them and contrasting them with foreigners who are even more distanced from Romanness. Nonetheless, Gruen's conclusion that ancient authors often sought to reconcile the 'Other' with themselves does not fully apply here: Pacatus, as we will see, emphasises the barbarity of Theodosius' non-Roman troops, while at the same time providing certain elements in their behaviour that seemingly and paradoxically contradict with this view. This follows G. Woolf's notion that "[stereotypes] change constantly to suit the communicative and persuasive strategies of those who to employ them".<sup>22</sup> Combined with Quiroga Puertas' observations, this paper will show that Gruen's conclusions are seemingly often not applicable to panegyrics, in which the stark contrasts with the stereotypical barbarian allow the author to place his subject in a more positive light.<sup>23</sup>

Throughout these complex and contrasting views, Pacatus maintains the suggestion that the dichotomy between barbarian and Roman prevails. His argumentation and motives for this contradictory presentation of things will be compared to Gruen's conclusions. This will provide a new perspective on the changing conventions of the genre of panegyric regarding the negative depiction of non-Romans amidst the rigid rules given by the rhetorical handbooks, and serve as a point of reference for later, even more complex views on Romanness.

## THE 'LOYAL BARBARIANS' OF THEODOSIUS

In the first part of the panegyric, the non-Romans are seldomly mentioned. Although Pacatus recalls the state of the Empire at the time when Theodosius became emperor, saying that "barbarian peoples had flooded over Roman territory like a kind of flood", after this the Goths and other tribes are hardly mentioned in the description of Theodosius, thus downplaying their role as enemies in earlier wars.<sup>24</sup> Their destruction of the countryside is only

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21 Quiroga Puertas 2013, 61, 65.

22 Woolf 2011, 112.

23 In accordance with Woolf 2011, 113.

24 *Panegyrici Latini* 2(12).3.3. Cf. Ammianus Marcellinus' *Res Gestae* 31.5.12 for a similar flood-metaphor for invading peoples (Burgersdijk 2016, 122). Stone 2020, 252 states that Pacatus, like Themistius' *Oration* 16, does not dehumanise the Goths through disaster-metaphors, but as this simile refers to earlier wars instead of the contemporary situation, his conclusions that Pacatus and Themistius depict the allied Goths in a more positive way than in the earlier panegyrics holds; see *Panegyrici Latini* 2(12).11.4-5; 22.3 for the other mentions of the Goths before the narration of the campaign.

touched upon, and Adrianople is left out altogether. Pacatus makes sure he does not dwell upon the wrongdoings of their enemies-turned-allies.

In contrast, when the narration of the campaign itself begins, the Gothic troops receive more attention. In the description of the preparations for war (32.3-4), Theodosius' decision to employ the "onetime enemies of Rome", as Pacatus calls them, is presented as serving multiple goals: sparing the Roman population by recruiting non-Romans, defeating the usurper, and strengthening the borders by neutralising "forces of dubious loyalty". With the treaties of 382 there was peace with the Goths, but that did not mean they were to be trusted. In order to contain the problem, the borders had to be heavily defended to prevent more hostile peoples from crossing the Danube, which a force of Greuthungi had attempted in 386 without success.<sup>25</sup> The Romans could not risk a Gothic revolt because of a sudden increase in their troops, and so they had to be kept away from the border.

However, the rest of 32.3-4 does not exhibit any signs of this "dubious loyalty": Pacatus points out that for barbarians, they are uncharacteristically loyal, showing discipline, following orders and being "afraid of being marked down as absent without leave. There was no disorder, no confusion and no looting, as is usual among the barbarians." He continues by saying that they even decline any form of compensation, except that their loyalty should be recognised. It is emphasised that the barbarians under Theodosius do not plunder the Roman countryside, as they had done before the treaties were made and as the audience might have expected. Pacatus is having it both ways in his argumentation: the mention of their "usual behaviour" reinforces the stereotype, whereas the surprising lack of this behaviour emphasises the exceptionality of the situation.<sup>26</sup> Pacatus therefore both confirms the barbarian stereotype and downplays it: the Goths appear loyal before Theodosius, but he keeps them where he is able to control them. They are not Roman, and therefore their loyalty to Rome is not fixed. This is strengthened by Pacatus' statement that Theodosius granted the allied non-Roman peoples "the privileged status of fellow soldiers", for which he uses the uncommon word *commilites*.<sup>27</sup> The choice for this word is striking, as a commonly used word was available: *commilitones*, which is often found in military speeches to emphasise the comradery between the

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<sup>25</sup> Curran 1997, 106.

<sup>26</sup> A common technique of panegyrist: Maguinness 1933, 121-123.

<sup>27</sup> I follow Mynors 1964 and the manuscripts in reading *commilitum*; Baehrens 1874 suggests *commilitii*, which is adopted by the TLL. The only other place *commiles* occurs in classical Latin is Caesar, *Bellum Civile* 2.29, but this passage is badly corrupted and virtually intelligible.

commanders and soldiers.<sup>28</sup> Pliny uses this word five times in his *Panegyricus* to accentuate Trajan's military character and his affinity with the troops. Since Pacatus often echoes this text, it is clear that he must be familiar with this more common word, and his choice for *commilites* is likely a conscious one.<sup>29</sup> With it, he implicitly rejects the connotations of comradeship and equality between a general and his soldiers, which would have inevitably been called to mind through its intertextual relation with especially Pliny, and introduces a more neutral term: the Gothic troops are fellow soldiers, not comrades to the emperor.<sup>30</sup>

The positive depiction of Germanic peoples is not without precedent: Tacitus' *Germania* had ascribed many positive, Roman aspects to the Germans, diminishing their 'Otherness', while not denying their barbarian vices.<sup>31</sup> Ethnic stereotypes are often adapted to fit the agenda of the author, but these adaptations were limited, as the stereotypes were derived from earlier texts from which they assumed authority.<sup>32</sup> Pacatus could not deny the barbarian nature of the Goths by presenting them as unambiguously good: this would have seemed absurd in the eyes of his audience. Instead, he states that despite their nature, the Goths act in a miraculously acceptable manner because of Theodosius' influence. The stereotype remains intact, but its negative aspects are neutralised.

### THE 'INFERIOR BARBARIANS' OF MARK ANTONY

In the passage following the one discussed above, a complex comparison is made between Theodosius' cooperation with non-Roman peoples, and the alliance of Cleopatra and Mark Antony in the Battle of Actium in 31 BC. This, too, was a war in which Roman troops fought together with foreigners, namely Egyptians. It seems that Pacatus inserts this reference to a war from four centuries earlier because it is an obvious comparison to make, albeit not a flattering one: both Theodosius and Antony were Roman rulers of the eastern half of the empire and both challenged the ruler in Rome whilst being allied to a non-Roman army. Pacatus aims to undermine existing or potential criticisms by using this

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<sup>28</sup> Oxford Latin Dictionary: *Commilito*.

<sup>29</sup> Rees 2013a, on the influence of Pliny's *Panegyricus*, which precedes the panegyric on Theodosius within the sequence of speeches in the *Panegyrici Latini*, on Pacatus. See especially his conclusion (258): "Anthologised at the head of the collection, the *Panegyricus* enjoys a canonical and originary status; juxtaposition with it, and lexical and tropological echoes of it in the speech to Theodosius invite—even demand—comparison."

<sup>30</sup> Stone 2020, 251, takes this notable choice of words not into account, stating that Pacatus, like Themistius, presents Theodosius as "the catalyst for the transformation of barbarian soldiers into true Roman soldiers."

<sup>31</sup> Gruen 2011, 165-168, 172-174.

<sup>32</sup> Woolf 2011, 111-115.

comparison for his own interest, as he denies explicitly that the conquered Antony is an equal to Theodosius, and goes on by comparing Cleopatra's Egyptians, negatively depicted as stereotypical Easterners, with the Goths, whom he presents as their counterparts (33.4-5).<sup>33</sup>

In 33.4, Pacatus points out the differences in character and behaviour between the two peoples: the Egyptians travel by ship and make use of comfortable but unwarlike clothing and instruments, while the Goths use military instruments and wear armour. He explains these differences by emphasising the environments from which they came, in line with the 'environmental theory' as described by Isaac.<sup>34</sup> Pacatus says that the Egyptians "were sent forth by enervating Pharos and effeminate Canopus, and the Nile, nursemaid of fickle peoples". The Goths, on the other hand, "menacing Caucasus, icy Taurus and the Danube, which hardens mighty bodies, had poured forth". Pacatus refers to *mollitia* in *mollis Canopus*, the "effeminate Canopus", and its direct contrast with *durator Hister*, the Danube that hardens.

Next, in the same passage, he contrasts the two groups' motives to go to war: the Egyptians are driven by their queen, suffering from "a foreign passion", the Goths "by love of praise and a concern to share in your [=Theodosius'] glory", a stereotypical Roman motivation for war. Pacatus ends this comparison by concluding that the Goths strived to liberate Rome from a pretender, whereas Cleopatra and Antony are presented as having attempted to take it from the rightful ruler, Augustus.

The purpose of this passage is somewhat confusing on multiple levels, as the alliance between non-Roman troops and Theodosius, victor in a civil war, is presented as legitimate and positive for Rome, whereas the alliance of Antony, defeated in a war against another Roman, is not. C. E. V. Nixon and B. S. Rodgers explain that this passage distracts the audience from questioning Theodosius' claim to loyalty after employing non-Romans.<sup>35</sup> However, as I stated above, this passage serves as more than just a distraction: it overrules a possibly more negative comparison between Theodosius and Antony. In Augustus' propaganda, Antony's alliance with Cleopatra is presented as explicitly non-Roman, causing Antony's Romanness to be questioned.<sup>36</sup> This allowed Augustus to present the conflict as a foreign rather than a civil war,

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33 Maguinness 1933, 134, describes this as the panegyrist's technique of "contemptuous acquiescence", a possible objection described in such terms that it sounds absurd to the audience.

34 Isaac 2004, 439.

35 Nixon/Rodgers 1994, 499, note 121.

36 Eder 2005, 20-22, on the propaganda war between Augustus and Antony.

as the latter would reflect negatively on the military accomplishment.<sup>37</sup> If Antony had lost his Romanness because of his association with foreigners, then why would the same principle not apply to Theodosius? Pacatus answers this question by claiming that there are various degrees of foreign peoples: Cleopatra's weak, decadent, Eastern troops are clearly inferior to Theodosius' robust, militant barbarians, whose desire to serve Theodosius and to free Rome makes them almost, but not quite, Roman. The use of stereotypes is important in both historiography and political writing, as "stereotypes of barbarism and civilization [...] might provide frames of reference against which historical events or political actions acquired significance."<sup>38</sup> Pacatus denies this significance of a historical precedent through a distinction within the barbarian stereotype. By comparing both peoples, Pacatus shows that they are nothing alike, and neither are Theodosius and the former-Roman Antony.

This negative association of a Roman ruler with barbarians might also call into mind a more recent precedent, namely Gratian's closeness to his Alanic troops. The main point the Western audience had to be convinced of was that Theodosius' relationship with the non-Roman troops was not comparable with that of Gratian, but as Pacatus could hardly be critical on Gratian, whose death Theodosius avenged by killing Maximus and who had been acknowledged as legitimate emperor in the West in Theodosius' propaganda, this had to be implied by using an earlier precedent.

In a last complicated point in 33.5, Pacatus points out that employing barbarian troops is not normal: "and so it seemed the more unworthy to you, O Emperor, that anyone could be found to be a partner in a sin of which the barbarian would act as avenger." The fact that barbarians are needed to defeat Maximus enhances the negative characterisation of the usurper, rendering the positive description of the Goths he made earlier somewhat obsolete. The notion of 'good barbarians' would be too strange for Pacatus' audience, and the orator had to remind them that neither he nor Theodosius considered the Goths to be as such.<sup>39</sup> The Goths are merely 'better barbarians' compared to those of Antony, and a lesser evil compared to Maximus, but as barbarians they are an evil nonetheless.

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37 Salerno 2018, 153-156, on the characterisation of Antony as Eastern ruler.

38 Woolf 2011, 113.

39 Cf. *ibid.*, 114, on a description of Gauls by Ammianus Marcellinus, who are depicted as if little had changed since Caesar described them, four centuries earlier: "The utility of these myths [of ethnography] set limits on their revisability. Ammianus' Gaul could not become unrecognizably un-Gallic."

## THE 'FORMER-ROMAN SOLDIERS' OF MAXIMUS

In the rest of the panegyric, the orator talks about Theodosius' collective troops of both Roman and non-Roman soldiers. However, Pacatus shifts his focus to the Roman troops by emphasising their Romanness in these passages: despite the non-Roman auxiliaries, the army remains Roman.<sup>40</sup>

In the battle narrative that follows, Maximus' men are depicted as his partners-in-crime, who receive well-deserved punishment (34.1-2). Theodosius' soldiers fight while being "mindful of their ancient valor, their Roman name, and last but not least their Emperors"; the enemies, knowing that "they had sold their services for money and torn Italy apart", fight and die desperately.<sup>41</sup> Theodosius' (Roman) men remember that they are Roman, whereas this does not apply to Maximus' men, who have lost their Romanness, as shows from the following passages.<sup>42</sup> In 36.1-4, Pacatus tells us that when Maximus' men are defeated, there are those who repent in their dying moment, as they "poured out their last breath in admiration of your [=Theodosius'] name and denunciation of their own leader". Too late these traitors realised their crimes, but others begged Theodosius for forgiveness, of which Pacatus says: "You [=Theodosius] did not spurn them arrogantly as vanquished men, nor angrily, as offenders, nor carelessly, as if they were of little use, but treating them with kindness and generosity you bade them become Romans."

In their sincere humiliation and remorse, Maximus' men receive forgiveness, and through it *Romanitas*. In this text, as in other panegyrics, the Roman identity of those born within the Empire is linked to the leader they follow.<sup>43</sup> Those who served Maximus could not be Romans until they changed their allegiance and this statement therefore emphasises Theodosius' own Roman identity as the only path towards Romanness, as well as the legitimacy of his claim to the throne.

## CONCLUSION

There are four methods to be distinguished which Pacatus uses to justify the employment of non-Romans in a civil war: first, he

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<sup>40</sup> Stone 2020, 251-252 suggests that this lack of differentiation between Romans and non-Romans implies, from this point of the speech on, their equation in Pacatus' eyes, but he does not discuss the negative note on the necessity of the lesser evil in *Panegyrici Latini* 2(12).33.5, which makes this implication to me seem unlikely.

<sup>41</sup> *Panegyrici Latini* 2(12).35.4.

<sup>42</sup> Rees 2013b, 51-53, argues furthermore that the presentation of Maximus' forces as non-Roman enhances the *Romanitas* of Gaul, which Pacatus presents as a victim of Maximus, not as an accomplice.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. van Diemen 2018, on the alienisation of Maxentius' men in *Panegyrici Latini* 12(9).

shows that Theodosius is more than capable of handling these untrustworthy barbarian troops, keeping them under control in order to withhold them from doing more evil. Secondly, the Goths are described as Roman-like barbarians who behave counter to the prevailing stereotypes. Although they exhibit characteristics based on the environment from which they derive, these characteristics are presented in a positive way compared to those of other non-Romans employed in the distant past, with the implication that the cooperation with the Goths under Theodosius was more positive than Gratian's criticised fondness of non-Romans. Thirdly, Pacatus briefly mentions the fact that Maximus necessitates the lesser evil of enrolling the Goths. Finally, by following the wrong leader, Maximus' men cannot be considered Romans, and therefore the notion of civil war is not applicable on this conflict.

Gruen's conclusions that "the expression of collective character in antiquity [...] owes less to insisting on distinctiveness from the alien than to postulating links with, adaptation to, and even incorporation of the alien" sheds an interesting light on this text, but cannot be adopted in its entirety.<sup>44</sup> Pacatus is inconsistent in his application of the hard dichotomy between Romans and 'Others', as the distance between Theodosius' Roman subjects on the one hand and the Goths and Maximus' men on the other changes to fit the argument. However, he keeps insisting on an absolute distinction between the groups, as the genre of panegyric does not allow any grey areas. The inconsistencies in this panegyric and the deteriorating dichotomy that Pacatus tries to uphold are a trend which can be observed to be developed in later panegyrists, such as Claudian and Sidonius Apollinaris.<sup>45</sup> Analysis of ethnic stereotypes within these authors will add to this discussion.

It is significant that despite their Roman-like behaviour and motives, the non-Roman troops explicitly do not receive a Roman identity: the "privileged status of fellow soldiers" mentioned in 32.3 is all they are able to obtain. They become more virtuous following Theodosius, as the lack of barbarian behaviour shows, but it seems that for them, in opposition to Maximus' men – who were born in the Empire –, virtue and following the right leader is not enough. They are not born in the Empire, and remain "forces of dubious loyalty", neither losing their barbarity, nor obtaining *Romanitas*. This way, Pacatus reassures the audience of Theodosius' good intentions towards Rome: the non-Roman troops are subject to true Roman rule, as it has been for centuries, and their own *Romanitas* remains exclusive and unthreatened by these

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<sup>44</sup> Gruen 2011, 352.

<sup>45</sup> See also Von Rummel, 2013, esp. 373-378, on the complication of the Roman-barbarian dichotomy in Late Antiquity and the early Medieval period.

new inhabitants of the Empire. Or, at least, that is how Pacatus presents it and it is what the audience would like to believe.

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