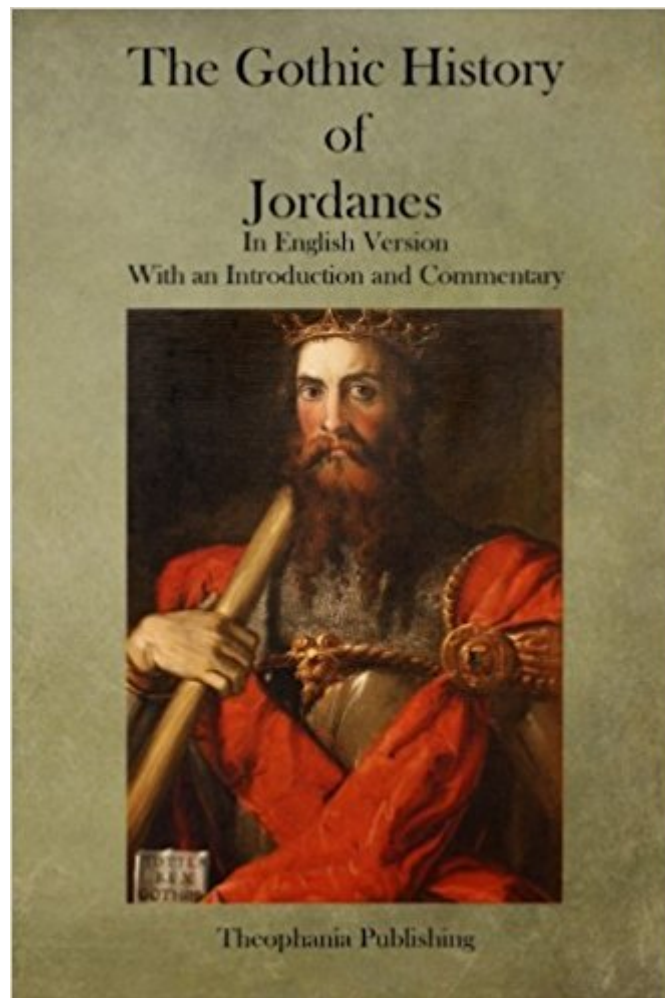




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The Gothic History Of Jordanes



Synopsis

Thank you for checking out this book by Theophania Publishing. We appreciate your business and look forward to serving you soon. We have thousands of titles available, and we invite you to search for us by name, contact us via our website, or download our most recent catalogues. Jordanes, as he himself tells us a couple of times, was of Gothic descent and wrote this work as a summary of Cassiodorus' much longer treatment of the history of the Goths. Because Cassiodorus' book no longer survives, Jordanes' treatment is often our only source for some of the Gothic history it describes. He wrote the *Getica* during the later stages of the reign of Justinian, not too long after the demise of the Ostrogothic kingdom in Italy. Jordanes divided his work, apart from the brief introduction and conclusion, into four main sections reflected in the contents below. These are a Geographical Introduction; the United Goths; the Visigoths; and the Ostrogoths. Other large sections, such as the discussion of the Huns, he treats as digressions of a sort the more interesting or important of these have been added to the contents. Mierow prefaces his translation with a detailed literary analysis of all the topics in the text; this is not, however, reproduced here.

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Customer Reviews

The Goths, unlike many other barbarians, were fortunate in having the zealous energies of both a missionary and a historian. The missionary Wulfilas, in translating much of the Bible into Gothic, saved the language from the near-oblivion which was the fate of Thracian and Illyrian. Jordanes, the historian, preserved much of the Goths' history and legendary pre-history. Jordanes' work was an epitome or summary, from memory, of a now lost 12-volume history of the Goths by Cassiodorus which Jordanes says that he had the opportunity to read at a three-day sitting. It makes one wonder

how much was irrevocably lost, as well as grateful for his efforts. The book is a reprint of a 1915 edition. The overall quality and readability is quite high, unlike some reprints of older works which I've seen. Fully one-quarter of the book is composed of introductory sections on a variety of themes, including Jordanes' name, ethnicity, ecclesiastical situation, language (Mierow concludes that Latin was Jordanes' second language), and an analysis of his probable and possible sources apart from Cassiodorus. If you like philological analyses of these kinds of questions, with reference to scholarly differences of opinion, as I do, then you will enjoy the introduction tremendously. Keep in mind that the state of the scholarship is as of 1915. I'm not a scholar, I just play one on, but I assume that at least some of the conclusions of the introduction have been called into question. That being said, this introduction is an excellent starting point for the study of the text, and that is how it should be viewed. Appended to the text, unfortunately at the end of the book instead of the bottom of the relevant page, is a commentary in the form of footnotes which offers explanatory information, cross-references to other writers, and variant readings of the text. These should be treated with some caution; I found one note which stated that the Sarmatians were Slavs, when in fact they were a group of Iranian-speaking peoples. The first part of the work itself deals with the legendary origins of the Goths. Mierow points out that Jordanes was anxious to demonstrate the distinguished history of the Goths, and so he makes the Dacian King Burebista a Goth, as well as the Thracian Getae and the s (Jordanes explains as Gothic women whose husbands were away at war; they got bored, apparently, and decided to do some campaigning themselves), and portrays the Goths as players in the Trojan War and involved in an early, unsuccessful invasion of Egypt. The later part of the work deals with actual historical events. Jordanes is our only surviving source for many events involving the Goths, as well as the Vandals, Heruli, Gepids, and Huns. He is our only source for the Battle of the Catalaunian Fields or Chalons, as well as much of the information about Attila. There is another edition on at about half the price of this one. I might buy that one eventually. I have read other books from that publisher, and they are generally text only, with no introduction or notes, and for this book I really wanted some background information.

THANKS

Jordanes knew very well who the Getae werethe Goth / Getae confusion may disappear if one chooses to see beyond this stumble block..... his Goths had nothing to do with the Germanic people that we have come to associate the them in early Middle Ages.

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