



# The Goths

*By Peter Heather*

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The volume is divided into three parts, corresponding to the three main phases in Gothic history: their early history down to the fourth century, the revolution in Gothic society set in motion by the arrival of the Huns, and the history of the Gothic successor states to the western Roman Empire. At its heart lies a new vision of Gothic identity, and of the social caste by whom it was defined and transmitted.

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## Editorial Review

### Amazon.com Review

Although they exerted a profound, far-reaching influence on Continental geopolitics, the historical Goths (as opposed to contemporary fans of the Cure and Bauhaus) are little known. Peter Heather provides a readable precis of the Goths' role in ancient and medieval European history, examining the murky origins of various Gothic-speaking groups in the Vistula River region of northern Poland, from which they spread out eastward and southward. Pressured by the expanding Roman empire on one side and migrating Hunnish peoples from Central Asia on the other, the Goths aggressively defended their territory and eventually attacked westward, contributing to the collapse of Rome and establishing Gothic empires in Italy, Spain, and North Africa. Heather's useful book ends with the fall of these governments in the 7th century. --Gregory McNamee

### Review

"...a volume of central importance on the place of the Goths in early European history and a fine contribution to the study of the transformation of Europe after Rome." *Times Literary Supplement, January 1998.*

"... an excellent introduction to the student" *Archaeological Review from Cambridge*

### From the Back Cover

Between the first and seventh centuries AD, Gothic groups moved thousands of miles across the map of Europe, from the fringes of the Baltic to the shores of the Atlantic ocean. In the process, they transformed themselves from an insignificant people on the outskirts of the known world into highly militarized forces, capable of carving out successor states for themselves from the body politic of the Roman Empire.

This book draws on all the available literary and archaeological evidence, much of the latter never before discussed in English, to reconstruct the Goths' dramatic history, and to explore the meaning of Gothic identity at different moments and in different contexts.

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