



Theodahad: A Platonic King at the Collapse of Ostrogothic Italy

Massimiliano Vitiello

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Educated in Platonic philosophy rather than the military arts, the Ostrogothic king Theodahad was never meant to rule. His unexpected nomination as co-regent by his cousin Queen Amalasuintha plunged him into the intrigues of the Gothic court, and Theodahad soon conspired to assassinate the queen. But, once alone on the throne, his lack of political experience and military skill made him ineffective at best and dangerously incompetent at worst. Defeated by the Byzantine emperor Justinian, Theodahad was killed by his own subjects.

In *Theodahad*, Massimiliano Vitiello rigorously investigates the ancient sources in order to reconstruct the events of Theodahad's life and the contours of sixth-century diplomacy and political intrigues. Painting a picture of an unlikely king whose reign helped spell the end of Ostrogothic Italy, Vitiello's book not only illuminates Theodahad's own life but also offers new insight into the sixth-century Mediterranean world.

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