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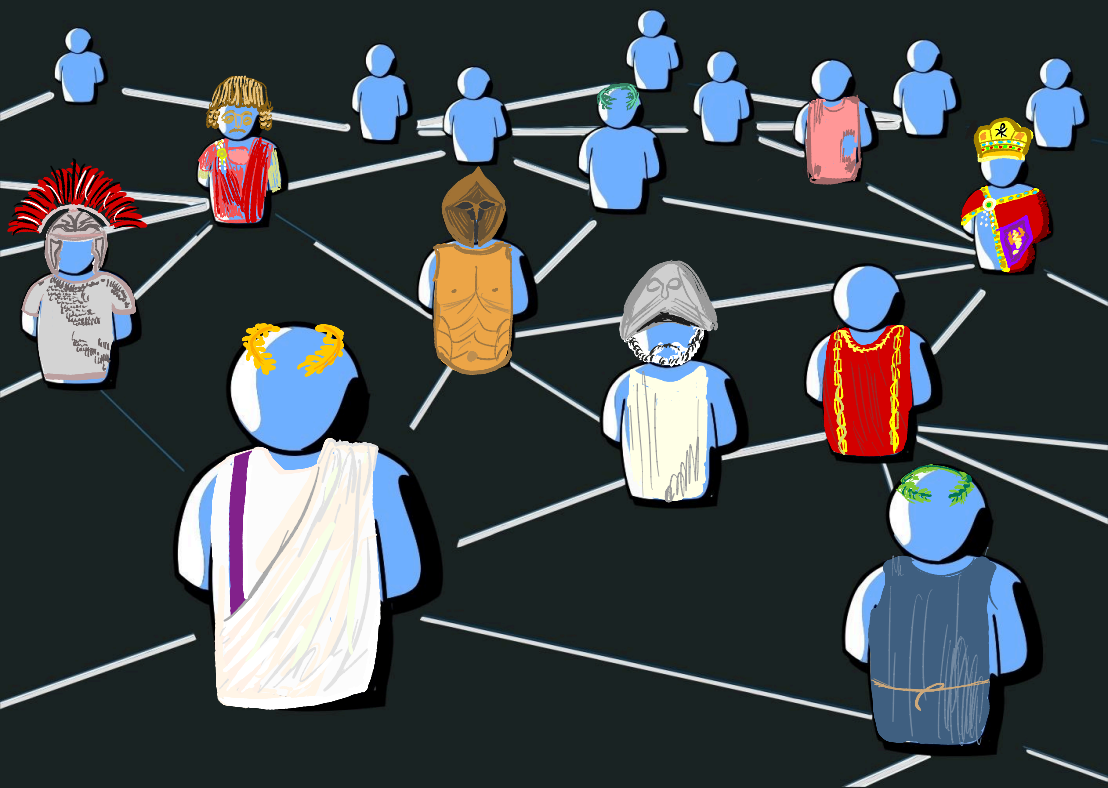
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THE TIES THAT BIND
ANCIENT POLITICS AND NETWORK ANALYSIS

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Network Management in Ostrogothic Italy: Theoderic the Great and the Refusal of Sectarian Conflict

Keywords

Abstract

The intent of this paper is to study the societal structure of late antiquity, as it is revealed and analysed through the methodologies of Social Network Analysis, and to ascertain whether any active attempts at intervention on the part of the managing agent can be discerned that resulted in meaningful changes of societal (i.e. network) structures benefitting the managing agent. Did individual actions, decisions, etc., that have hitherto been known but not studied in the wider perspective of underlying societal structures, have a meaningful regulatory impact on these structures?

1   Introduction∗

"Network management in Ostrogothic Italy" – this title may at first glance seem ostentatiously modern, as a way of re-packaging ancient history in a modernistic fashion palatable to the 'internet generation'. This is by no means the intended effect. It seems appropriate, then, to first discuss the chosen title and its implications, before moving on to the core intent of this paper. In fact, the concept of "network management", in a general sense, may provide a reasonable and promising starting point for a network approach to ancient history. The fundamental intent of historical network studies is to combine sociological concepts and an array of different methodologies commonly subsumed under the heading of Social Network Analysis in an effort to discover societal structures of the past, and particularly those that may be overlooked or dismissed as inconsequential in traditional historical research. These societal structures must then be analysed by aid of more traditional methodologies of historical research and thus, hopefully, be proven to be significant. The historian is tasked with following and analysing processes over large time-spans, even if the fragmentary nature of his sources often militate against this. Thus, one of the aims of this paper is to visualise historic processes that take place behind the scenes, oftentimes invisible to the casual observer.

In defining the precise nature of "network management", a careful and circumspect approach is indicated. Thus, let us first attempt to define what we mean by "management". In his monograph on the fundamental organisational principles of human labour, Tony Watson describes the function of the manager as follows: "As a *function* management is the overall shaping of relationships, understandings and processes within a work organisation to bring about the completion of the tasks undertaken in the organisation's name in such a way that the organisation continues into the future."[1]

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1   WATSON (2006), p. 167 and 455.

This functional role does not *a priori* necessitate a specific skill set, as we are not yet dealing with a clearly defined modern job description. Instead, Watson mostly intends to delineate a meta-position, concerned with coordinating labour processes and infrastructure, so as to ensure a positive overall result. Thus, on the subject of the actual activity of the manager, he simply adds: "As an *activity*, management is the bringing about of this 'shaping'".[2] The fundamental task of management, therefore, is rooted in a specific notion of order and structure and is to ascertain the future viability of an organisation. This is by no means limited to economic entities. Rather, international organisation and states also rely on a high degree of organisation and management in order to survive and thrive. It is no great leap to imagine a state leader in the mould of a 'statesman-manager', a role that even today is often ascribed to Theoderic the Great in late antique Ostrogothic Italy. And indeed, it is rarely possible to see both planning and organisation of a state entity so obviously depending on the skills of a single person.[3]

But before we can turn to the subject of Theoderic's management skills, we must first attempt to further define the term 'management' on a broader scale. In a paper published in 2001, Jörg Sydow and Arnold Windeler characterise the important function of management as follows: "Management meint in funktionaler Sicht die Planung, Organisation, Führung und Kontrolle sozialer Systeme."[4] In comparison to Watson's definition, this short sentence implies a much broader role for management, undoubtedly due to Sydow's and Windeler's broader perspective. While Watson's reflections ground in the realities of labour processes, Sydow and Windeler are concerned with strategic management of interorganisational structures. Thus, they operate at a macro level which treats economic entities like corporations as parts of a higher, state level organisational structure. At the same time, these two divergent viewpoints show how complex the role of management can be and how differently it can be interpreted. Generally, management is something that happens when (self-)organising structures, including social structures, appear and that is intended to ensure their survival. Therefore, despite its modernist sound, 'management' means nothing more than the task of organising that which must necessarily be

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2   *Ibid.*, p. 455.
3   Cf. WOLFRAM (1993), p. 17: "Kaiserlich war auch des Gotenkönigs Herrschaft über die römi- sche Bürokratie, die er bis zu den höchsten Rängen hinauf besetzte; […] Theoderich entschied über die Zugehörigkeit zum Senat, übte die Blutsgerichtbarkeit wie das Gnaden- recht über alle Bewohner Italiens aus und besaß die Hoheit in kirchlichen Angelegenheiten; eine Zuständigkeit, die Theoderichs heermeisterliche Befugnisse allerdings wesentlich über- traf."
4   SYDOW / WINDELER (2001), p. 134.

organises,[5] and thus we can see that for our purposes the usual, modern definition of 'management' as an industrial or economic skill set is too restricted.

That being said, and with this wider notion of 'management' in mind, we must now turn from the general to the specific and gain clarity on what exactly we mean by 'networks'. 'Networks' are, speaking as generally as it is possible to speak, structures which consist of nodes (actors) and edges (ties). According to Clyde Mitchell, a 'social network' is "a specific set of linkages among a defined set of persons, with the additional property that the characteristics of these linkages as a whole may be used to interpret the social behaviour of the persons involved."[6] Beyond the individual level, networks can also be comprised of larger entities, such as corporations or organisations, which then form part of a higher organisational structure in which they serve as individual actors establishing ties to other actors of equal characteristics. Such a collective in turn depends on management, as Sydow and Windeler ascertain: "Beim Management von Unternehmungsnetzwerken, dem Netzwerkmanagement, geht es im Kern um die Organisation der Aktivitäten und Beziehungen zwischen den beteiligten Unternehmungen".[7]

What follows is that network management is a process happening on a macro level and in which four distinct tasks may be discerned: selection, allocation, regulation, and evaluation. In what follows, I shall restrict myself to discussing the first task – selection –, as it will play a large part in the subsequent analysis of Theoderic's network management. First, let us turn again to Sydow and Windeler: "Ferner – oft zu allererst – sind die Organisationen auszuwählen, mit denen im Netzwerk zusammengearbeitet bzw. mit denen die Zusammenarbeit beendet werden soll."[8] Network management thus includes responsibility for the selection of actors which are allowed into the network structure. This also includes the inverse responsibility of eliminating unproductive or redundant actors from the same structure.[9] At the same time,

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5   This view is also espoused by VON DER OELSNITZ (2009), p. 9f. with respect to the logistical mastery of both Romans and Incas: "Legt man aber keinen Wert auf das Begriffsmerkmal der ökonomischen Perspektive, dann wird schnell deutlich, daß Führungs- und Organisationsfunktionen schon seit Menschengedenken, spätestens aber seit Erfindung der Schrift, von besonders qualifizierten Personen ausgeübt wurden." Refering particularly to ancient management, he asks: "Entsprechen diese Investitionen in den reibungslosen Austausch von Waren und Nachrichten nicht auch dem modernen Managementgedanken?"

6   MITCHELL (1969), p. 2.

7   SYDOW / WINDELER (2001), p. 134.

8   *Ibid*.

9   PAYER (2002), p. 52 states that, as the focus of management lies on achieving success, management should in all cases strive to create and maintain a common orientation towards success.

as the managing agent is ultimately responsible for maintaining the network, he is by this very fact imbued with the necessary authority to include or exclude individual agents. Thus, the overall level of efficiency within the organisation is less an objectively quantifiable value and more the result of the individual, even personal perspective of the management level.

But we can further characterise 'network management' by widening the scope of our understanding of it. Just like the nature of 'management' as such, the nature of 'network management' can also be understood in broader terms if we adapt it to neighbouring areas of human enterprise not restricted to economic activity. Thus, we can also understand 'network management' as the processes of maintaining and 'managing' *social* networks, thereby ridding ourselves of the economic focus on efficiency and rationalisation, for instance within companies. Instead, 'network management' can also describe an active attempt at shaping and structuring societal systems.

In summary, then, this is what we mean by talking about 'network management' in Ostrogothic Italy. The intent of this paper is to study the societal structure of late antiquity, as it is revealed and analysed through the methodologies of Social Network Analysis, and to ascertain whether any active attempts at intervention on the part of the managing agent can be discerned that resulted in meaningful changes of societal (i.e. network) structures benefitting the managing agent. Did individual actions, decisions, etc., that have hitherto been known but not studied in the wider perspective of underlying societal structures, have a meaningful regulatory impact on these structures? If we are able to show that this was the case, it would further strengthen the historical legitimacy and trustworthiness of the network structures described by the heuristic tool of network analysis. Though, it has to be said, these network structures (mostly visualised in the form of network graphs) can never aspire to complete and utter accuracy; they will always have to remain somewhat hypothetical, as we simply do not have enough sources providing us with the information direly needed for operating network analysis exhaustively. Thus, our reconstructions of networks cannot and should not be seen as depictions of 'historical reality'. Instead, they should be seen as models which can help us gain further insights into the intriguing societal processes lurking behind narrative and political history which cannot be gleaned from traditional close reading of sources mostly focused on their own narrow horizon.

So – Theoderic, network manager? Our introductory remarks may lead us to conclude that analyses of ancient social networks can potentially advance our knowledge. This does not automatically mean, however, that past societies or even individual actors were conscious of these societal structures or of the effect of their own actions. However, ignorance of widespread consequences does not negate the existence of such consequences. Actions that were intended as limited, local interventions could very well exert influence on a much larger

scale, even if actors and participants are not aware of the fact. In any case, it is hardly imaginable that a society such as Ostrogothic Italy or, indeed, its most far-sighted ruler, could envision the complex multitude of possible consequences or the vast interconnected sphere of cause and effect for the whole structure of society. By no means should we assume such an opposition. But, as I hope will become clear from the following case study, we should make room for the possibility of sweeping changes effected by smaller and clearly defined interventions.

2   Relationships surrounding the trial of Boethius

Our case study will focus on the person of Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius, a noble Roman in the service of the rulers of Ostrogrothic Italy.[10] A scion of a reputable senatorial family, orphaned at a young age and later to be renowned for his erudition, Boethius began his political career fairly late but with immediate success. Though he had been occupied for years with only occasional tasks on behalf of Theoderic,[11] he was appointed consul *sine colleg*a in 510 on the explicit recommendation of the king himself.[12] Twelve years later, in 522, his sons followed him as consuls, being appointed simultaneously and by circumventing the traditional selection of one consulship by the Eastern emperor.[13] In the same year, Boethius was also appointed as head of the royal chancellery,[14] an obvious sign that he and his family had risen to the inner circle of the king. Unfortunately, our sources do not tell us much about how this remarkable rise had happened. In any case, Boethius' fall from Theoderic's good graces came about as suddenly and abruptly as had his rise. The following year, in late 523, Boethius' situation, already compromised by his many dealings (not all of them friendly) with other dignitaries of the court, degraded completely. While attempting to shield a fellow senator from, as he saw it, unfounded

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10   PLRE II, p. 233–237. References to the prosopography of western Roman senators under Ostrogrothic rule included in SCHÄFER (1991), p. 9–117 are always indicated by SCHÄFER (1991), followed by the identifying numeral. In the case of Boethius himself, thus: SCHÄFER (1991) Nr. 30.

11   For example: around 506/7 AD, he was chosen to select and present diplomatic gifts to be sent to the Burgundians and Franks on account of his learning (cf. Cassiod. *var*. 1,45; 2,40). At around the same time, he was also asked to investigate a possible case of peculation involving payments to the domestici equitum et peditum (cf. Cassiod. *var*. 1,10 and see also BARNISH [1992], p. 12–14). The latter task was probably also entrusted to him on account of his erudition; the relevant letter in the Variae heavily emphasizes the knowledge of arithmetic.

12   LIEBENAM (1909), p. 53.

13   On the late antique consulate, see for instance LANCON (2000), 54f. and now SGUAITAMATTI (2012).

14   Boeth. *cons. subscriptio*.

charges of treason, Boethius found himself caught in the crossfire, was found guilty of high treason and executed after a lengthy imprisonment.[15] Scholars have not been able to completely explain his sudden fall from grace any more than his unexpected rise.[16] Due to the sparsity of our sources, we will likely never be able to fully explain Boethius' career path. Nevertheless, adopting a structural perspective may well be able to cast the whole affair in a new light and to provide some needed fresh impulses.

Let us first take a closer look at the social context in which Boethius moved during his tenure as *magister officiorum*. In his *Consolatio Philosphiae*, which he wrote during the final months of his imprisonment, he himself furnishes us with much of the necessary information.[17] Much of this work consists of an imaginary and obviously strongly escapist dialogue, which pits the author himself against the personification of Philosophy and which seeks to provide Boethius with a degree of consolation for his unjust fate. However, in the fourth chapter written in prose style, which essentially serves as a prologue for the following disinvestment of all earthly concerns, Boethius mounts a detailed defence of his actions and the views that he has espoused throughout his political career. This section also includes a catalogue of persons he (directly or indirectly) holds responsible for his current predicament.[18] The accusations he levels against these persons include the details of his eventual arrest, though he frustratingly remains silent on the actual reasons for it, as well as on the matter of why the *magister officiorum* was faced with such harsh consequences.[19]

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15   Neither date nor place of his execution is explicitly attested in the sources. The date in particular is subject to debate, though the sentence was likely carried out near Milano in 524. For a more detailed discussion, see GOLTZ (2008), p. 363–370.

16   SCHÄFER (1991), p. 240–262 hypothesized that Boethius and his aristocratic pride alienated the social newcomers from northern Italy favoured by Theoderic. MOORHEAD (1983) postulates that Boethius was a follower of a group of theologians adhering to the orthodox faith, but admits that this hypothesis is not completely convincing. In a later study, he also suspects political newcomers as the prime movers behind Boethius' fall (see MOORHEAD [1993], p. 232–253). Some scholars have interpreted his execution as a case of judicial murder (KLINGNER [1965], p. 592; TRÄNKLE [1984], p. 63; RUBIN [1953], p. 26f.), though others have refuted this (GOLTZ [2008], p. 360f.).

17   On the *Consolatio*, see generally GRUBER (1978), p. 13–48, as well as SHANZER (1984) for the context of its creation. In his interpretation of the text, GOLTZ (2008), p. 381–387 pays special attention to the role of Theoderic in Boethius' end, while the philosophical implications, as well as the reception of the *Consolatio* is illuminated in MARENBON (2009).

18   Boeth. *cons*. 1,3,10-36. For a discussion of these sections, see SCHÄFER (1991), p. 240–262; GOLTZ (2008), p. 356–373. Cf. REISS (1981), p. 43 for the overall structure of the fourth chapter.

19   GRUBER (1978), p. 11 posits that the charges laid against him included three distinct crimes, namely the *crimen maiestatis*, the *crimen perduellionis*, and the *crimen sacrilegii*. Boethius himself does not explicitly name these offences but rather restricts himself to ambiguous

As a stepping stone for further elaboration, it seems appropriate to visualise the personal and societal environment of Boethius during his trial and imprisonment. By doing this, we hope to uncover further connections or relationships that are not discernible from a close reading of the *Consolatio* alone. In order to produce such a visualisation, the relational data from the *Consolatio* is fed into the software package *VennMaker*.[20] A preliminary visual interpretation of the resulting network graph (Figure 1) reveals a rudimentary ego-network. Boethius himself is clearly identifiable as the central actor (in network jargon: *ego*) situated in the middle of the graph. Relationships are indicated by coloured and/or dashed lines running from Boethius to the other actors in this network (the *alteri*), as well as among the different actors. Black lines indicate a positive relationship, while red lines indicate enmity. Lines drawn in bold serve to indicate a patron-client relationship. Dashed lines represent connections that are not explicitly attested in the sources, but which can be surmised with a certain amount of confidence. The shape of individual nodes indicates whether we are dealing with individuals (circles) or larger groups (squares). All *alteri* are depicted as belonging to one of two concentric circles, with the inner circle including provincials and Roman citizens, and the

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circumscriptions. Thus, he mentions that he was charged with attempting to save the senate (Boeth. *cons*. 1,4,20: *Senatum dicimur saluum esse uoluisse*), but this could only be interpreted as being a crime of maiestas in a circular argument. There is no legal ground for interpreting it as a crimen maiestatis, and neither is there in the case of a subsequent statement that he was being charged with hoping for Roman freedom (Boeth. *cons*. 1,4,26: *libertatem arguor sperasse Romanam*). MOORHEAD (1993), p. 221 interprets this as a slogan advocating an intervention in Italy by the eastern Empire, but AMORY (1997), p. 133 with n.144 is loath to accept this. For the philosophical interpretation of libertas, see now MAGEE (2005). In any case, Boethius does not provide any additional context for this charge, which, according to him, rests solely on forged letters attributed to him. In a following section of the text, he further mentions a charge of obstruction, namely that he was accused of omitting or hiding evidence that would have led to the whole senate being charged with maiestas (Boeth. *cons*. 1,3,21: *delatorem, ne documenta deferret quibus senatum maiestatis reum faceret, impedisse criminamur*). There is no evidence, indeed not even a hint of evidence, for such a charge being levelled against the senate. On the contrary, his fellow senators seem to have cooperated with the king, which particularly embittered Boethius (cf. *cons*. 1,4,23 and MOORHEAD [1978], p. 612). SCHÄFER (1991), p. 259–262 claims that the trial was being conducted in northern Italy – a region loyal to the Gothic rulers – so as to provide a "home advantage" to the prosecution. This allegedly led to an estrangement between Theoderic and the senate. Boethius claims to have collected notes and evidence detailing all aspects of his case (*cons*. 1,4,25), but these documents are now lost, if they ever existed (cf. GRUBER [1978], p. 123). On the *sacrilegium ob ambitum dignitatis* (for which, again, no further details are mentioned), see n.51 further down.

20   VennMaker is a software package designed for Social Network Analysis, particularly of ego-networks, developed by M. Schönhuth, M. Gamper, M. Stark & M. Kronenwett at the University of Trier. It is now available as version 1.5.9 from www.vennmaker.com.

outer circle representing 'barbarians', i.e. Goths. Finally, the graph is further divided into a northern and southern hemisphere, which denote contextual differences. The southern, yellow hemisphere includes all relations which Boethius mentions in direct connection to his trial. The northern, red hemisphere, on the other hand, shows those relations mentioned by Boethius within the same relevant chapter of the *Consolatio*, but which do not directly factor in the trial itself. This difference should be borne in mind, as it will become important at a later stage.
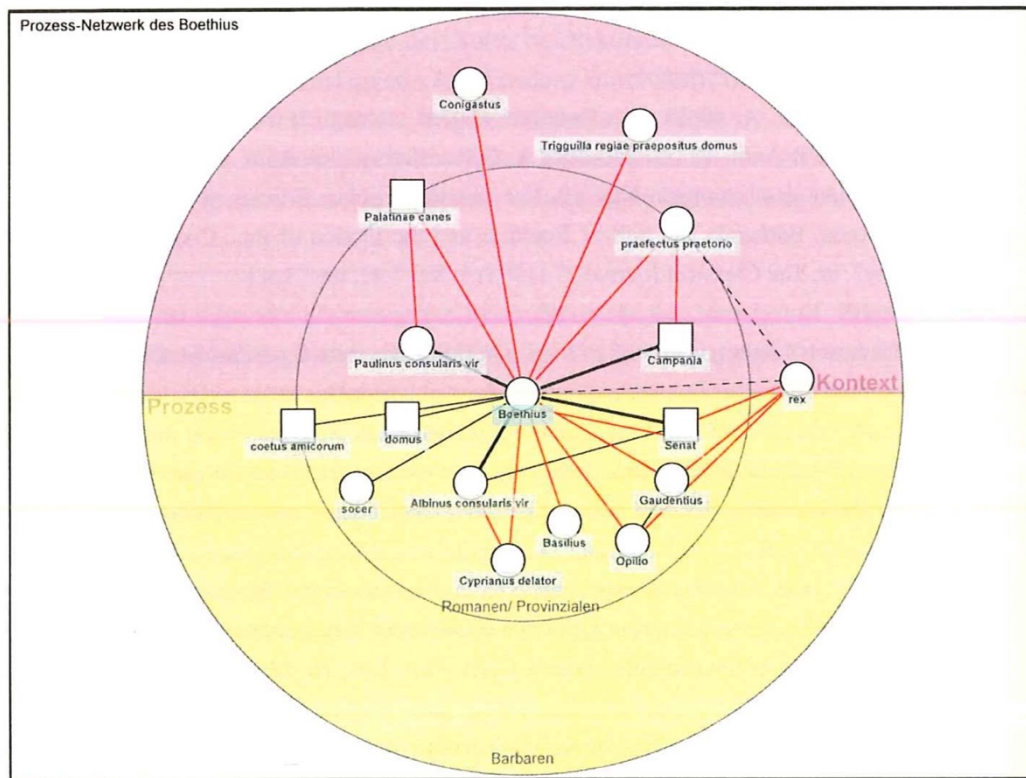

Fig. 1. Trial network of Boethius

What new insights can be gleamed from such a visualisation? One intriguing fact becomes immediately obvious, without even the need to look at individual relations in detail. In looking at the southern hemisphere (the one dealing directly with the trial), we find that the relations depicted here consist exclusively of dyads (relationship between two actors) within the Roman subgroup of Ostrogothic Italy. No Goth is mentioned as being directly involved in the charges levelled against Boethius. While it is strictly speaking possible that the group described as *coetus amicorum* also included Goths, this seems

unlikely.[21] Even if this was the case, the relationship between Boethius and the *coetus amicorum* remains positive, i.e. this group was not involved in his denunciation. Thus, we arrive at our first important conclusion, namely that the mysterious affair of Boethius' prosecution originated within exclusively Roman circles.[22] This is remarkable, particularly if we are mindful (as we should be) of the alleged distance between Boethius and the 'barbarians', which has been postulated mostly based on his employ of specific words and terms within his writings.[23]

In fact, Theoderic is the sole Goth that can at least indirectly be said to be involved with the accusations against Boethius, who accuses the king of laying a trap for the senators by involving them in the *maiestas* trial against consular Albinus.[24] Upon learning this, Boethius claims to have energetically defended his fellow senators but that this did not result in the gratitude due to him. He does not elaborate any further and so we are left in the dark as to Theoderic's further involvement.[25] To the reader of the *Consolatio* it must seem clear that the dire situation in which Boethius finds himself, and for which he was also partly responsible, is to be traced to the actions and initiative of the king, though his repeated rants against fellow senators clearly illustrate that he sees them as the main culprits.[26] We can thus surmise an intervention by Theoderic, but we do not know what form it took.

Indeed, Goths only appear as part of the network if we include those relations without a direct bearing on the trial, which are depicted in the northern hemisphere of the network graph. These, it should be remembered, are relationships that are attested in the literary context of Boethius' account of his trial. It would be surprising indeed if Boethius did not also partly blame these persons and groups, as he purposefully interweaves them with the narrative of his senatorial enemies.[27] They are depicted as a sort of preliminary to his downfall, as incubators of his final defeat. Are barbarians to blame for his fate,

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21 Cf. MOORHEAD (1978), p. 612; GOLTZ (2008), p. 379f.

22 In a general fashion, this was also remarked upon by GEGENSCHATZ / GIGON (2004), p. 281.

23 On the enmity of Boethius towards 'barbarians', which probably was little more than a topical reference to standard literary tropes occasioned by his disillusionment in prison, see AMORY (1997), p. 133–135.

24 Boeth. *cons*. 1,4,32: *meministi, inquam, Veronae cum rex auidus exitii communis maiestatis crimen in Albinum delatae ad cunctum senatus ordinem transferre moliretur, uniuersi innocentiam senatus quanta mei periculi Securitate defenderim*.

25 GOLTZ (2008), p. 383–387 notes that the many allusions to older literary tropes within the text are indicative of Boethius attempting to paint Theoderic as a stereotypical tyrant. For these tropes, see COURCELLE (1980); MAGEE (2005), p. 350–357.

26 E.g. Boeth. *cons*. 1,4,23.

27 Cf. Boeth. *cons*. 1,4,10–15.

then? This is not borne out by a closer inspection of these relations. Of a total of nine negative relationships (in both hemispheres), only two involve persons that can be identified with certainty as Goths, namely Triggvilla[28] and Conigastus.[29] To these we may add the *palatinae canes*, which should of course be interpreted as a derogatory nickname for the whole court society, but which we cannot take to mean Goths exclusively, as courtiers also included Romans.[30] We should thus interpret the slur as an all-out attack against the opportunists and sycophants at court, be they of Roman or Gothic origin. By comparison, four negative relationships explicitly involved Romans, namely Cyprianus,[31] Basilius,[32] Gaudentius,[33] and Opilio,[34] to which we might add the strained relationship with the senate as a collective. If we are to assume (as we probably should) that the *praefectus praetorio*, with whom Boethius argued about grain shipments to *Campania*, was also a Roman, we are faced with a clear preponderance of Romans among the enemies of Boethius.[35] This does not mesh with the image of a proud noble opposed to barbarian rule (which is also contradicted by his involvement in the Ostrogothic administration, after all).

It also presents us with another problem. If we believe Boethius that the charges levelled against him were mere fabrications, as he so often claims,[36] intended to cover the true political motivation behind the trial, and in the absence of any real political opposition of Boethius to 'barbarian' rule, what could that motive have been? To answer this, we need to take another look at the persons that Boethius attacks in his writings. There is evidence of a deep enmity between Boethius and the Gothic officials Triggvilla and Conigastus, whose decisions Boethius frequently countermanded during his tenure as *magister officiorum*, because he thought them unjust.[37] We can expect both of them to have voiced their displeasure over this to the king, particularly in the case of Triggvilla who, as *praepositus domus regiae* – that is as *praepositus sacri*

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28   PLRE II, p. 1126f.; AMORY (1997), p. 423f.
29   PLRE II, p. 330; AMORY (1997), p. 369.
30   On the Ostrogothic administration and court society, see GIESE (2004), p. 83–88.
31   PLRE II, p. 332f.; SCHÄFER (1991), Nr. 41; AMORY (1997), p. 369–371.
32   PLRE II, p. 216.
33   PLRE II, p. 495.
34   PLRE II, p. 808; SCHÄFER (1991), Nr. 73.
35   The praefectus can likely be identified as Flavius Anicius Probus Faustus Niger; cf. GRUBER (1978), p. 120 and also see my n.38.
36   Boeth. *cons*. 1,3,3–5; 4,19; 26;34;37;46.
37   Boeth. *cons*. 1,4,10: *Quotiens ego Conigastum in imbecilli cuiusque fortunas impetum facientem obuius excepi, quotiens Tigguillam regiae praepositum domus ab incepta, perpetrata iam prorsus iniuria deieci, quotiens miseros quos infinitis calumniis impunita barbarorum semper auaritia uexabat obiecta periculis auctoritate protexi!*

cubiculi[38] – had immediate access to Theoderic. Interestingly, in Cassiodor's *Variae* we read about an intervention of Triggvilla as *saio* against the praetorian prefect Faustus Niger,[39] who had unjustly acquired property which Triggvilla now restored to its original owner.[40] As an envoy of the king, Triggvilla here likely attempted to mediate in an affair concerning two Romans. The Gothic envoy in this case is not personally involved, but rather attempts to remedy the problem, a role that Triggvilla in particular seems to have occupied on a frequent basis. Thus, in 511 he is known to have tried to acquire a house on behalf of Ennodius,[41] a steadfast catholic and later bishop of *Ticinum*. In this he was aided by Helpidius,[42] personal physician to the king and also of catholic faith, which seems to indicate a close connection between those involved. This would seem to militate against the notion that both faiths were diametrically opposed to one another. Triggvilla also agreed sometime after 519 to represent a group of Jews before the king, who were seeking compensation for injustices suffered at the hands of Christians.[43] He did this in his capacity as *praepositus sacri cubiculi*. We do not know if this was one of those actions that Boethius reproached him with later, but what we can say is that Triggvilla was the embodiment of the politics of tolerance and mediation espoused by Theoderic and that his rise to the inner circle of the king was therefore only logical. Conigastus seems to have occupied a similar position as a broker of influence. From an episode transmitted in Cassiodor's *Variae* we know that he was *comes Gothorum*,[44] an office that included the duty to mediate in disputes between Goths and Romans.[45] Both Gothic officials, therefore, can rightly be seen as connectors between actors of different faiths and ethnic background, between Arian Goths and Catholic Romans.

Another person could also be justifiably assumed to have had a mediating position. Cyprianus, though a Roman, apparently served as a soldier in the Gothic army, which was in itself unusual.[46] He spoke the Gothic language, in addition to Latin and Greek, and had his children taught in all of them as well. As a *referendarius* and later as *comes sacrarum largitionum*, he was part of the civil

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38   Cf. GRUBER (1978), p. 119.
39   PLRE II, p. 454–456; SCHÄFER (1991), Nr. 49.
40   Cassiod. *var*. 3,20. Boethius himself also sometimes butted heads with the praetorian prefect; cf. n.34.
41   PLRE II, p. 393f.
42   PLRE II, p. 537.
43   Anon. Val. 14,81f. Cf. SCHÄFER (2001), p. 193.
44   Cassiod. *var*. 8,28.
45   On the *comites Gothorum*, see GIESE (2004), p. 85f.; SCHÄFER (2001), p. 191; WOLFRAM (2001), p. 290f.
46   On Roman serving with Goths, see MOORHEAD (1993), p. 71–75; GIESE (2004), p. 83f.

administration and of court society in Ravenna.[47] Under Athalarich, he rose to the rank of *patricius*. His career, his proximity to the king and his plurilingualism would all seem to indicate that heformed part of the same courtly subgroup as Triggvilla and Conigastus. Indeed, based on his narrative role in Boethius' account alone, Cyprianus could have been depicted as part of the northern hemisphere of the network graph but for the fact of his direct involvement in the prosecution of Albinus. Nevertheless, he is a representative of a zone of contact between the two constituent peoples of the Ostrogothic kingdom. His brother Opilio, on the other hand, is listed by Boethius among his denouncers,[48] and though he had fallen from the king's graces, he later appears proclaiming the succession of Athalarich in *Liguria*.[49] From this point onward, his career went uninterrupted, culminating in his being sent on an embassy to emperor Justinian in Constantinople, during which he defended the actions of king Theodahad against the eastern Roman emperor.[50] He can without doubt be named a supporter of Gothic rule.

To conclude, all of these actors can be subsumed into the *palatinae canes* against which Boethius seems to have spoken out for the sake of principle. Ironically, these were the very people that were instrumental in following and implementing Theoderic's policies of tolerance and equilibrium. They were instrumental not only in bridging the gap between the two constituent peoples, but also served as connecting links between the two faiths.[51] Boethius' opposition to and attacks against this crucial group of people representing a neuralgic aspect of the king's rule must have posed a significant problem to Theoderic, regardless of whether this conflict was a product of random chance or a calculated move on the part of Boethius. Theoderic , in any case, was not in a position to tolerate this inner-circle conflict because it might potentially destabilise the entire edifice of Gothic rule in Italy.

The final charge against Boethius, which he mentions but declines to elaborate on, was that of a *sacrilegium ob ambitum dignitatis*. Should we see in this an indication that, in addition to general political stability, peace between the confessions was also at risk? Andreas Goltz recently emphasised the importance of this charge and rightly stated that the accusations of magical practices, which were probably the result of a conservative catholic opposition to Boethius'

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47   He apparently even had the privilege of regularly riding out (recreationally) with the king; cf. Cassiod. *var*. 5,40,4.

48   Boeth. *cons*. 1,4,17.

49   Cassiod. *var.* 8,16,5.

50   Proc. *BG* 1,4.

51   Though there have been attempts to paint Triggvilla as a conservative, based on an unreliable passage from the works of Gregory of Tours (Greg. Tur. *Franc.* 3,31). Cf. Amory (1997), p. 423f.

philosophical tendencies,[52] would have helped in securing popular support for Boethius' execution.[53] The argument can be taken further. As the charge of *sacrilegium* carried with it a religious implication, this accusation against Boethius had the effect of disqualifying him from becoming an identification figure for sectarian conflict. I would argue, then, that the charge of *sacrilegium* was intended to avert further damage to the confessional equilibrium within Ostrogothic Italy. And indeed, a contemporary reflex to paint Boethius as a catholic martyr does not seem to have existed; this was a phenomenon of much later times.[54]

3   Network structures and the central position of Boethius

Accepting the hypothesis that Boethius' opposition to crucial elements of Theoderic's rule – or at least to a group of representatives of such elements – was what led the king to conclude that he was no longer acceptable as *magister officiorum*, we still have to explain the unusually harsh consequences that Boethius was faced with. Why should the politically inept scholar and philosopher be charged with high treason and subsequently executed?

To find a possible explanation for this, I intend to use Social Network Analysis as a heuristic and visual tool to show that the reality of the societal and political positions of Boethius may have differed from the image we gain from our main source (i.e. Boethius himself). This idea will then lead us back to the points about network management that I stated at the beginning of this paper. I shall base the following reflections on an analysis of the network of senatorial land-owners under Ostrogothic rule and their connections to each other. In order to generate this network, it was necessary to establish a database of affiliations in which any named individuals of senatorial rank are listed together with the properties they owned throughout the provinces of Italy. If any given senator owned property in a province, e.g. *Campania*, this is recorded as a positive value in the database. If two senators owned lands within the same province, a link is established between them. In order to gain the necessary information about land ownership, I rely mainly on the prosopographical work

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52   GRUBER (1978), p. 128f. Boethius himself makes the connection between the charge of sacrilegium and his philosophical studies (Boeth. *cons*. 1,4,41f.).
53   GOLTZ (2008), p. 397. But see already HARTMANN (1897), col. 597.
54   GOLTZ (2008), p. 396–400 claims that the fate of Boethius' father-in-law, the *caput senatus* Symmachus was much more widely decried in early medieval literature and that Boethius was only regarded as a martyr beginning with Carolingian literature. But see contra PATCH (1947) and SCHÄFER (1991), 251 with n.64, who also does not see any larger significance in the charge of *sacrilegium*.

previously undertaken by Christoph Schäfer in his dissertation on the western Roman senate under Ostrogothic rule.[55]

This compilation of data allows us to draw up a number of network graphs. The first one (figure 2) represents what in network terminology is called a 2-mode network because it involves two different classes of nodes: it shows the connections between individual senators (numbered blue circles) and the provinces in which they owned tracts of land (red squares with the name of the province indicated).[56] Figure 3, on the other hand, is based on the relationships between senators hypothesized according to their ownership of properties in the same province and shows a number of clusters representing a complex web of interconnected land owners in individual provinces.
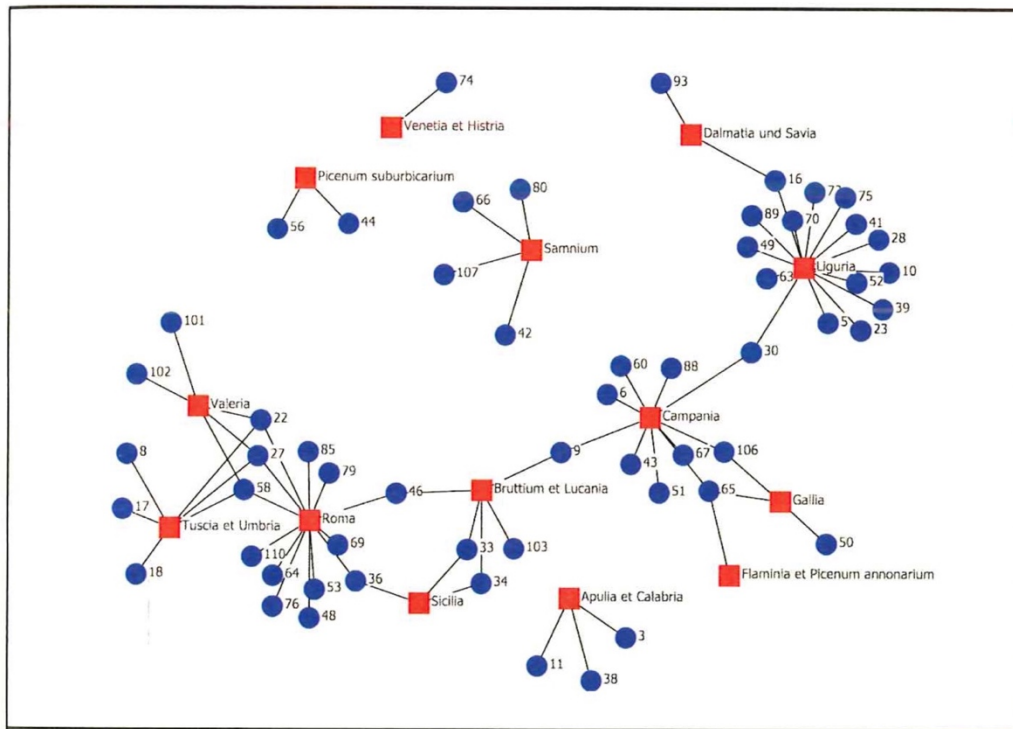

Fig. 2. 2-mode network featuring senators and provinces of Ostrogothic Italy[57]

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55   SCHÄFER (1991); see also *ibid.*, p. 118–139.
56   On 2-mode networks see especially BORGATTI / EVERETT (1997).
57   All of the following network graphs were drawn up with the comprehensive software package Ucinet 6 (BORGATTI, S.P., EVERETT, M.G. AND FREEMAN, L.C. 2002. Ucinet for Windows: Software for Social Network Analysis. Harvard, MA: Analytic Technologies), which includes the visualization aid NetDraw.

Though the connections between land owners in the same province are, it has to be said, of a somewhat hypothetical nature, there is good reason to assume such connections if we view the ownership of property in the same region as a structural similarity between individual actors, as a form of social embedding which binds all participants together, consciously or unconsciously, and which influences their patterns of behaviour. This is by no means as far-fetched a conclusion as it may seem at first glance; ownership of land and rural properties have always formed the bedrock of senatorial wealth and its significance only grew in late antiquity, as new legislation and the slow establishment of the *colonatus* system provided land owners with hitherto unheard-of authority and profit margins.[58] In connection with the political upheavals particularly in the western half of the Empire, the subsequent decline of public administration and order, and with the slow erosion of traditional career paths, wealthy land owners tended to concentrate more and more on their family holdings. Thus, at the beginning of the 6th century, land ownership was the overarching characteristic of senatorial lifestyle and the pursuit of success in this area became an imperative; the vast tracts of senatorial property throughout Italy were slowly becoming miniature fiefdoms in their own right, a faint echo of later developments.[59] Based on this, I posit that contacts between land owners were the inevitable result of land ownership in the same region, as such a co-existence invariably must have led to the emergence of particular interest groups and local hierarchies, of both mutually supportive and antagonistic relationships. Thus, the network graph in figure 3 represents a simplified model of the aristocratic social context in which individual actors were by necessity embedded.

A structural context such as this provides a solid starting point from which to further elaborate on our network reconstruction. It would be possible, for instance, to complement the fundamental links between senators (based on common land ownership) by other ties, e.g. proven friendships, communication ties, business or family connections. On their own, and because of the very fragmented nature of our sources for 6th century Italy, none of these relationships could provide us with a coherent network, but together and, more importantly, in connection with our land ownership model, they can enhance our appreciation of societal ties between senators. To illustrate this, I have included family ties in the next network graph that must be discussed, figure 5, which shows a multiplex network, i.e. a network including different classes of connections (land ownership *and* family ties).

As family ties and relationships often proved instrumental in establishing and managing social connections (and business interests), they are an ideal

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58   On the *colonatus*, see now SCHIPP (2009).
59   Cf. HEATHER (2000).

supplement to pre-existing networks. Figure 4 shows only family relationships in the 1st and 2nd degree, as well as marriage alliances.[60] The result is a significant increase in the number of both actors and ties, based on which we can tentatively take quantitative measures. One such measure, betweenness centrality, posits that an actors (A) has high centrality if a high number of connections between other actors pass through him, that is, if (B) and (C) are not directly connected to each other, but rather only by way of (A).[61] A word of warning, though: quantitative measures taken from network models based on incomplete and fragmentary sources cannot aspire to absolute objectivity. Though we know with absolute certainty that our network models *are* incomplete, we simply do not know *how* incomplete they are. This makes it difficult to gauge accurately the import of quantitative measures. We can nevertheless use them as an indicator of relative importance and figure 6 shows a graph depicting relative measures of betweenness centrality (nodes with higher centrality are depicted as larger).

It is immediately apparent that Boethius is the actor with the highest betweenness centrality by far. His position within the network structure is such that a large number of possible communication paths between other actors pass through him. This is in large measure due to the fact that he acts as a gatekeeper to the cluster of senators owning property in *Liguria* (the large cluster of connections immediately above Boethius in figure 5; Boethius is marked by the number 30). He would thus be in control of a large part of the flow of resources within this network.

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60 Thus including relationships between parents and children, as well as between siblings. Those actors whose presence in the graph is only due to the proof of family ties (and not based on land ownership) are marked by the letter 'A' (followed by a numeral). An appendix to this paper lists these actors and gives their names as well as prosopographic references. The data collection for this graph was done as a means of proving a point and not in a systematic fashion; the resulting graph therefore does not claim to be exhaustive and can be further completed. The conclusions that will be drawn from it should thus be seen as preliminary and in need of further verification and/or modification. It should also be pointed out that the graph presents a multi-generational view of the late 5th and early 6th century. Individual actors may not have been contemporaries. In a later study, these deficiencies will be remedied.

61 Actors with high betweenness centrality are thus in a prime position for steering (and blocking), e.g., communication processes or the flow of resources within the network. Cf. FREEMAN (1977). FREEMAN (1978/79). BORGATTI / EVERETT (1997), p. 256f. SCOTT (2007), p. 86f.
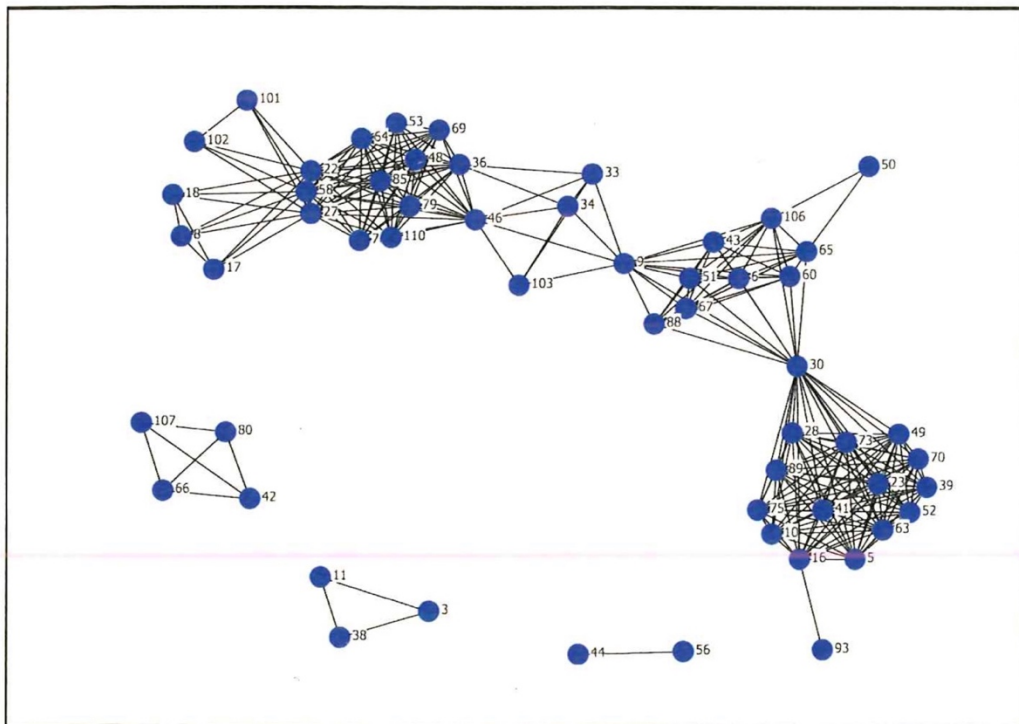
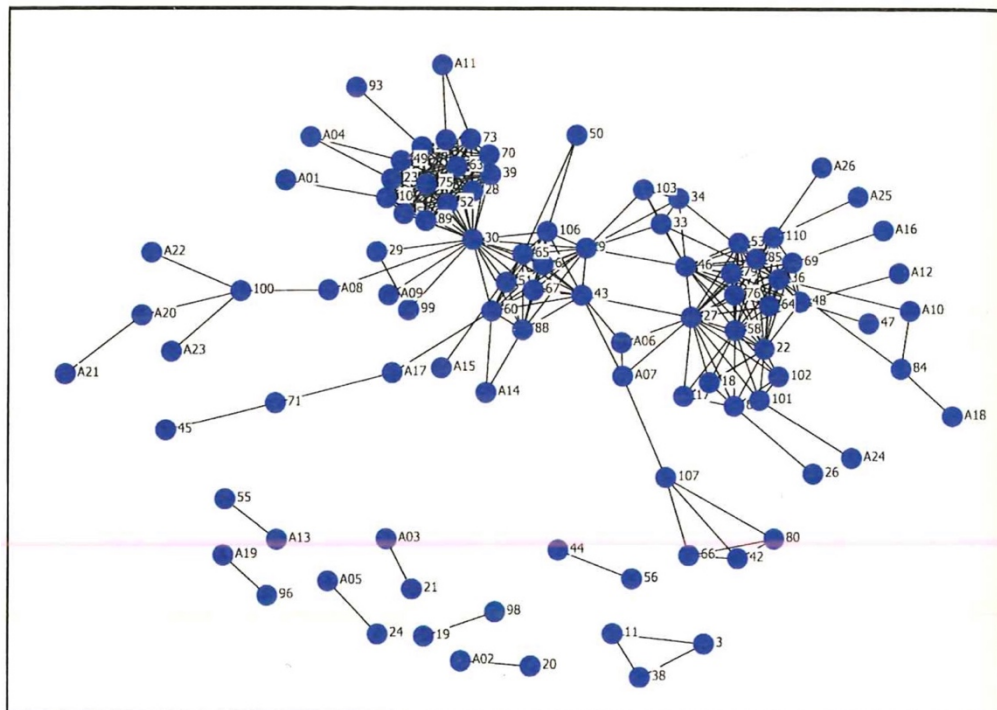**Fig. 3:** 1-mode network of senatorial landowners in Ostrogothic Italy

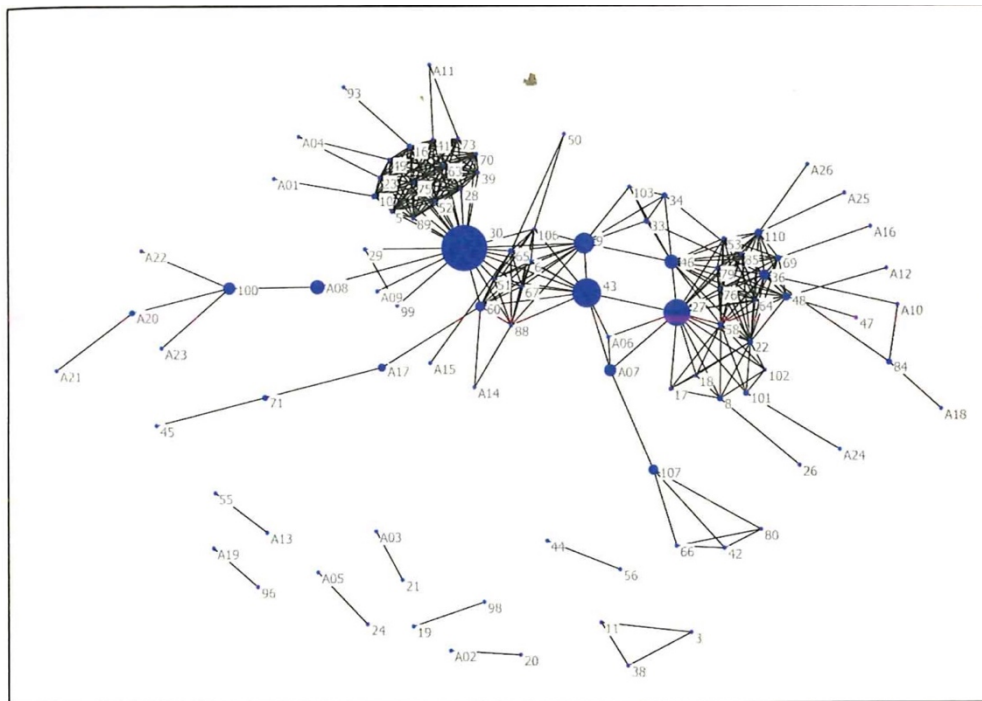**Fig. 4:** Multiplex network of land ownership and family ties

Fig. 5: *Betweenness* centrality in multiplex network

As I have already mentioned, because of the nature of our sources and the incompleteness of our network models, the position occupied by Boethius within the network must be considered hypothetical. But there is some indication that it is a more or less accurate description of Boethius' actual position: the sociological model at the foundation of our network graphs can help us to fill the gaps in our historical knowledge without having to prove individual resource flows. Boethius' role in Ostrogothic society was thus not only defined by his exalted position as *magister officiorum*, but also by his structural position within senatorial society, by his blood ties and economic connections, as well as by his role as a broker of information and resources. This conclusion helps us to understand Boethius' fate, as this position was as prestigious as it was exposed; it held opportunities as well as dangers in store for him.[62] It helps us see why Theoderic may have decided to send Boethius as an envoy to other Germanic courts, even though he had held no previous political post; why a retiring philosopher was able to embark upon a spectacular civil career, though it does not seem to have held any special interest to him; lastly, why his downfall was as abrupt and lethal as it turned out to be. On account of his structural importance alone, Boethius was an exalted

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62   On the importance of information brokers in networks, see e.g. SCOTT (2007), p. 86f. WELL-
      MAN (198), p. 45f.

representative of his class; his connections reached to every corner of senatorial society and could not be ignored by the king.[63] On the contrary: they had to be put to use. Boethius, in short, was highly influential, from a sociological point of view.

4   Theoderic's policy of tolerance and the structural role of Boethius

As a discipline, Social Network Analysis and network research has its own methodologies and theoretical approaches, which sometimes might seem far removed from the traditional working methods of historians. Thus, any historian attempting to use network theory has to find a way to adapt these models and methods to historical research and to supplement them with traditional historiography. But at the same time, Social Network Analysis provides the historian with new paradigms and new points of view, which help him/her to transcend the limitations of his source material and to posit new theories that would have been difficult to develop from traditional close reading of the sources alone. The important structural position of Boethius is a case in point; at first glance it would seem difficult to prove our hypothesis by means of the usual methods employed by ancient historians. However, our reflections on Boethius provide us with a promising starting point, i.e. the *Consolatio*. Is it possible to find indications within this text that prove our hypothesis to be correct, that is that Boethius really did function as a broker of information and that, maybe, this was obvious to himself and to his contemporaries?

Two text passages would seem to indicate just that. The first can be found within the section containing Boethius' lamenting of his political fate. After referring to letters attributed to him, which he calls forgeries designed to prove his alleged high treason, he states: "When Gaius Caesar, son of Germanicus, charged him with being implicated in a conspiracy against him, Canius remarked: 'Had I known of it, you would not!'"[64]

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63   His exceedingly high status is further shown by the fact that he was made *patricius* in or around 507, at a time when he had neither occupied any important office nor achieved any remarkable successes (cf. Cassiod. *var*. 1,45; 2,40). Equally interesting is the fact that he, as his father before him, was appointed consul sine collega, which could be explained by the fact that his father and he occupied a similar – or rather, after his father's death: the same – structural position within the network. On Fl. Nar. Manlius Boethius see PLRE II, p. 232f. On the importance of structural equivalence, see SCOTT (2007), p. 124–126.

64   Boeth. *cons*. 1,4,27: *Respondissem Canii uerbo, qui cum a Gaio Caesare Germanici filio conscius contra se factae coniurationis fuisse diceretur: "si ego", inquit, "scissem, tu nescisses"*. All translations of the *Consolatio* are from WALSH (1999).

Iulius Canus was a philosopher under the Julian-Claudian emperors and was admired by Seneca on account of his proverbially stoic countenance, which was particularly in evidence when Caligula announced his death sentence.[65] Canus had apparently been involved in a conspiracy against the emperor, but was now resolved to use the moment of his execution to study what would happen to his soul.[66] It should come as no surprise that Boethius references Canus as a model to emulate during his imprisonment and with whose fate he could identify. But this is by no means all that we can learn from the text. Indeed, Canus' response indicates that he was aware of his own 'regulatory' powers, that is of his capacity to decide whether or not a given piece of information was to be transmitted or blocked. This would bear remarkable similarities to Boethius' alleged position as an information broker and perhaps we should assume that Boethius' identification with Canus goes beyond the mere similarity of their fate.

The second passage that interests us here is contained in the second book of the *Consolatio* and is part of a discussion about the nature of virtue: "When the tyrant thought that by torture he would force a free man to betray his associates in the conspiracy against him, the free man bit through his tongue, and threw it in the face of the storming tyrant."[67]

The victim mentioned here is Zenon of Elea, a philosopher whose courage in the face of death was famous and often recounted throughout antiquity. In some accounts, he confesses to his own guilt after prolonged torture and then denounces the tyrant's own bodyguards as co-conspirators, in others he resorts to whispering, which leads the tyrant to bring his head closer to Zenon's mouth. The philosopher then proceeds to bite off the tyrants ear.[68] The version recounted by Boethius is markedly different; here, the philosopher bites off his own tongue, rather than to betray others, thus again alluding to the importance of knowledge and the flow of information. Indeed, Boethius presents the refusal to divulge information as an act of resistance, which implies that such information existed and could have endangered others, leading the protagonist of the story to choose a path which precludes him from sharing it.

It seems poignant to me that Boethius choses this version of the anecdote. It would appear that considerable bitterness accompanied his composition of the *Consolatio*. What is interesting though, is that he chooses to include two anecdotes centring on the communication of knowledge or rather on the refusal

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65   Sen. *tranq*. 14,4–10.

66   Cf. WINTERLING (2004), p. 127f.

67   Boeth. *cons*. 2,6,8: *Cum liberum quondam uirum suppliciis se tyrannus adacturum putaret ut aduersum se factae coniurationis conscios proderet, linguam ille momordit atque abscidit et in os tyranni saevientis abiecit.*

68   Cf. VON FRITZ (1972).

to do so. Did Boethius himself possess such information that could be harmful to others and was he under pressure to give it up? While this is an intriguing question, it is not an essential one; rather, Boethius obviously saw himself in a similar position, which can be interpreted as a reference to, and consciousness of, his structural role as an information broker.

I admit that this hypothesis is somewhat audacious, perhaps even a leap, and that there is a certain amount of vagueness still surrounding the connection between network analysis and historical interpretation. To stress an often repeated point: this is largely because of the lack of available sources. Thus, there must remain some uncertainty as to how the structural characteristics of senatorial society, as shown in the network graphs, and the picture presented by our written sources can be brought into harmony. But, to conclude, I would like to add a final thought on the matter, which looks at the aforementioned structural characteristics from a different point of view. At the beginning of this paper, the concept of network management was discussed. Now that we have studied in some detail the reconstruction of senatorial networks in 6th century Italy, we can perhaps better grasp the full potential of this concept. If Boethius' structural position within senatorial society really was of such a nature that Theoderic could hardly afford to ignore him, perhaps even forcing him to try to integrate him into the administrative machinery of Ostrogothic government though Boethius himself seems to have shown hardly any enthusiasm (or, indeed, talent) for this, then this in turn would have made it impossible for Theoderic to ignore his conflict (or potential conflict) with a group of persons essential to his overall policy of ethnic and religious balance. To do so would have invited disaster. The policies of Theoderic, which the king sought to uphold even in the most minute details of his reign,[69] could not tolerate even the tacit or passive opposition of the *magister officiorum*, regardless of whether the later was in fact involved in treasonable actions or not. Perhaps, on the contrary, even a fundamentally insignificant affair could be a welcome opportunity for getting rid of the irksome official.[70] And because of Boethius' structural

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69 Thus, for instance Theoderic was anxious to avoid any hint of the Gothic army being anything but the defenders and protectors of the Roman populace, as shown by the fact that he attempted to mediate between Romans and Goths when, inevitably, conflicts broke out and even assured Roman ‚victims' adequate compensation. Cf. Cassiod. *var*. 3,38; 2,8. There is of course some question of how far the evidence for this can be taken; in any case, the two documents in Cassiodorus show us, at the very least, that the king was ready to soften the negative impact of Ostrogothic presence.

70 MOORHEAD (1993), p. 232–235 suspects not the king, but rather Boethius' political enemies at court as the prime movers behind the whole affair, as they might (rightly) have felt threatened by the prestige of Boethius. But based on structural network considerations, there is no need to suspect intentional foul play by envious courtiers to explain the swift downfall of Boethius. It is rather the structural position of Boethius himself that provides us with an

significance, his opponents could not be satisfied with simply removing him from office, as this would not have significantly impacted his structural position, which was independent of the office he occupied.

Thus, perhaps, we should see the elimination of Boethius, a structurally important part of the network, as an expression of network management, as a selective intervention that resulted in the removal of an individual element that threatened the welfare of the entire network 'organisation'. This notion finds further confirmation in the fact that it obviously was not enough to remove Boethius himself, but that the ultimate object must instead have been to eliminate the structural role that he had occupied. It can hardly come as a surprise then, that, after Boethius' conviction and execution, his property was confiscated. This forestalled any possibility of his properties being transmitted to his heirs, who would thus potentially also inherit his structural role. Having said this, I am perfectly aware that the confiscation of property was a routine consequence of being convicted of treason.[71] But Theoderic did not stop there. In addition to Boethius' family being eliminated from the ranks of the major land owners, Boethius and his heirs were also excluded on a religious level by the charge of *sacrilegium*. In light of the special importance of religious harmony for Theoderic's rule, the importance of this often overlooked fact can hardly be overstated. Because he was branded a blasphemer, he could not serve as a role model for anti-Arian agitation. Thus, Boethius was almost surgically removed from any and all societal contexts which could conceivably threaten Ostrogothic dominion.

This is not to say that Theoderic single-mindedly followed a clear-cut plan; the possibility must be allowed that what seems clear and obvious to us, was anything but to the Ostrogothic king. But it seems unlikely to be a coincidence that Boethius' successor as *magister officiorum*, Cassiodorus,[72] was at best of peripheral importance in our network.[73] Indeed, as far as we know, Cassiodorus was a conscientious worker who faithfully put into practice the policies of his lord without attracting much attention to himself. After the Ostrogothic kingdom had disappeared, he retired quietly to his vast properties, on which he

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explanation: "Brokers, by virtue of their structural location, cannot be full members of any one cluster. Often their very marginality means that they are not fully trusted because no one cluster can exercise effective social control over them." Cf. WELLMAN (1988), p. 46.

71   Cf. GOLTZ (2008), p. 361.

72   PLRE II, p. 265–269. SCHÄFER (1991), Nr. 34.

73   This is even more striking when taking into account that much of the information available to us is to be found in Cassiodorus' own writing; rather than distort the resultant network graph in his favor, his peripheral position is instead confirmed. This may also serve as indirect evidence that the origin of our information does not, in this case at least, automatically lead to a predetermined prioritization.

founded a monastery and lived out his life as a monk. These are further indications that we would be right in interpreting Boethius' fall as a form of network management, which would validate the network approach adopted in this paper. In this context, it is worthwhile to consider a passage from the Ecclesiastical History of Theodorus Lector:

> "The barbarian Theoderic had an orthodox deacon, whom he loved and valued greatly. This deacon, thinking that he was doing something agreeable to Theoderic, apostasised from the faith of the Homoousians and became an Arian. When Theoderic became aware of this, of a sudden he beheaded him that he loved, saying: 'If you do not keep the faith in God, how can you be of sound faith towards a man?'"[74]

There may have been more behind this episode than a mere personal failing. Regardless of the historical veracity of Theodorus' anecdote, this passage is proof, by a conservative catholic author, no less, of Theoderic's extreme sensitivity to matters of faith in so far as they related to his ability to govern. The anecdote certainly emphasises the paramount importance of a close and trusting personal relationship with the king. More than this, however, it also shows the efforts of the king to avoid any unnecessary disturbance of the fragile religious balance within his kingdom, such as might certainly be caused by rumours of Arian proselytizing at court. Similarly, Boethius' actions against a group of persons representing Theoderic's overall policies were certain to cause turbulence and thus, by removing Boethius and thus forestalling any possible misunderstanding, Theoderic would have acted well within the demonstrated confines of his political guidelines. In the end, then, Boethius' rigid and politically insensitive attitude met with an equally inflexible and immovable doctrine, namely the specific policies governing Theoderic's rule. Boethius' fall was a model in the rigorous defence of Theoderician policy.

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[74] Theod. Anag. *HE epit*. 463 (ed. Hansen): Θευδέριχος ὁ Ἄφρος διάκονόν τινα εἶχεν ὀρθόδοξον, ὅν πάνυ ἠγάπα καὶ ἔθαλπεν. Οὗτος δὲ ὁ διάκονος νομίζων Θευδερίχῳ χαρίζεσθαι τῆς τοῦ ὁμοουσίου πίστεως ἀποστὰς τὰ Ἀρείου ἐφρόνησεν. Γνοὺς δὲ τοῦτο Θευδέριχος τὸν οὕτως ἀγαπώμενον εὐθέως ἀπεκεφάλισεν εἰπών· "εἰ τῷ θεῷ πίστιν οὐκ ἐθύλαξας, πῶς ἀνθρώπῳ φυλάξεις συνείδησιν ὑγιαίνουσαν;" Cf. Gowltz (2008), p. 62f. On the translation of Ἄφρος, which is best rendered as 'barbarian' as this avoids unnecessary connotations, cf. *ibid*., p. 64f.

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Appendix

Id.-Nr.	Name	Prosopographic reference
A01	Faustinus (5)	PLRE II, 450
A03	Asterius	SCHÄFER (1991), Nr. 29
A04	Cynegia (2)	PLRE II, 331
A05	Helisea	PLRE II, 534
A06	Flavius Caecina Decius Basilius (11)	PLRE II, 216f.
A07	Decius Marius Venantius Basilius (13)	PLRE II, 218
A08	Rusticiana (1)	PLRE II, 961
A09	Flavius Manlius Boethius (4)	PLRE II, 232f.
A10	Blesilla	PLRE II, 231
A11	Opilio (3)	PLRE II, 807
A13	Constantiolus	PLRE II, 352f.
A14	Vigilius (pope) (4)	PLRE II, 1166
A15	Agretia	PLRE II, 36
A16	Ostrogothic princess	AMORY (1997), p. 461
A17	Daughter of Olybrius (5)	PLRE II, 607, 795
A18	Flavius Rufus Placidus (6)	PLRE II, 891
A20	Symmachus (3)	PLRE II, 1042f.
A21	Q. Fabius Memmius Symmachus (10)	PLRE II, 1046f.
A22	Galla (5)	PLRE II, 491
A23	Proba (1)	PLRE II, 907
A24	Placidus (3)	PLRE II, 890
A25	Marcianus (14)	PLRE II, 716
A26	Maximus (17)	PLRE II, 747

Table 1: Actors identified by their family ties (cf. fig. 5)