

BELISARIUS & ANTONINA

Love and War in the Age of Justinian



DAVID ALAN PARNELL

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Contents

<i>List of Illustrations</i>	vii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	ix
Introduction	i
1. The World of Antonina	9
2. General of the East	29
3. Victory in Africa	57
4. The Eternal City	85
5. From Rome to Ravenna	107
6. Trying Times	125
7. Italy Redux	157
8. Twilight of a Power Couple	179
9. Afterlife and Legend	193
<i>Appendix 1: Dramatis Personae</i>	203
<i>Appendix 2: Timeline of Their Lives</i>	207
<i>Appendix 3: The Wealth of Belisarius</i>	211
<i>Notes</i>	213
<i>Bibliography</i>	243
<i>Index</i>	255

Illustrations

Figures

1. Dancers and actresses on the diptych of Flavios Anastasios Probos	13
2. Soldiers, possibly guardsmen, detail from the imperial panel of Justinian in San Vitale	23
3. The road leading south out of Dara	31
4. The ruins of the fortifications of Dara	38
5. The emperor and his people at the games, detail from the base of the column of Theodosius in Istanbul	49
6. The Lady of Carthage, a sixth-century mosaic from Carthage	61
7. The ruins of ancient Carthage	73
8. The Porta Asinaria, through which Belisarius entered Rome in December 536	95
9. The Porta Pinciana, which Belisarius defended during the siege of Rome, 537–538	106
10. The palace of Ravenna, detail from a mosaic panel in San Apollinare Nuovo	120
11. Portrait of a sixth-century woman, probably Antonina, detail from the imperial panel of Theodora in San Vitale	124
12. Floor mosaic from the Great Palace, Constantinople	143
13. Portrait of a sixth-century man, probably Belisarius, detail from the imperial panel of Justinian in San Vitale	156
14. The imperial mosaic panel of Justinian in San Vitale	161
15. The imperial mosaic panel of Theodora in San Vitale	161
16. A sixth-century lead seal, obverse: Virgin and Child, reverse: monogram of Belisarius	178

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 17. The album cover art for Judicator's <i>Let There Be Nothing</i> , showing Belisarius, Antonina, and Theodosios | 192 |
| 18. <i>Belisarius Begging for Alms</i> by Jacques-Louis David | 196 |
| 19. <i>Belisarius</i> by Jean-Baptiste Stouf | 197 |

Maps

- | | |
|--|----|
| 1. The World of Belisarius and Antonina (the Mediterranean in the sixth century) | 8 |
| 2. The East (overview of the Roman/Persian Mesopotamian frontier) | 28 |
| 3. North Africa (overview of important sites in the Vandal War) | 56 |
| 4. Italy (overview of important sites in the Gothic War) | 84 |
| 5. Rome in the Sixth Century (detail showing Aurelian Wall and its gates) | 98 |