

= Eutharic =

Eutharic Cilliga (Latin : Flavius Eutharicus Cillica) was an Ostrogothic prince from Iberia (modern @-@ day Spain) who , during the early 6th century , served as Roman Consul and " son in arms " (filius per arma) alongside the Byzantine emperor Justin I. He was the son @-@ in @-@ law and presumptive heir of the Ostrogoth king Theoderic the Great but died in AD 522 at the age of 42 before he could inherit Theoderic 's title . Theoderic claimed that Eutharic was a descendant of the Gothic royal house of Amali and it was intended that his marriage to Theoderic 's daughter Amalasuintha would unite the Gothic kingdoms , establish Theoderic 's dynasty and further strengthen the Gothic hold over Italy .

During his year of consulship in 519 relations with the East Roman Empire flourished and the Acacian schism between the Eastern and Western Christian churches was ended . Whilst Eutharic was nominally a statesman , politician and soldier of the Roman Empire , he was also an Arian , whose views clashed with the Catholic majority ; as consul enforcing Theoderic 's tolerant policy towards the Jewish people , he incurred resentment from the local Catholics , whose traditions were less than tolerant . Following disturbances in Ravenna , where Catholics burnt down a number of synagogues , Eutharic 's siding with the Jewish people of Ravenna was reported with resentment in a fragmentary contemporary chronicle .

Some time after the death of Eutharic , his son Athalaric briefly held the Ostrogothic throne but died at the age of 18 . After Athalaric 's death , Eutharic 's widow moved to Constantinople where further attempts at establishing a dynasty failed .

= = Early life = =

Eutharic was born around AD 480 to a noble ostrogoth family of the Amali line . Eutharic 's ancestry has been traced back through his father Veteric , son of Berismund , son of Thorismund , son of Hunimund , son of Hermanaric , son of Achiulf . Eutharic grew up in Iberia (modern @-@ day Spain) where he had a reputation for being " a young man strong in wisdom and valor and health of body " . He was later to become the " son in arms " (filius per arma) to the Byzantine emperor Justin I , a role which indicated a part of his early life may have been spent as a soldier .

Eutharic 's status in both the Gothic and Roman world was elevated by the attentions of Theoderic the Great who he was related to distantly through their mutual connection with Hermanaric . Hermanaric was an Ostrogoth chief who ruled much of the territory north of the Black Sea . Eutharic was descended through five generations from Hermanaric , whilst Theoderic was a descendant of Hermanaric 's older brother Vultwulf .

By the late 5th century Theoderic was king of the Ostrogoths , ruling from Ravenna in Italy and a close ally of the Roman Emperor Zeno . Following the death of a rival , Theoderic Strabo , Theoderic the Great received the titles of patricius and magister militum from Zeno and in 484 he was appointed consul . Though there was tension between Theoderic and Zeno 's successor Anastasius I , the emperor who followed Anastasius , Justin I , sought reconciliation with Theoderic whose influence in the Gothic world would make him a powerful ally . Having worked throughout his life to establish a kingdom and strengthen relations with both the church and Rome , Theoderic was keen to establish a dynasty . His marriage to Audofleda however had produced only a daughter , Amalasuintha . Therefore , to achieve his ambitions Theoderic would have to ensure he chose a son @-@ in @-@ law with an ancestry equal in strength to his own . His investigations into the Gothic royal lines , which were by this time widely distributed across Europe , led him to Iberia . Here he discovered Eutharic , the last heir of a related branch of the Amali , who had recently assumed the regency of Spain .

More recent studies however suggest that Eutharic 's Amali ancestry may have been a deliberate invention on the part of Theoderic to aid his ambitions of establishing dynastic credibility . According to Gesta Theoderici Eutharic belonged to the Gothic house of Alan rather than the house of Amal . Whilst Jordanes , in his history of the Goths , does make reference to Eutharic 's prudentia et virtus , or pride and valour , this too may have been a fabrication on the part of Theoderic . Those qualities

were recognised as requirements of Gothic ethnographic ideology , expressed in their code of civilitas . It would have been highly beneficial for Theoderic 's chosen son @-@ in @-@ law to possess them .

= = At the court of Theoderic = =

In AD 515 Eutharic answered a summons by Theoderic the Great and moved to the Ostrogothic court at Ravenna in Italy . Here he was given in marriage Amalasuintha , the daughter of the king . It was Theoderic 's intention that this union would create a long @-@ lasting dynastic connection between the previously sundered Ostrogoths and Visigoths . Theoderic also named Eutharic his presumptive heir .

Whilst in Italy , Eutharic played an important political role within Theoderic 's kingdom . With a court background he had the ability to serve in government and he was respected by the Romans , who admired his liberality and magnificence . Catholic writers of the time however indicate that , whilst his father @-@ in @-@ law was renowned for policies of toleration , Eutharic acted more like a " bigoted Arian " .

= = Consulship = =

In 498 , as the Empire 's nominal vice @-@ regent in Italy , Theoderic had been granted the right to nominate the Western candidate for each year 's consular pair . He was however bounded by a restriction : to select only a Roman citizen for the position . To advance Eutharic 's standing in the world Theoderic wished him to be made consul for the year 519 . To get around the restriction imposed on his nominations , and as a favour to Theoderic , Justin himself nominated Eutharic .

The nomination was successful , and in January 519 Eutharic took up the position of Western Consul . By granting him Roman citizenship , accepting him as co @-@ consul and calling him a " son in arms " , Emperor Justin I sought to restore ties with Theoderic , strained during the reign of Anastasius I Dicorus . He showed further favour to Eutharic by conceding the senior consulship to him . It is reported that at the celebrations to mark the assumption there were , " magnificent shows of wild beasts procured from Africa " and that a visiting diplomat , the patricius Symmachus , sent by the eastern Imperial court to Italy was , " amazed at the riches given to the Goths and the Romans " .

During this period Eutharic was eulogised by Cassiodorus in the Senate . In it he compared Eutharic to great consuls of the past . The short Chronicle , which Cassiodorus wrote to congratulate Eutharic on his consulship , is noted for focusing on Eutharic 's accession to a position of high civilian honour , rather than any military victories , as had been more common for past Gothic nobility . Eutharic 's time as consul is portrayed largely as a time of prosperity for the western Roman empire with the code of civilitas being promoted . In March 519 , the Acacian schism which had separated the Eastern and Western Christian churches for the previous 35 years was ended and the churches reconciled . In addition to the prosperity felt by the peoples of the Roman empire , Eutharic 's year of consulship has also been described as seeming like " [a year] of bright promise for the Ostrogothic kingdom " .

The contemporary Catholic chronicle of the Anonymus Valesianus portrays Eutharic in a negative light , connecting him with taking the Jews ' side in anti @-@ Jewish disturbances in Ravenna over the Jewish congregation 's rights to their synagogue ; the disagreement prompted a conflict between the Arians and Catholics as the Arian Eutharic chose to side with the Jewish people . It is thought that the outrage expressed by the Catholics at this action was in proportion to Eutharic 's being a symbol of the recent reconciliation between the Eastern and Western Churches brought about under the direction of Theoderic .

= = Death and legacy = =

Eutharic died in 522 at the age of 42 , less than three years after his consulship . His death caused

problems for Theoderic who never succeeded in his desire to establish a strong Gothic dynasty . Though Eutharic and Amalasuintha had a son , Athalaric born in 516 , and a daughter , Matasuntha , the dynasty was never established convincingly . Theoderic named Athalaric as his heir in 526 , and Athalaric 's mother Amalasuintha acted as regent for her son following Theoderic 's death that year . Athalaric died in October 534 at the age of 18 . To maintain her power , Amalasuintha brought her cousin , and a nephew of Theoderic , named Theodahad to the throne . Though he was made to swear fealty to Amalasuintha , Theodahad felt insecure and in December 534 had her imprisoned on an island in Lake Bolsena where she was eventually murdered on 30 April 535 .