

a brief period by the Ostrogoths from Ravenna. Recovered for the Eastern Empire by Belisarius, the province was governed by a "Katapan" resident at Salona, acting for the Exarch of Ravenna. The Dalmatians detested the government of Ravenna, for their young men were conscripted to fight the battles of the Eastern Empire in distant Persia. And this may in part account for the poor defence Dalmatia offered when the terrible days of the Avar invasion came upon them.

We are now approaching the seventh century, the period of barbarian pressure and unrest in the valleys of the Danube and the Save, and Dalmatia obscurely felt the influence. But these invaders were Slavs not Teutons, and their advance was slower, more spasmodic and less effective than that of their brother barbarians, Goth or Lombard. Behind, beyond and eastward of the Slavs were the Avars, a tribe not to be confounded with the Slavs, but of an origin not clearly known to us. The Avars, most savage of barbarians, gradually thrust the Slavs of the Danube basin westward across the Dinaric Alps, and drove them into the islands, following them, like a devastating torrent of lava, down to the very shores of the Adriatic. Dalmatia was submerged and its Roman capital,