

Late Roman Card Descriptions- Clubs

C-A Late Roman Weapons



The illustrations seen here feature a variety of late Roman weapons and equipment. Seen here are two late Roman spears known as *Hastae* (singular: *Hasta*) which are commonly known as thrusting spears which measured up to 1.8m or more in length while a unique feature of these late Roman spears is that their shafts had alternating color stripes in which the ones seen here feature one with a blue and red shaft and the other with a red and yellow one. Seen next to these spears to the left are two late Roman javelins known as *Spiculum* in singular form which were the throwing javelins used by late Roman legionnaires since around 250AD replacing the Ancient Roman throwing javelin known as the *Pilum*. Other than the spears and javelins, the ornament seen here is the late Roman cavalry standard with an ornate bronze dragon's head known as a *Draco* which has a cloth tail at the other side representing the dragon's body and tail; this ornament meanwhile was adopted by the Romans from the nomadic Sarmatian horsemen north of the Danube River. Other than that, two standard late Roman longswords are also seen here known as a *Spatha* wherein one is a simple *Spatha* used by common soldiers (below) whereas the other (above) is a more ornate one used by late Roman generals, while also seen here to the right is the sheath used for the *Spatha*. The other weapon seen here on the other hand is a late Roman composite bow known as an *Arcus* as well as two small throwing darts used by late

Roman legionnaires known as *Plumbata*. On the upper-right side are two late Roman round cavalry shields with one having a golden sun pattern on a red background and the other bearing the image of the *Chi-rho* or the initials of Christ in Greek.

C-2 Slav Warrior, 6th-7th Centuries



Before the Slavs as people migrated en masse into the Balkans and Eastern Europe during the 6th and 7th centuries, nothing much is known about them, thus their origins are shrouded in mystery. Since very little written sources discuss the origins of the Slavs, most of what we know about them comes from archaeological evidence, thus based on it, we can trace the origins of the Slavs back to 1500BC in what is now Poland, Belarus, and Ukraine wherein they mostly lived in settlements found in forests or swamps. Before their migration south to the Balkans, these people were also historically known as the *Venedi*, although later on they would be known in Latin as the *Sclaveni* and in Greek as *Sklabenoï* where the word “Slav” is derived from. What caused their en masse migration south however is not clear but it can be suggested that it was because of the dissolution of the Hunnic Empire following the death of its ruler Attila the Hun in 453, as with his death his massive empire had crumbled and thus left a vacuum in Eastern Europe allowing the Slavs to expand. Another theory to why the Slavs expanded south was due to overpopulation creating a lack of land for them to farm, and thus this led them south to the Balkans where there was an abundance of land for them to farm.

It was during the mid 6th century during the reign of the Eastern Roman emperor Justinian I the Great (527-565) when the Slavs with other groups such as the Avars began devastating the Eastern Roman Balkans which were left depopulated therefore leaving lots of land for invaders to pillage and settle in, thus this was when the Slavs were first recorded by Eastern Roman (Byzantine) authors. In the 550s, the Slavs who here had served as the infantry of the Avars had advanced deep into the Balkans towards Thessaloniki wherein they destroyed several fortified settlements along the way including the major city of Sirmium which is in today's Serbia, however they still failed to capture their target which was Thessaloniki. However, during the 580s, the Slavs accompanied by the Avars as their infantry troops again- as the Avars were mostly cavalry- would devastate the Eastern Roman Balkans once again at a large scale wherein they had overwhelmed Greece, Thrace, and Thessaly. Although the Eastern Romans had made a pact with the Avars in which the latter was to receive an annual payment of 100,000 gold solidi in return for not attacking Eastern Roman borders, the Slavs did not take part in this agreement and instead continued attacking the Balkans in full force to the point of finally establishing permanent settlements there.

By the early 600s, the Eastern Romans once again organized a campaign against the Slavs at the Danube River border, but this ended with no positive results as the campaign was aborted due to a military mutiny in 602 that would later overthrow the Eastern Roman emperor Maurice (r. 582-602). With this campaign ending in failure for the Eastern Romans, the Slavs and Avars once again freely pillaged their way through the Balkans with nothing to stop them that in 626, after making an alliance with Eastern Rome's traditional eastern enemy the Sassanid Persian Empire, the Avars and Slavs had laid siege to the Eastern Roman capital Constantinople itself. This siege however ended in failure as the Eastern Romans were able to repel their attacks, and thus the alliance between the Avars and Slavs had ended whereas the Avars retreated back north across the Danube leaving the Slavs behind in the Balkans. The Slavs thus being left behind permanently settled in the Balkans where they would eventually establish their own states while some groups of Slavs settled as far south as Greece until the Eastern Romans recaptured these parts of Greece from the Slavs in the 9th century, though some Slav settlements still remained within the mountainous regions of Greece. The Slavs in the Balkans meanwhile were there to stay, and eventually they would be converted to Orthodox Christianity by Eastern Roman missionaries while they too would form principalities which would then become the medieval states of Serbia, Bosnia, and Croatia.

Now the Slavs were known to have been great warriors especially as infantrymen that were said to be unusually strong and ready for battle when it came to defending or conquering territory for settling. With Slavic warriors said to be unusually strong, the one in this illustration is no exception as here he is seen to be not wearing any kind of armor but rather just a plain white shirt with red embroideries held up by a leather belt, white pants with red embroideries, leather boots, a cloth headband on his head instead of a helmet, and a cloak over his outfit which therefore reflects his strength and bravery. Although true enough, Slav warriors during the 6th and 7th centuries were not recorded to have worn any kind of armor, hence this one doesn't wear any. On the other hand, there is also not much information on what kinds of weapons Slavic warriors in the Balkans used

during the 6th and 7th centuries, although it is known that they came to battle equipped with many weapons such as a spear, axe, sling, bow, and shield, but not so much swords. The Slavic warrior in this illustration now is seen to be holding a small axe as his primary weapon on his right hand while on his left hand, he holds a round wooden shield with the *Kolovrat* or “spoked wheel” symbol on it- which is the symbol of the chief god in Slavic mythology- and behind it is a set of throwing javelins as his secondary weapon.

C-3 Lombard Warrior, 6th Century



Long before the Germanic people known as the Lombards settled in Italy and established their own kingdom there in the late 6th century, they originally came from as far north as Scandinavia wherein from there as a small tribe migrated south to Germany. The name of this people being “Lombard” came from the Proto-Germanic words *langaz* and *bardaz* meaning “longbeard” and it is either they gave this name to themselves or that their enemies and neighboring tribes gave it to them as they were identified as having long beards; as originally this tribe were not known as the “Lombards” but as the *Winnili*. The Lombards were apparently first written about in Roman sources from as early as the 1st century AD wherein the Roman historian Tacitus mentions that they were a group of people living at the banks of the Elbe River who were known to be “remote” and very aggressive despite being a small tribe.

The Lombards now had expanded their tribe and influence over the centuries after defeating other neighboring Germanic tribes such as the Vandals and later the Heruli in which the Lombards were able to subdue the latter who were known to be the fiercest and most brutal of the Germanic tribes. Once defeating the Heruli people in what is today Austria and Slovakia, the Lombards in the 6th century managed to migrate south into the Pannonian Plain (today's Hungary) where they came across a new enemy Germanic tribe, which here were the Gepids who were an enemy of the Eastern Roman Empire. As the Lombards had arrived in the Pannonian Plain, the Eastern Roman emperor Justinian I the Great (r. 527-565) had paid them off to fight the Gepids as a way of fighting a war against a foreign enemy without having to send imperial troops to fight them. Here, the Lombards have become an "ally" to the Eastern Romans that many Lombard warriors in the 6th century were paid off by the Eastern Romans as mercenaries to help them in their wars, and true enough a large contingent of Lombard mercenaries were used by the Eastern Roman general Narses in his campaign against the Ostrogoths in Italy which ended in a success for the Eastern Romans who at the end managed to expel the Ostrogoths and conquer the Italian Peninsula, at least for the meantime.

Meanwhile, the Lombards in the Pannonian plain under their king Audoin (r. 546-560) and after him his son and successor Alboin (r. 560-572) had been engaged in a long war against the Gepids which eventually ended with the Lombards finally defeating the Gepids once and for all. Although the Lombards had defeated the Gepids in Pannonia, their king Alboin was not comfortable settling in Pannonia as another threat was growing in the east that would be a problem to them, and these were the nomadic Avar people. After hearing from the Lombard mercenaries that fought in Italy who reported to Alboin that it was a perfect place to settle in due to it being left depopulated after many years of war between the Eastern Romans and Ostrogoths, Alboin decided that it was time to migrate south and settle in Italy despite it being under Eastern Roman control. Despite Italy being under the Eastern Roman Empire, it was so depopulated due to the recent wars and plague, that the Lombards led by Alboin marched into it without facing much resistance in 568, thus after only a few years of Italy being under Eastern Roman rule, most of it quickly and simply fell to the Lombards. Eventually, almost the entire Italian Peninsula had fallen to the Lombards except for major cities like Rome and Ravenna which remained under Eastern Roman control, and when establishing control over Italy, the Lombards made the city of Pavia the capital of their new kingdom there.

Although the Lombards had established a kingdom in Italy, they would subdivide their kingdom into 36 different smaller states or duchies all over Italy wherein the Lombard king had appointed his most trusted men to be the "dukes" or leaders of these duchies. Eventually, the Lombard kingdom in Italy had descended into instability when their king Alboin was assassinated in 572, and thus after his death it was really now the Lombard dukes ruling their own duchies that ruled Italy despite there still being a Lombard kingdom. The Lombards when deciding to settle in Italy for good gave up their old Germanic barbarian ways and adopted the Roman way of life including the Roman style of dressing up, the use of coins and a taxation system, and even converting to the Orthodox (Catholic) religion. Although the Lombards have converted to Catholic Christianity when settling in Italy, they still remained a constant enemy towards the Eastern Roman

Exarchate of Ravenna- which controlled the remains of Eastern Roman territory in Italy- and to the pope. In the late 6th century, the Lombards would then continue expanding into Italy taking over Eastern Roman territory thus forcing the Eastern Romans to ally with the Frankish Kingdom in Gaul to keep the Lombards at bay, however the Eastern Romans never really succeeded in taking back territory from the Lombards that eventually they would lose more territory in Italy including the south to the Lombards. During the 7th and 8th centuries, the Lombards would once again continue expanding their rule over Italy while also becoming more Romanized culturally, and it was thus during the reign of the Lombard king Liutprand (712-744) when Lombard Italy was at its golden age, although at this time the Eastern Romans due to having to defend their empire from the Arabs in the east and other enemies elsewhere could no longer defend Italy from the expanding Lombards, thus more Eastern Roman territory in Italy would be lost while the pope in Rome would be more and more threatened by them.

By 751, the Eastern Roman Exarchate of Ravenna had fallen and thus they had lost all their territories in Northern Italy to the Lombards whereas what was left of Eastern Roman Italy was just Rome and the southern regions, however the pope in Rome even felt like the Eastern Romans could no longer protect him and so instead he turned to the Frankish kingdom for assistance against the Lombards. In the late 8th century, the Frankish king Charles (r. 768-814)- later known as Charlemagne- would be the one to relieve the pope from the Lombard threat by invading Italy and within just a year conquering the entire Lombard kingdom and absorbing it into his Frankish kingdom which then became the Frankish Empire in 800 when Charlemagne was crowned as “Roman emperor” by the pope. Although the Lombards in Northern Italy were absorbed into the Frankish Empire of Charlemagne, a number of Lombard duchies still remained in Southern Italy, most notably the Duchy of Benevento which would last all the way to the 11th century and be a threat to the Eastern Romans who still held Southern Italy until then. However during the 11th century, the Lombards had lost complete rule over Italy as the last of Lombard territory in Southern Italy had fallen to a new power that arrived in Italy, which were the Normans who also took over the last of Eastern Roman territory in Italy.

This illustration here shows what a Lombard warrior in the 6th century more or less looked like, and this one here appears to be more or less a Lombard infantryman. The warrior in this illustration wears a Germanic style scaled *Spangenhelm* as his helmet while his long beard is a reference to him being a Lombard which originally supposedly meant “longbeard”. The armor he wears on the other hand is a long set of scaled armor fastened by leather straps seen in front while the armor suit itself extends all the way to his knees. Beneath his armor, the Lombard warrior here is wearing a red striped tunic, and beneath that some brown sleeves, and brown trousers tucked into his felt boots. As for his weapons, the Lombard warrior here is seen using a thrusting spear as his primary weapon on his right while his left hand holds a large round wooden shield with alternating black and white paint and metal studs which are the nails holding the shield together whereas tucked underneath his shield is his sheathed sword wherein only the bottom of its sheath is seen in this illustration.

C-4 Limitanei, 4th Century



The late Roman army was divided into two wherein one division was the mobile field army known as the *Comitatenses* and the other was the army in charge of guarding the borders known as the *Limitanei* whose name derives from the Latin word *Limes* meaning “borders”, while sometimes they were also known as the *Limitanei Ripenses* meaning “soldiers on the riverbank”. The origins of the *Limitanei* army dates back to the late 3rd century when the Roman emperor Diocletian (r. 284-305) made a reform that created two armies being the mobile field army and the border army, and thus over the decades the *Limitanei* would develop into a full border patrol army especially under the reign of Constantine I the Great (306-337) due to his extensive reforms for the Roman army.

As their role was to be the empire’s first line of defense against invaders as well as border-police troops, the *Limitanei* represented the largest part of the late Roman army. The *Limitanei* now were light troops which consisted of infantry, cavalry, and river flotillas and were stationed across all borders of the empire in fortifications whether along the Rhine and Danube Rivers, the Euphrates River, Hadrian’s Wall in Britain, or the deserts of Africa and Arabia, and by being stationed in these fortifications they were not normally expected to fight far from them. As compared to the *Comitatenses* and other units in the late Roman army, the *Limitanei* as border troops were lower paid, although still professional units in the army. In the 4th century, the *Limitanei* were professional soldiers, though by the 5th century they had become part-time soldiers who were given land in

exchange for defending the borders, while by the 6th century they have devolved into unpaid militia. Although being professional soldiers in the 4th century, the Limitanei were not fully equipped for battle due to their role as border troops, hence many soldiers in this unit sometimes did not wear armor but rather just a helmet while some wore scale or mail armor and no helmet but a hat, which thus hints that they had to provide their own equipment.

This illustration here thus depicts a 4th century Limitanei soldier that is not equipped with any kind of armor except for a helmet, thus rather than wearing a full set of armor, the soldier here is seen just wearing a standard red and white long-sleeved late Roman tunic held up by a leather belt, long white trousers tucked into his leather boots, and a standard late Roman ridge helmet with a crest to protect his head; again the inconsistent look of his attire hints that this soldier provided his own equipment. For his weapons, this soldier here holds a thrusting spear or *Hasta* on his right hand as his primary weapon while his secondary weapon being a *Spatha* longsword is not seen as it is sheathed beneath his shield, and therefore the leather strap across his chest diagonally is meant to indicate that there is a sword tucked beneath the shield. The left hand meanwhile is holding a large oval shaped late Roman shield with a white background and a red crescent and stripe which is a shield design seen in the late Roman military document known as the *Notitia Dignitatum*.

C-5 Eastern Roman Consul, 5th century



As the Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire was the continuation of the Roman Empire, a lot of institutions from the old empire remained in place throughout Eastern Roman history including the centuries old Roman Senate. When the Roman emperor Constantine I the Great (r. 306-337) moved the Roman capital to Constantinople in 330, he also moved a number of Roman senators from Italy to the new capital in exchange for free land and grain, while some senators from the west also opted to go east. Basically, in the Byzantine era the senate functioned as a kind of city council as true enough other major cities in the empire in the late Roman period such as Antioch and Carthage had a senate and not only Constantinople. The senate in Constantinople though was the most “powerful” one in the empire despite them not really wielding any real power except in advising the emperor when it came to creating policies and in managing the budget for public events such as chariot races and shows. Although there were still some instances when the senate actually made decisions for the empire as a whole such as in plotting to overthrow an emperor, as seen with the Nika Riot in 532 when several members of the senate in Constantinople supported the rioting against the emperor Justinian I.

In the Eastern Roman Empire, the senate basically consisted of members of aristocratic families and usually the position of senator was hereditary. The Eastern Roman Senate too was divided into 3 positions wherein each one ranked higher above the other, and here the highest ranking of the divisions (*Illustres*) consisted of the most senior generals and Constantinople’s *Prefect* or mayor, the second rank (*Spectabiles*) consisting of important politicians from Constantinople and the provinces, and the third and lowest rank (*Clarissimi*) consisted of provincial governors. A lot of the old positions in the Ancient Roman Senate though ceased to exist in the Eastern Roman Empire such as that of *Aedile*, *Tribune*, and *Quaestor* and thus the head of the Eastern Roman Senate- at least only in Constantinople- was the mayor of the city, though the one senatorial rank from Ancient Rome that continued in the Eastern Roman Empire was that of *consul*. Now, in the era of the Roman Republic before it transformed into the empire in 27BC, there were two consuls that served as the heads of the Roman Senate and therefore as the two heads of the Roman state itself, and even in the age of the empire from 27BC onwards the rank of consul still existed, although sometimes the Roman emperor had held it.

Although, the position of consul no longer held real power during the Roman imperial era and in the Byzantine era beginning 330 when the Roman capital was moved to Constantinople, the position of consul was a very prestigious one to have as it was a centuries old government position that had not died out. However, the role of the consul especially in the Eastern Roman Empire was basically all ceremonial, although like in Ancient Rome two consuls would be elected each year and sometimes a consul can be re-elected a number of times. The consul’s role in Eastern Rome really came into motion in starting public races and leading military parades and since the role of consul was basically ceremonial, any male with influence could hold the title whether it was the successful general of the moment or a high ranking general or *Magister Militum* (Master of Soldiers), an influential politician or eunuch, a wealthy aristocrat, the emperor himself, or even the emperor’s underaged son. Notable people in Eastern Roman history who held the rank of consul included the future emperor Justinian I the Great (r. 527-565) himself in 521 when

he was still known as “Flavius Petrus Sabbatius” while even a number of foreign barbarian rulers of that time held the position too basically as an honorary title granted to them by the Eastern Roman emperor, and such foreign rulers that held the title of honorary consul were the Ostrogoth king Theodoric the Amal (r. 475-526) and the Frankish king Clovis I (r. 481-511). Reigning Eastern Roman emperors too had held the position of consul for a year, and the last one to hold it was Emperor Constans II (r. 641-668) in 642.

The position of consul in the Eastern Roman Empire would slowly disappear by the 7th century and this most possibly happened during the reign of Emperor Justinian II (685-695) as he unified the position of consul with that of the emperor himself, hence it was under his reign when the emperor began wearing the long wrapped-around robe known as the *Loros* which was originally the ceremonial outfit of the Eastern Roman consul. The position of consul in Eastern Rome had been completely abolished during the reign of Emperor Leo VI (886-912) as a way to give more power to the emperor and the Patriarch of Constantinople. Although the position of consul disappeared, the Eastern Roman Senate continued to live on for the next centuries, yet the Eastern Roman Senate true enough still existed until the empire’s very last day being May 29, 1453, and thus the Senate died with the empire itself as Constantinople fell to the Ottomans.

This illustration depicts a late Roman consul from the 5th century, and here he is seen wearing the ceremonial consular robes which here is gold in color with ornate patterns sewn into it while underneath it is a tunic. This ceremonial robe worn by the consul here is the evolved version of the Ancient Roman *Toga* and would eventually become the imperial *Loros* worn by Eastern Roman emperors beginning in the late 7th century, while on his left hand the consul holds a ceremonial staff held by late Roman consuls. The image of this consul in this illustration including his robes, the ceremonial staff, and his facial features is very much based on the 5th century carved ivory diptych depicting Flavius Felix, who was a Western Roman consul in 428. This ivory diptych of Flavius Felix is notable for depicting a Byzantine (or late Roman era) consul’s attire in complete detail; however, the diptych doesn’t show what the color of the consul’s robes were, hence this one’s gold color of the robes and its green interior was based on an existing colorized artwork that was also based on this diptych of Flavius Felix.

C-6 Narses (478-573)



Narses was together with Belisarius one of the greatest generals of the 6th century Eastern Roman Empire during the emperor Justinian I the Great's (r. 527-565) reconquest of Roman territory previously lost to barbarians. Narses was born in around 478 in Sassanid Persian held Armenia to an Armenian family of noble status, however nothing much is known about his early life- apart from becoming made into a eunuch- until 530 when he was already serving the Eastern Roman emperor Justinian I, thus how or when he got to the Eastern Roman capital Constantinople remains unknown. When Narses was recorded for the first time in 530, he was already serving as Emperor Justinian I's steward and high treasurer, though from here he rose through the ranks becoming the commander of the emperor's eunuch bodyguard force, then the *Praepositus Sacri Cubiculi* or "Grand Chamberlain", and then becoming the *Magister Militum* or "Master of Soldiers". It also so happened that in Justinian I's reign, he overturned the law wherein eunuchs could not become patricians in status as Narses who was a eunuch became a patrician too.

In 532, Narses had made a name for himself in taking part in crushing the violent *Nika* Riots in Constantinople wherein the emperor Justinian and the empress Theodora instructed him to bribe the Blue faction's leaders to stop rioting, and here Narses was true enough successful both by paying off the Blue leaders and by convincing them that Hypatius who was the man that they proclaimed emperor against Justinian belonged to their rival Green faction while also convincing the Blues that Justinian still supported them. At the end, the Nika Riots were brutally crushed wherein 30,000 rioters were massacred at the Hippodrome by imperial forces. As for Narses, his success in quashing the Nika Riots

suddenly found him in a position of commanding armies and so Justinian sent him with an army of 7,000 which arrived at the port of Ancona in Italy in 538 to assist the general Belisarius in the Eastern Roman reconquest of Italy from the Ostrogoths. In this Italian campaign, many of the troops commanded by Narses consisted of foreign people from various tribes from beyond the borders of Eastern Rome, and when in Italy, Narses was described by the contemporary historian Procopius to be “keen and more energetic than would be expected of a eunuch”. Here, Narses and Belisarius met each other at a war council to discuss on how they will capture Rimini and about the failures of the other commander John. It was here where the rivalry between Belisarius and Narses had grown especially due to their difference of commanding troops and military strategies as Belisarius was a tactician whereas Narses was just a commander taking orders from the emperor. Due to the rivalry between Narses and Belisarius, the command was divided and thus a number of military disasters occurred such as the massacre of Eastern Roman troops at Milan by the Burgundians which happened in 539, and because of this Narses was blamed for these disasters and thus recalled to Constantinople by Justinian.

Back in Constantinople, Narses returned to working at the imperial court, and it was believed that Narses here helped the empress Theodora and Belisarius’ wife Antonina overthrow the finance minister John of Cappadocia in 541. In 545, Narses was sent by Justinian to the lands of the Heruli in Central Europe to recruit the Heruli as allied *Foederati* troops for the Eastern Romans. In 551, Narses was appointed by Justinian to be the commander of the army in the Italian expedition to finally recapture the entire peninsula from the Ostrogoths as a year earlier (550), the appointed commander of the expedition being Justinian’s cousin Germanus had died, therefore Narses had replaced him, and it is believed that Narses was put in command due to his old age so that he would never be able to rebel successfully against Justinian. With this new position of his, Narses was able to have access to the emperor’s financial resources, and thus with these funds he was able to amass some 20-30,000 troops which mostly consisted of barbarian mercenaries from beyond the empire’s borders which he hired such as the Heruli, Gepids, and Lombards. In this campaign, Narses marched his army along the coast of the Adriatic Sea from the Balkans into Italy which thus took more than a year for him to reach Italy whereas the Eastern Roman navy commanded by John and Valerian had already sailed to Italy and defeated the Ostrogoth fleet at the naval battle of Sena Gallica.

With the Ostrogoth fleet defeated, the coastal defense of Italy was down and thus Narses with his army were able to march into Italy unopposed. Eventually, Narses and his army confronted the Ostrogoth army led by their king Totila (r. 541-552) at the Battle of Taginae in 552 wherein Narses organized his troops in a crescent formation, and by outnumbering Totila in terms of men, the Eastern Romans at the end had won the battle wherein Totila himself was killed as his forces were routed. Once the Ostrogoths were defeated at Taginae with their king Totila killed in battle, Narses with his forces then proceeded south to Rome which they recaptured after a siege, and following this Narses headed south to locate Totila’s treasury. The remaining Ostrogoths however were still around and had rallied behind Totila’s son Teia who they proclaimed as their king, thus Narses chased down the remaining Ostrogoths to the slopes of Mt. Vesuvius. The army led by Narses once again confronted the Ostrogoths here at the Battle of Mons Lactarius in 553

which lasted for 2 days and ended with an Eastern Roman victory wherein the last Ostrogoth king Teia was killed in battle here the same way his father was a year earlier. Although the Ostrogoths were defeated and had surrendered to the Eastern Romans, the Franks from Gaul had suddenly invaded Italy as before Totila was slain in battle he apparently asked for assistance from the Franks, however the Franks came a bit too late. As the Franks invaded Italy, they split their forces into two groups wherein the first group confronted Narses and his army at the Battle of Volturnus and were defeated due to Narses' men surrounding them with their phalanx while the second group died from plague.

By 554, Italy was thus pacified and the war was over, although it would only be in 562 when the last strongholds of the Ostrogoths and their barbarian allies would finally surrender to the Eastern Romans. Narses meanwhile following his final battle in 554 would spend the rest of his life in the recently conquered although depopulated Eastern Roman Italy wherein he would be in charge of reorganizing its government and rebuilding structures damaged by all the years of war. Just like how very little is known about Narses' early life, there is also very little known about his last years spent in Italy while his date of death too remains unclear as some historians believed that he died in 567- 2 years after the death of the emperor Justinian I (565)- though some historians say Narses died in 574 at the very old age of 96. According to legend, Narses still served Justinian's nephew and successor Justin II (r. 565-578) as Justin II and his wife Empress Sophia recalled Narses to Constantinople for treating his subjects like his slaves, and whether this legend is true or not, it is just possibly meant to say that Narses was still active even after Justinian's death.

In this illustration, the Eastern Roman general Narses is depicted as a eunuch administrator in the imperial court instead of a general as this was his original career. The facial features as well as the hair of Narses in this illustration was based on the mosaic of a man in the Basilica of San Vitale in Ravenna, Italy who is often believed to be Narses while the fact that he is seen to not have a beard in this illustration is meant to indicate that he is a eunuch. Additionally, this illustration also shows Narses as an old man with gray hair as true enough he was already an old man when he was recorded to have served the empire, thus this illustration is supposed to depict him as a man in his 70s which was his age during his campaign against the Ostrogoths in Italy during the 550s. As an imperial court official, Narses here is seen to be wearing the outfit associated with Eastern Roman courtiers in the 6th century, thus here Narses is seen wearing a long white tunic with black trimmings and over it a large blue cloak or *Chlamys* which has a large gold and red embroidery at the front side of it known as a *Tablion* while the cloak itself is fastened by a golden brooch at his right shoulder known as a *Fibula*. As for his footwear, Narses here is seen wearing leather boots.

C-7 Genseric, King of the Vandals (428-477)



Very few rulers in history had a very eventful lifetime as a king than the legendary Vandal pirate king Genseric who in one lifetime saw his people, the Vandals transform from a small Germanic tribe to the naval power of the Mediterranean Sea. Genseric was born in 389 as the illegitimate son of the Vandal king Godigisel and a slave woman, and following the death of Godigisel in 406 when battling the Franks after crossing the frozen Rhine River into Western Roman Gaul along with several other barbarian tribes, he was succeeded by his legitimate son, Genseric's half-brother Gunderic which left Genseric as Godigisel's second son as the second most powerful man in the Vandal tribe. Under the rule of Gunderic, the Vandals entered into the service of the Western Roman Empire as *Foederati* or allied troops, and in return for their service they were resettled in Western Roman Hispania, and it is here where the Vandal tribe would build their kingdom at the southern regions of Hispania- today's Andalusia. It was during the Vandals' time in Sothern Hispania when Gunderic died in 428, and therefore he was succeeded as the King of the Vandals by his half-brother Genseric.

Now as king, Genseric saw that Hispania was not a safe place for the Vandals as there they were constantly attacked by their neighboring Germanic barbarian tribes being the Visigoths and Suebi, thus Genseric envisioned for a stronger Vandal kingdom which should be by the sea, and so already at the beginning of his reign, Genseric had already begun constructing a fleet at the Mediterranean coast of Hispania as a way to get out of there and establish a new kingdom elsewhere. In 429, after Genseric had defeated the Suebi tribe that attacked his region in Hispania, he already transported as many as 80,000 of his

people by ship from Hispania to North Africa as due to this attack by the Suebi, Genseric no longer saw Hispania as a place where they could thrive, and therefore he concluded that Hispania should just be left to the Visigoths and Suebi as the Vandals had bigger ambitions. On the other hand, Genseric and his Vandals were also given an offer by the Western Roman general in North Africa Bonifacius to settle there in exchange for Bonifacius getting assistance from the Vandals in his struggle against the powerful Western Roman general Flavius Aetius. Once Genseric and his Vandals together with Alan and Goth allies arrived in North Africa, they quickly proceeded west defeating the weak and divided Western Roman armies in today's Morocco and Algeria before laying siege to the city of Hippo Regius for 14 months. During the Vandal siege of Hippo Regius in 430, St. Augustine was its bishop and it was during this 14-month siege when he died, although not in battle but of natural causes.

With Hippo falling to the Vandals, the entire regions of Numidia and Mauretania had fallen to the Vandals as well, and as Genseric was gaining the upper hand, he betrayed the general Bonifacius who being powerless to stop the Vandals fled to Italy allowing most of North Africa to be annexed by the Vandals. In 435, the Western Roman emperor Valentinian III (r. 425-455) concluded peace with Genseric and the Vandals which recognized Genseric as king of the lands he conquered while the Vandals too were forced to pay tribute to the Western Roman Empire all while Genseric's son Huneric was sent to the Western Roman capital Ravenna as a hostage. For Genseric however, the ultimate prize was to capture Carthage, the capital of Roman North Africa, and so in a surprise move in 439, Genseric and his forces laid siege to Carthage as the Western Romans at this point were distracted due to being preoccupied with barbarian invasions in Gaul. With the Romans caught unaware, Genseric successfully captured Carthage in October of 439, and once he captured it he also captured a large portion of the Western Roman fleet docked there which therefore became his new fleet. Now that Carthage fell to the Vandals, Genseric set himself up there making it his new capital, and as an Arian Christian he exiled the city's Nicene Christian bishop and demanded that all his close advisors be Arian Christians.

As the Western Romans had lost Carthage and most of North Africa, the grain supply was therefore cut off while Genseric on the other hand was fortunate enough to have conquered these regions which were rich in grain, thus he had all the resources he needed to run a powerful kingdom while he even made more profit due to selling off the grain grown in his new kingdom to the Western Romans. On the other hand, Genseric's reign turned out to be not only successful because of the abundance of resources in his kingdom but during his reign, he kept the Roman administration system to run his kingdom while in his reign, Latin literary culture still continued to flourish in Carthage as Genseric was ruling over a multi-ethnic population of Vandals, Alans, Goths, Moors, and Roman citizens in North Africa. Now having gained a large fleet after capturing the Roman fleet in North Africa and constructing new ships as well, Genseric laid siege to the city of Panormus (Palermo) in Sicily in 440 but was repulsed by the Western Romans. In 442, another treaty with both the Western Roman emperor Valentinian III and Eastern Roman emperor Theodosius II (r. 408-450) recognized Genseric as king of his lands in North Africa, therefore the Romans had acknowledged the loss of their lands in North Africa.

Fast-forward to 455, and here Genseric's Vandal Kingdom had now become a major naval power in the Mediterranean, and now thanks to having a powerful navy, Genseric here was able to capture the Balearic Islands, Sardinia, Corsica, and Malta and thus annex them to his kingdom. It also happened that in 455, the Western Roman emperor Valentinian III was assassinated on the orders of the senator Petronius Maximus who then usurped the Western Roman throne and married the late Valentinian III's wife Licinia Eudoxia for legitimacy while Maximus had also married off his son to Valentinian III's and Eudoxia's daughter Eudocia who was originally supposed to marry Genseric's son Huneric. Due to the marriage of Huneric and Eudocia being cancelled, Genseric saw this as a reason to declare war on the Western Romans, and thus Genseric with his navy set sail for Italy from Carthage with the intention to attack Rome itself. When word got to the emperor Petronius Maximus that Genseric was on his way to attack Rome, Maximus panicked and ordered everyone to flee the city, and here Maximus and his son were killed by the mob who fled the city in a panic. Genseric meanwhile before marching to Rome was confronted by Pope Leo I who implored Genseric to not destroy Rome or murder its inhabitants, to which Genseric agreed to so long as his men could loot the city of its valuables. The Vandals true enough did not kill anyone as they sacked Rome in 455, however they still stripped the city of its most precious valuables such as the gold from the ceiling of the Temple of Jupiter on the Capitoline Hill, though their sack of the city was remembered in history to be so brutal that the word "vandal" or "vandalism" would originate from this Vandal Sack of Rome. The Vandal Sack of Rome in 455 was the second time Rome was sacked in the 5th century- the first time by the Visigoth king Alaric I in 410- and although the first Sack of Rome in 410 was more brutal due to the killing of its inhabitants, the one in 455 took so much valuables away from Rome to the point that Rome had lost its prestige. Aside from taking away Rome's most precious valuables, Genseric also took with him the empress Eudoxia and her daughters Eudocia and Placidia with him to Carthage, and when arriving in Carthage Eudocia was finally married to Genseric's son Huneric.

Although Genseric had returned to Carthage, his fleet continued raiding the coasts of Italy until 456 when the Vandal raiders were defeated by the Germanic Western Roman general Ricimer who in 457 helped his long-time friend the Western Roman general Majorian become the new Western Roman emperor. In his reign, Majorian had planned an ambitious reconquest of North Africa from the Vandals, and so in 460 he ordered the construction of a massive fleet in the Mediterranean coast of Hispania intended to invade the Vandal Kingdom. Genseric however got word of Majorian's plan and so he burned his own lands in North Africa to deprive Majorian's army of resources if they invade, then he sent men from Carthage to Hispania to sabotage Majorian's mission by burning down the newly constructed ships, although here it was most likely that Genseric bribed off traitors in Majorian's army to burn down the ships. Genseric thus saved his kingdom from a Western Roman invasion while in 461, Majorian had fallen from power and was thus executed by his puppet master Ricimer, and due to Majorian's death, Genseric saw a power vacuum in the Western Roman Empire wherein he had intentions to place his own puppet on the Western Roman throne which here was his ally the Western Roman senator Olybrius, however Ricimer had already placed his own puppet in power being the senator Libius Severus (Severus III). In the meantime in 462, Genseric sent the former Western Roman empress Licinia Eudoxia back to Constantinople together with her daughter

Placidia who was married to Olybrius which was an act of reconciliation with the Eastern Roman emperor Leo I (r. 457-474), although this was possibly also Genseric's way of getting Leo I's approval to make Olybrius his puppet emperor.

In 465, the Western Roman emperor Severus III was dead- possibly poisoned by Ricimer- and thus for the next 2 years there would be no Western Roman emperor allowing Genseric to once again take advantage of the power vacuum to make Olybrius his puppet Western Roman emperor. In 467 meanwhile, the Eastern Roman emperor Leo I placed his own puppet on the Western Roman throne which was the Eastern Roman aristocrat Procopius Anthemius (r. 467-472) who however would also be Ricimer's puppet, though together both Leo I and Anthemius put together a massive expedition consisting of 1,000 ships to finally invade, conquer, and put an end to the Vandal Kingdom once and for all as Leo I's eastern half of the empire was apparently constantly raided by Genseric's fleet which thus made Leo want to put an end to this once and for all. In 468, this massive fleet consisting of both Eastern and Western Roman ships led by Leo's brother-in-law Basiliscus set sail to Carthage, and here Genseric who knowing he could not face off a fleet this large resorted to trickery. As the 1,000-ship fleet arrived outside Carthage, Genseric bought time by luring Basiliscus into a truce wherein the Roman fleet would have to wait for 5 days, although after 5 days Genseric deployed his fleet of fireships which crashed into the Roman ships destroying 600 of them in the process. This engagement here being the Battle of Cape Bon was thus a catastrophic defeat for the Romans who were forced to abandon this campaign all while the victorious Genseric grew richer and more powerful after seizing the Roman ships he captured as well as the gold and silver in them, thus due to this victory the Vandal Kingdom had remained the dominant power in the Western Mediterranean.

Following his victory at the Battle of Cape Bon in 468, Genseric's fleet proceeded to harass the Eastern Roman Empire by invading the coast of Greece, however the Vandals despite raiding and devastating Greece were never successful in conquering it. In 472 meanwhile, it was Anthemius' turn to fall from power as the Western Roman emperor due to civil war breaking out between him and his barbarian puppet master Ricimer, and here Genseric once again saw an opportunity to place his intended puppet Olybrius on the Western Roman throne. This time it was successful as Genseric finally got Leo I's approval to make Olybrius the Western Roman emperor, and as Olybrius arrived in Italy Ricimer too proclaimed him as his new puppet emperor against Anthemius all while Anthemius was later captured and executed and Olybrius succeeding him as the new Western Roman emperor. However, just within a few months in 472 Ricimer had died and so did Olybrius while in 474 it was Leo I's turn to die.

Following Leo I's death, he was succeeded by his son-in-law Zeno (r. 474-475/ 476-491) as the new Eastern Roman emperor, and immediately when becoming emperor in 474, Zeno decided to conclude peace with Genseric's Vandal kingdom sending the Eastern Roman senator Severus to Carthage to negotiate the peace. Peace was thus concluded between the Eastern Romans and the Vandal Kingdom while Genseric after enjoying a few years of peace died in 477 at the old age of 87, and apparently Genseric had outlived the Western Roman Empire by a year as just a year before his death (476), the Western Roman Empire had been abolished when the barbarian warlord Odoacer overthrew the last

Western Roman emperor Romulus Augustus (r. 475-476). Genseric was thus succeeded by his son Huneric (r. 477-484) who unlike his father did not have such ambitions in growing the Vandal Kingdom, although the peace Zeno made with the Vandals would last until 530 ending when the Eastern Roman emperor Justinian I the Great (r. 527-565) declared war on the Vandals after his ally Vandal king Hilderic (r. 523-530)- the son of Huneric and grandson of Genseric- was overthrown by his cousin Gelimer (r. 530-534), while in 534 the Vandal Kingdom was successfully annexed by the Eastern Roman Empire and wiped off the map.

According to a description by the 6th century Eastern Roman historian Jordanes, “Genseric was a man of moderate height and lame in consequence of a fall from his horse. He was a man of deep thought and few words, holding luxury in disdain, furious in anger, greedy for gain, shrewd in winning over the barbarians and skilled in sowing the seeds of dissension to arouse enmity”. Now in this illustration, Genseric appears to be a large man although as described as moderate in height while in appearance he here looks more barbarian than Roman especially in clothing as it was said above that he held luxury in disdain whereas his facial expression and holding of his axe is supposed to reflect his fury, greed for gain, and shrewdness. This illustration of Genseric here meanwhile was also partially based on the appearance of a Vandal warrior from a 16th century manuscript painted by Flemish painter Lucas d’Heere which is found at the Ghent University Library in Belgium. Just like how the Vandal in the manuscript is seen, Genseric here wears a large fur overcoat over his chainmail armor, while beneath his short-sleeved and thigh length mail armor is first a short-sleeved blue tunic and beneath that a plain colored-long sleeved tunic. Genseric here also wears trousers tucked into his leather boots, fur gauntlets, and a number of accessories such as a Germanic style pendant on his necklace, a leather belt over his armor, and a Germanic style *Diadem* crown on his head. Here, he is also seen wielding a large battle-axe which he holds behind his head whereas in terms of facial appearance, Genseric here appears to be around 50- as reflected by his hair still being brown- which was the age he was in 439 when he captured Carthage from the Romans.

C-8 Khosrow I, Shah of the Sassanid Empire (531-579)



Khosrow I, also known as *Khosrow Anushirvan* (“Khosrow the Immortal Soul” or “Khosrow the Just”) would be remembered in history as one of the greatest if not THE greatest Sassanid Persian ruler (*shah*), both for his military feats and for being a patron and reformer of the arts and scholarship. Khosrow I was born in around 512 as the youngest son of the Sassanid Persian shah Kavad I (r. 488-496/ 498-531) who was already a very powerful ruler in his own right; however due to Khosrow having many older brothers it was not definitely sure that he would succeed his father, although his father saw him as the most able of his sons. In order to secure Khosrow’s succession but also intending for Khosrow to rule both the Sassanid and Eastern Roman Empires- the world’s two most powerful empires of this time- Kavad I in 520 asked the Eastern Roman emperor Justin I (r. 518-527) to adopt Khosrow as a son, thus Justin adopted Khosrow despite Khosrow not travelling to Constantinople and living there, though Justin only adopted Khosrow as a barbarian hostage and not as a son or a Roman which therefore infuriated Kavad to the point of declaring war against the Eastern Romans. The war between the Sassanid Persian Empire and the Eastern Roman Empire would then last for years even going passed Justin I’s death in 527 that his nephew and successor Emperor Justinian I the Great (r. 527-565) would end up inheriting an empire at war with its eastern neighbor.

All while the war was ongoing, Kavad I had to deal with his own internal problems in his empire, most notably being that of the religious leader Mazdak who preached religious beliefs that were an early form of Communism. In around 528, Mazdak was brought to Kavad’s court where the young Khosrow who was still the crowned prince had

him executed by hanging him in gallows and having his men fire arrows at him to the point of killing him. In 531 meanwhile, the war between the Sassanids and Eastern Romans came to an end as Kavad I died and was thus succeeded by his youngest son Khosrow I, however since Khosrow needed to consolidate his rule first by dealing with his older brothers who all had a claim to the throne, he had to push for an “eternal peace” with Justinian I’s Eastern Roman Empire wherein the Eastern Romans would have to pay him an annual tribute of 11,000 pounds of gold. As soon as Khosrow came to power in 531, he had his older brothers as well as their offspring and Khosrow’s uncle Bawi as well all executed to consolidate his rule. Khosrow had also used the “eternal peace” he made with Justinian to concentrate on his internal reforms which included continuing his father’s policies in limiting the power of the nobility and clergy and having taxes which previously enriched both nobility and clergy be directed straight to the imperial treasury.

Part of Khosrow’s reforms in his early reign included creating a new noble class known as the *Deghans* which allowed non-nobles to join the nobility by enlisting in the elite cavalry force; dividing the military into 4 districts in the empire being Mesopotamia in the west, the Caucasus in the north, the Persian Gulf in the south, and Khorasan (Central Asia) in the east under 4 different generals known as *Spahbeds* as a way to make military command more efficient; and lastly in creating a new cavalry unit consisting of horse archers armed with composite bows. During the early part of Khosrow’s reign as he and Justinian were at peace with each other, Khosrow had turned his imperial court into a center of philosophy by inviting scholars and philosophers from the Eastern Roman Empire and even from India, and true enough many Eastern Roman scholars especially the Pagan ones came to Khosrow’s court due to Justinian I shutting down Pagan temples and universities in his empire. Due to his admiration for philosophy and scholarly pursuits, Khosrow is therefore remembered as the epitome of the Persian “philosopher king”. Other than that, Khosrow was known to have had several construction projects across the Sassanid Empire which included several bridges, roads, dams, and defensive walls, although the most notable construction project of Khosrow was the Academy of Gondishapur which was one of the largest universities of this time.

The “eternal peace” with Justinian however only lasted until 539 due to Justinian intervening in the politics of the Caucasus and Mesopotamia accompanied by an incident which involved the Eastern Roman client kingdom being the Ghassanids attacking Sassanid territory and the Armenians under Eastern Roman rule revolting against their overlords, which therefore made Khosrow believe Justinian violated the treaty and thus giving him a reason to resume war with the Eastern Romans. Additionally, envoys from the Ostrogoth Kingdom in Italy came to Khosrow’s court in his capital Ctesiphon to ask him to resume war on the Eastern Romans as the Ostrogoth king Vitiges (r. 536-540) here was surrounded in Italy by Eastern Roman troops. True enough, Khosrow resumed war with the Eastern Romans which therefore forced the Eastern Roman general Belisarius to abandon the campaign in Italy- despite finishing it and capturing Vitiges- and return east to battling the Sassanids in Syria. In this campaign, Khosrow managed to invade Eastern Roman Syria in 540 while scoring several victories against the Eastern Romans including capturing the important city of Antioch itself wherein Khosrow deported its population to a new city he built in Mesopotamia known as *Weh Antiok Khosrow* or “Khosrow’s Better

Antioch". Justinian here was willing to conclude another truce with Khosrow, and although Khosrow agreed to it at first, he immediately violated it by forcing towns and cities in Syria to pay tribute to him, bathing in the Mediterranean Sea in order to insult Justinian, and purposely having the Green faction win in a chariot race in Antioch as a way to insult Justinian who supported the Blue faction. Since peace was not concluded, Justinian called off the truce and had Belisarius sent to move against the Sassanids, this time in the region of Lazica (today's Georgia). Khosrow thus abandoned his campaign against the Eastern Romans in Syria and moved north to Lazica in 541 as he now intended to capture a Black Sea port there in order to launch a naval invasion of the Eastern Roman Empire, however when arriving in Lazica he would confront Belisarius and his army in battle wherein Belisarius and the Eastern Roman forces would emerge victorious.

The war between the Eastern Romans and Sassanids was not over yet and would thus go on until 545 wherein Justinian would this time conclude peace with Khosrow all while at this time, the devastating Plague of Justinian ravaged both the Eastern Roman and Sassanid Empires, which therefore led to a truce being made between both empires. This peace of 545 however did not last as Christians in Sassanid held Lazica in 548 rebelled against Sassanid rule wherein the Eastern Romans had assisted them here, and therefore this led to the Lazic War between both empires breaking out again in 549, this time at a much larger scale going on until 556 ending with an Eastern Roman victory. In the meantime as Khosrow was dealing with the war against the Eastern Romans, he was also busy expanding his empire elsewhere such as for instance in Aksumite (Ethiopian) held Yemen wherein he sent his general Vahrez to conquer it, and true enough this expedition ended in success for the Sassanids, and following the Sassanid capture of the capital Sana'a, the whole region of Yemen fell under Sassanid rule.

By the time Khosrow had finished off his campaigns in Yemen and had once again concluded peace with the Eastern Romans, he now turned his attention east to deal with the Hephthalite threat which had been troubling the Sassanids for the longest time. Considering that Khosrow had reformed the Sassanid army, he was now confident that he could crush the Hephthalites in the northeast, and here Khosrow took advantage of the lack of central leadership among the Hephthalites and the unstable relationship between the Hephthalites and their neighbors being the nomadic Gok Turks by making an alliance with the Gok Turks against the Hephthalites. In 560, Khosrow's Sassanid army assisted by the Gok Turks launched an invasion on Hephthalite territory and thus won a major victory over the Hephthalites at the Battle of Gol-Zarriun. As a result of this victory, the Hephthalite Empire had fallen and its territory was thus divided between the Sassanids and Gok Turks, and so the Sassanid Empire grew larger in size.

In the meantime, the Eastern Roman emperor Justinian finally concluded what would be a 50-year peace with Khosrow's Sassanid Empire in 562 wherein the Eastern Romans would pay annual tribute to the Sassanids, however just 3 years later (565), the old emperor Justinian I had died and was thus succeeded by his nephew Justin II (r. 565-578). The new emperor Justin II meanwhile inherited an empire that was already low on funds due to his uncle's ambitious conquests and thus he found himself not in a position to continue paying tribute to Khosrow. On the other hand, due to Khosrow expanding his

empire to the northeast as he wanted to maintain control of the Silk Route, he eventually got into trouble with his allies being the Gok Turks as they too wanted to have control of the Silk Route. Seeing that Khosrow did not want to share control over the Silk Route with them, the Gok Turks thus sent envoys to the new Eastern Roman emperor Justin II to make an alliance with him against the Sassanids. In the meantime, a revolt against Sassanid rule broke out in Armenia in 572 to which Justin II used as an excuse to break his uncle's treaty with the Sassanids and therefore stop paying tribute to the Sassanids. The moment Justin II stopped paying the annual tribute, Khosrow once again declared war on Eastern Rome and thus Justin II struck first by sending an army to invade Sassanid Mesopotamia, although in the following year (573) Khosrow retaliated by sending an army to invade both Armenia and Syria. In this campaign, Khosrow managed to capture the important fortress of Dara in Syria from the Eastern Romans, and as Justin II heard of the fall of Dara he suddenly went insane and would never recover, and thus in 574 Justin decided to abdicate in favor of his close friend the general Tiberius, although Justin II would rule in name only until his death in 578 wherein Tiberius II from here on would take over as the full emperor until his death in 582.

As Tiberius was in charge of the Eastern Roman Empire before Justin II's death in 578, Khosrow invaded Eastern Roman Armenia once again and was initially successful until the Eastern Roman army led by the general Maurice retaliated and captured a number of Sassanid camps. Eventually, the new emperor Tiberius II concluded peace with Khosrow but this peace would not last as in 579 Khosrow had died and was thus succeeded by his son Hormizd IV (r. 579-590) as the new Sassanid shah who was not interested to pursue peace with the Eastern Romans. At his death in 579, Khosrow left behind a rich, stable, and powerful Sassanid Empire- thanks to his effective reforms- that extended west to east from Syria to today's Pakistan and north to south from Central Asia to Yemen while the empire he left behind was also a cultural superpower wherein its capital Ctesiphon was a magnificent capital that could rival Constantinople. According to legend, it was Khosrow I and his court who received the game of Chess which was created in India and created the rules for it whereas Khosrow too sent the game of Backgammon which originated in Persia to India. It is even said that the Silk Route itself that connected Europe to China and India was established in Khosrow I's reign as he established protection over it after his campaigns against the Hephthalites. Due to the great amount of construction projects during his reign across the Sassanid Empire as well as his patronage of the arts and philosophy which therefore led to a growth of it across his empire, Khosrow I's reign was certainly the Sassanid Empire's golden age, although it would be just less than a century after his death in 579 that the Sassanid Empire would be extinct due to the sudden expansion of the Arabs in the 7th century.

This illustration of the Sassanid shah Khosrow I Anushirvan was based on his image from a contemporary silver plate from the 6th century which depicts him seated, although this illustration instead depicts Khosrow standing up but in the same position wherein both of his hands holds a sword to the ground. In this illustration, Khosrow wears the ornate massive crown worn by Sassanid rulers which features two crescents and a ball above it, which is the same kind of crown he is wearing in the plate depicting him. Here, just like in the plate, Khosrow is seen having long curly hair and a short beard while in

terms of appearance, he would be in his 40s here which was his age during the Lazic War against the Eastern Romans. The attire Khosrow is seen wearing here meanwhile also bears similarity to the one in the plate depicting him whereas the purple color is supposed to indicate his royal status as back then purple was the color reserved for royals. Just like how the plate depicting him shows embroideries on his outfit as well as a collar studded with pearls, the outfit of Khosrow in this illustration features several silver embroideries sewn into it as well as the jeweled collar and harness made up of pearls with a large ruby at the center which gives support to his outfit; this jeweled harness piece too appears in the plate depicting him. The outfit of Khosrow here meanwhile consists of the long purple silk tunic extending to his knees while he too is seen wearing ruched silk pants, purple shoes, and a sheathed ornate sword which he holds to the ground which is most likely a ceremonial sword.

C-9 Empress Aelia Ariadne (450-515)



In Eastern Roman history, there are very few people like the empress Ariadne who had witnessed so many crucial historical events from a position of power, and no one too had so much relations to different emperors the way Ariadne had being a daughter of an emperor, husband of two emperors, mother of an emperor, and even a niece of an emperor! Ariadne was born in around 450 to the Thracian military officer Leo and his wife Verina who was also a native of the Balkans. In 457 when Ariadne was only 7-years-old, the Eastern Roman emperor Marcian (r. 450-457) had died and without any sons, the *Magister*

Militum or “Master of Soldiers” Aspar who was the power behind Marcian proclaimed his chief-of-staff which was Ariadne’s father Leo as his new puppet-emperor despite Marcian having a son-in-law which was the aristocrat Procopius Anthemius while Aspar could not become emperor due to his barbarian origins and being an Arian Christian.

Leo I thus became the new emperor in 457 and was the first emperor in Roman history to be crowned by the Patriarch of Constantinople while Leo’s wife Verina too became empress and their daughters Ariadne and her younger sister Leontia part of the imperial family. Now as emperor, Leo I did not want to be a puppet of the barbarian general Aspar and so to balance out the power of Aspar and his army which were mostly of Germanic origins, Leo recruited the warlike Isaurian warriors from the mountains of Isauria in Southern Asia Minor into a new military unit which he founded known as the *Excubitors* whose duty was to serve as the emperor’s loyal bodyguards as well as palace guards. The leader of these warlike Isaurians that Leo recruited was their chieftain Tarasikodissa, and to seal the alliance with the Isaurians, Leo married off the 17-year-old Ariadne to the 42-year-old chieftain in 467. To appear more acceptable and civilized to the Greek-speaking people of the imperial capital Constantinople, the chieftain Tarasikodissa changed his name to Zeno, and following his marriage to Ariadne they had a son named Leo named after his grandfather born in the same year. In 471, Leo fully eliminated Aspar by having him assassinated in the palace, thus the Germanic element in the Eastern Roman army was cleared out whereas Leo earned the nickname “Macelles” meaning “the Butcher” for killing the powerful Aspar, and therefore Zeno took Aspar’s place as *Magister Militum*.

In 473, Ariadne and Zeno’s young son Leo was proclaimed as *Caesar* by his grandfather Leo I and therefore his grandfather’s successor as they were of the same blood, and not too long after, Leo I died in early 474 at the age of 73 whereas his 7-year-old grandson Leo II succeeded him, but due to his young age which disabled him to rule alone, his father Zeno by the request of his wife Ariadne and her mother Verina was a month later made his co-emperor and therefore the one really in charge of the empire. However, before the year 474 ended, the child Leo II was dead probably from an outbreak of plague leaving his father Zeno to succeed him as emperor, but just 2 months later in early 475 Zeno was overthrown in the course of a single night due to a conspiracy plotted by his mother-in-law Verina and her brother Basiliscus, the uncle of Ariadne. Zeno easily lost the throne due to his massive unpopularity among the people of Constantinople who saw Zeno as primitive due to his Isaurian origins, and so Zeno to avoid being killed fled Constantinople together with his wife Ariadne and loyal Isaurian soldiers back to the mountains of Isauria in Asia Minor whereas Basiliscus took over as emperor.

Just a year later though in 476, the usurper emperor Basiliscus proved to be very incompetent and thus even more unpopular than Zeno which then allowed Zeno to march back to Constantinople the moment the Isaurian general Illus who Basiliscus sent to hunt down Zeno defected to Zeno. Basiliscus then lost the throne and was imprisoned in a cistern in Cappadocia where he would die in 477 while Zeno ruled again as emperor with his wife Ariadne as his empress, though the rest of Zeno’s reign would be troubled by uprisings against him left and right by anyone brave enough to challenge him as Zeno was still seen as “illegitimate” due to his “barbaric” Isaurian origins despite him being a Roman

citizen and speaking both Latin and Greek. True enough, at one point in 479 Ariadne had actually come into conflict with her husband Zeno over the fate of her mother Verina who was imprisoned by Zeno's general Illus for supporting first the rebellion of Basiliscus in 475 which was crushed in 476 and later the rebellion of their relative Marcian in 479 which was also crushed. Verina though was never released and thus she died in prison in a fortress in the mountains of Isauria in 484, though before Verina's death she and Ariadne plotted to assassinate Illus which failed as Illus evaded the assassin's attempt to kill him and thus blamed Zeno for trying to have him killed leading Illus to rebel against Zeno.

Illus' rebellion was however finished off by the forces loyal to Zeno in 488 with Illus himself killed whereas Zeno died in 491 from natural causes, although it is believed that before death, Zeno had an epileptic seizure and while having it Ariadne had him buried alive, though this was not all true as the source mentioning Zeno's death that way was a source made to slander him. Ariadne too remained married to Zeno until his death in 491 and following Zeno's death the widowed empress Ariadne who was childless- as her and Zeno's son Leo II died back in 474- selected Zeno's successor and her new husband being the finance minister Anastasius who then became the new emperor and shortly afterwards he married Ariadne. Unlike Zeno who the people of Constantinople saw as an unrefined provincial and even a "barbarian", Anastasius I was the opposite being a strategic thinker and sophisticated aristocrat. Due to their old age whereas Anastasius was in his 60s and Ariadne in her 40s by the 490s, they had no children, although Ariadne remained married to Anastasius I until her death in 515 at the age of 65 while Anastasius followed her in death just 3 years later in 518 at the very old age of 87. Possibly, Ariadne in her last years could have met the future emperors Justin I (r. 518-527) who served as the commander of the Excubitor palace guard force under Anastasius I and Justin's nephew Flavius Petrus Sabbatius who would be the future emperor Justinian I the Great (r. 527-565). Ariadne is also a saint in the Eastern Orthodox Church and so is her father the emperor Leo I.

For this illustration of Empress Ariadne, I did not really base it on any sculptures such as the bust which is said to be depicting her or the full-body ivory diptych depicting her but rather on recreated illustrations of late Roman fashion for noblewomen and empresses. The jeweled crown Ariadne wears here somewhat resembles the crown seen on Ariadne's ivory sculpture as this one and the sculpture shows 4 strands of pearls sticking out of it known as a *Pendilia*. The outfit Ariadne wears here resembles the outfits worn by Roman (or Byzantine) empresses of the 5th and 6th centuries wherein a long veil is attached to the crown behind while another feature in the outfit is a gold jeweled collar known as a *Superhumeral*. The dress Ariadne wears here consists of a white tunic as the innermost layer, above that an embroidered purple outer dress wherein the purple color is to indicate she is an empress, and above that the classic *Palla* which was a piece of cloth Roman women wore over their dresses, and holding the entire outfit together is a gold jeweled belt. She is also seen wearing red shoes here which is not entirely proven if empresses wore it although as seen in the 6th century mosaic of Empress Theodora in the Basilica of San Vitale in Ravenna, Italy it shows her wearing red shoes, which was therefore the basis for Ariadne's red shoes here. This outfit worn by Ariadne here may not be all historically accurate but it was at least heavily based on the attire worn by Roman noblewomen of the

5th and 6th centuries. In terms of facial appearance, Ariadne appears young here, therefore this illustration shows her at the time she was the wife of Zeno.

C-10 Aspar (400-471)



Some characters in Roman history may not have been emperors but were even more powerful than emperors, and one such figure is the 5th century general and politician Flavius Ardabur Aspar who was neither a Roman too, rather he was both Goth and Alan by origins. Aspar was born in around 400 and was the son of the Gothic or Alan general Ardabur who served the Eastern Roman emperor Theodosius II (r. 408-450) in the earlier part of his reign. Ardabur's son Aspar first came into the picture in 424 joining his father in the Eastern Roman expedition to Italy as ordered by Theodosius II to defeat the Western Roman usurper emperor Joannes, who had seized the Western Roman throne during the power vacuum that followed the death of the Western Roman emperor Honorius (r. 395-423) in 423. The goal of this expedition was to depose and possibly kill off Joannes and place Theodosius II's aunt Galla Placidia and her son the young Valentinian III in power as both mother and son had fled to Constantinople earlier on. The expedition was successful and in 425, Joannes was captured and killed when Aspar's and his father's troops arrived in Italy wherein Aspar laid siege to the capital Ravenna and eventually managed to get Joannes to surrender, and thus the child Valentinian III became Western Roman emperor with his mother as his regent. However, shortly after Joannes was defeated and killed, Flavius Aetius who was a general loyal to Joannes arrived with an army of Huns which

clashed with Aspar's forces outside the city of Aquileia in Italy, though this short battle was put to an end as the new empress-regent Galla Placidia concluded peace with Aetius in exchange for sending the Huns back to their homeland, while Aspar on the other hand together with his father returned to the Eastern Roman Empire.

Many years later, Aspar became a *Magister Militum* (Master of Soldiers) in the Eastern Roman army which was one of the highest positions only below the emperor himself, and as *Magister Militum* he was an influential power behind Theodosius II. During his time as *Magister Militum*, Aspar was also appointed as *Consul* for the year 434 after his campaigning against the Vandals in North Africa while Aspar too was said to have commanded an army against the Huns but was defeated. When Theodosius II died in 450 from a horse-riding accident without having any male heirs, the job was left to Aspar- as he was practically the most powerful man in Eastern Rome- to choose the next emperor, and here Aspar chose an army officer named Marcian who served under him as Theodosius' successor, therefore to become emperor Marcian married the late Theodosius' older sister Pulcheria who remained unmarried throughout her entire life. Throughout Marcian's 7-year reign (450-457), Aspar was the power behind him as Aspar despite having so much power could not be emperor in name due to both his barbarian origins and being an Arian Christian, which was considered heretical. Due to both Marcian and Pulcheria being old in age, they never produced children while Pulcheria had died in 453 and Marcian in 457.

Aspar again as the kingmaker of the Eastern Roman Empire took the role of selecting another man to be his puppet-emperor, however Marcian had a son-in-law being the Constantinople born aristocrat Procopius Anthemius who had a legitimate claim to the throne, but before Anthemius could become emperor, Aspar moved first and thus named his rather unknown army chief-of-staff Leo, who was by origin a Thracian peasant but an Orthodox Christian as his new puppet emperor. This then prevented the more educated aristocrat Anthemius from becoming emperor whereas Leo now being proclaimed the new emperor would also be the first emperor to be crowned by the Patriarch of Constantinople. The reason now to why Aspar chose the peasant Leo as his new puppet emperor was because Aspar had thought that he could simply use Leo as a place-holder emperor for the meantime believing Leo would die any time soon due to his old age, and when both he and Aspar- who was already old here- would die, it would be one of Aspar's sons who would marry one of Leo's daughters that would become the next emperor following Leo. However, Aspar would soon enough be proven wrong by Leo, as having had a taste of power, the seemingly unambitious Leo could no longer let go of it, and thus Leo felt that he no longer needed to be the puppet of the barbarian Aspar which then made Leo begin slowly plotting the downfall of Aspar.

Leo now having the intention to stay in power and form his own dynasty first focused on balancing out the power of Aspar and his mostly Germanic army by recruiting a new group of people which were the Isaurians from the mountains of Asia Minor into the army believing they would be more loyal. In 466, the Isaurian tribesmen came to Constantinople led by the chieftain Tarasikodissa and were thus incorporated into the Eastern Roman army, while their chieftain was married to Leo's daughter Ariadne to fully seal the alliance, and to seem more acceptable to Constantinople's Greek speaking

population, the chieftain changed his name to the Greek “Zeno” and became a general as well to the shock of Aspar. The tensions between Leo and Aspar soon enough began to grow more evident in 470 when Aspar tried to convince Leo to make Aspar’s son Patricius as a *Caesar* and also to marry him off to Leo’s other daughter Leontia, which however only led to the people of Constantinople rioting as they did not want a Germanic barbarian who was more so an Arian Christian to be their next emperor. The rioting however was put down when Leo told the people that Patricius would soon enough convert to Orthodox Christianity despite Leo now having plans of his own, which was to make his son-in-law Zeno his successor. Little did Aspar know too that both Zeno and the other general Basiliscus who was Leo I’s brother-in-law were already plotting to kill him and his sons off, and in 471 as Aspar and his sons were invited to lunch by Leo, they were suddenly ambushed and killed by the orders of Leo, Zeno, and Basiliscus, thus putting an end to the Germanic elements in the Eastern Roman army. The death of Aspar however was not well received by his loyalists such as the Ostrogoth general in Thrace Theodoric Strabo who would rebel against imperial rule for the next years while another person too who happened to be loyal to Aspar was his former student in Constantinople Theodoric the Amal who by 475 became the King of the Ostrogoths.

In this illustration, Aspar appears to be wearing the attire of a late Roman *Magister Militum*, and being in a very high military position wherein Aspar was even the highest-ranking *Magister Militum* known as the *Magister Militum Praesentalis*, he is seen wearing the color purple which was only reserved for members of the imperial family and other high-ranking officials. To indicate that Aspar is a *Magister Militum*, his helmet here includes a number of jewels and a purple horsehair crest above it which were only reserved for the helmets of high-ranking generals in the late Roman army and for the emperor himself. The armor Aspar is wearing here is the usual late Roman scaled armor, but to indicate his high rank, it appears to be gilded, while his purple cape and the purple linings in his *Pteruges* guarding his thighs and upper arms also indicate his rank. Beneath his armor, Aspar here is seen wearing a long-sleeved red tunic and white pants which also doubled as socks as they cover his entire feet going completely beneath his shoes. A late Roman longsword or *Spatha* too is seen which here is although sheathed in front of Aspar, and additionally he is holding a walking stick on his right. On the other hand, to show that Aspar is of Germanic barbarian origins, he is depicted having blond hair, however only his blond beard is shown as the helmet covers his hair.

C-J Majorian, Western Roman emperor (457-461)



Julius Valerius Maiorianus, better known as “Majorian” who was considered to be the last great Western Roman emperor was born in around 420 in Italy to a Roman family of patrician status. He was named after his grandfather who was a general that served the emperor Theodosius I (r. 379-395) whereas this general’s daughter was married to an officer named Domninus who served the influential Western Roman general Flavius Aetius. It was due to his father serving Aetius that Majorian when grown up would follow in his father’s footsteps and serve the same *Magister Militum* (Master of Soldiers) Aetius. It was during Majorian’s time as a young man when serving under Aetius wherein he would meet two men that would play a major role in his life which would include the Gallo-Roman officer Aegidius and the Suebi-Goth officer Ricimer.

Majorian would first appear in historical records in 445 wherein he defeated the Franks that were laying siege to Tours in Gaul, then in 447 or 448 he distinguished himself in battling against the same Franks led by their king Clodio that were invading Western Roman Gaul wherein the young Majorian under Aetius’ command led the cavalry charge against the Franks on a bridge. Due to Majorian’s recent military feat but also due to his patrician status, the Western Roman emperor Valentinian III (r. 425-455) in 450 considered Majorian as a possible future husband for his daughter Placidia and therefore a potential successor as Valentinian III true enough had no sons. Majorian however would never end up marrying the emperor’s daughter as his commander Aetius who was convinced by his wife Pelagia forbade him from doing so as Pelagia feared that if Majorian would marry into the imperial family then he would overshadow Aetius in terms of

prestige. Majorian was thus fired by Aetius and forced to retire to his country estate, although just 4 years later (454) he would return back to public life following the murder of his commander Aetius by the emperor Valentinian III. However, in the following year (455) it was Valentinian who was assassinated under the orders of the senator Petronius Maximus who then took the throne after marrying the late emperor's widow Licinia Eudoxia, and under Petronius Maximus Majorian was appointed to the rank of *Comes Domesticorum* (Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial Guard). The emperor Petronius Maximus however only ruled for a few weeks wherein his reign ended when he was lynched to death by the people of Rome, and what followed this was the 455 Vandal Sack of Rome led by the Vandal king Genseric (r. 428-477), and following that continuous Vandal raids across the coasts of Italy.

Following the Vandal Sack of Rome, Avitus who was once a colleague of Majorian when serving Aetius in the past was proclaimed as the new emperor by the Visigoths whereas both Majorian and his other colleague from the past Ricimer who was now a general supported his rule. However, Avitus would soon fall out of power when losing the support from the people and aristocracy in Italy due to him being proclaimed as emperor by the barbarian Visigoths and being not an Italian but a Gallic-Roman by origin, and thus the moment Avitus lost public support in 456, both his generals Majorian and Ricimer turned on him as well. As Majorian and Ricimer rebelled against Avitus' rule, they defeated a loyalist army of Avitus wherein they even killed Avitus' loyalist general Remistus, and following this it was Ricimer that defeated Avitus' forces wherein Avitus himself was captured and forced to abdicate and become a bishop. In early 457 however, Avitus was killed by starvation possibly under Majorian's or Ricimer's orders. In the meantime, the Eastern Roman emperor Marican (r. 450-457) had died in early 457 and was succeeded by the officer of low birth Leo I the Thracian (r. 457-474) who was not in a position to name anyone as his Western co-emperor as he possibly intended to rule alone, although Leo still awarded Ricimer with the title of *Magister Militum* and Majorian as both *Patricius* and *Magister Militum*.

Due to Majorian being a likeable person, a patrician of Italian origin, and for recently expelling a Vandal raid on Italy together with Ricimer as well as defeating an Alemanni invasion into Northern Italy, Ricimer proclaimed Majorian as his puppet emperor in April of 457. Although Majorian was proclaimed emperor, Ricimer who possessed a lot of power was to be the kingmaker and therefore the power behind his rule, while it was only in December of 457 when the Eastern Roman emperor Leo I finally recognized Majorian as his Western co-emperor. Now in power, Majorian passed a series of reforms in which most were economic ones in order to return some economic stability to his empire, while the other reforms he made were targeted against corruption in the government, others to encourage families to have more children due to the population of the Western Roman Empire in decline, and lastly he also made reforms to conserve Ancient Roman structures which would then punish those who used them as quarries in order to get free raw materials to build their houses. In the meantime, Illyria which was under the general Marcellinus and Northern Gaul under the general Aegidius which had declared independence from the Western Roman Empire some years earlier rejoined the Western

Roman Empire as Majorian took power as both Aegidius and Marcellinus saw Majorian as someone they could follow due to them serving with him under Aetius in the past.

Now as emperor, Majorian was intent to conquer lands the Western Romans had lost to barbarian invasions in the past, and so he recruited a large number of men into his army for his campaigns while also recruiting a large number of barbarian mercenaries to be stationed in Italy under Ricimer's command while Majorian would be away. Beginning 458, Majorian campaigned in Gaul against both the Visigoths and Burgundian kingdoms that have declared war on the Western Romans after hearing of Avitus' deposition and death. Majorian first defeated the Visigoths under their king Theodoric II (r. 453-466) at the Battle of Arles, and thus the defeated Visigoths were returned to Federate status and forced to fall back to Aquitaine whereas the Western Romans recaptured the southern coast of Gaul. At the same time as well, the people of Lyon gave up their city to the Burgundians, although when Majorian arrived before Lyon after his victory against the Visigoths, he was able to take back Lyon from the Burgundians, thus the defeated Burgundians too were reduced back to Federate status by Majorian.

Once Majorian had recaptured most of Gaul from the Visigoths and Burgundians, he now turned his attention south to Hispania as he intended to use it as his base to build a fleet in order to reconquer the Vandal Kingdom in North Africa. Before launching his invasion of Hispania and later North Africa, Majorian sent his general and Governor of Illyria Marcellinus with an army of Huns to Sicily to take it back from the Vandals, and true enough Marcellinus was successful here in retaking the island. Majorian then launched his invasion of Suebi held Hispania from Gaul in 459 together with his generals Nepotianus and the Goth Sunieric. Although the reconquest of Hispania took more than a year, it was a success for the Western Romans wherein Majorian's armies defeated the Suebi first at Galicia, and then later going as far as today's Portugal and occupying it. By 460, most of the Iberian Peninsula had already been recaptured by the Western Romans wherein the Suebi were pushed back to the northwest, thus following this Majorian proceeded to the port of Carthago Nova in the Mediterranean coast of Hispania wherein he used the loot he captured in his previous campaigns to construct a large fleet intended to invade the Vandal Kingdom in North Africa. Meanwhile, when the Vandal king Genseric got word that Majorian was planning an invasion of his kingdom, he burned his own farmlands in the regions of Numidia and Mauretania as a way to make Majorian's upcoming invasion difficult by depriving him of food resources. Additionally, Genseric had also paid off traitors in Majorian's army to burn down the ships Majorian had built, thus when Majorian returned to Carthago Nova from his campaign across Hispania, he discovered that his fleet had been burned, therefore he had no choice but to cancel his invasion of North Africa and return to Italy.

In the meantime, back in Italy, Ricimer and the Roman Senate began feeling threatened by Majorian's victories and power, most especially Ricimer who now felt that Majorian was becoming far too independent as an emperor in his own right and not the puppet emperor Ricimer intended to have, and so Ricimer and the Senate began their plot to overthrow Majorian. As for Majorian on the other hand, before returning to Italy he concluded a humiliating peace with the Vandals, and when returning to Arles he assigned

his general Nepotianus to be in charge of Hispania while he returns to Italy. After a long journey through Gaul along the Ligurian coast, Majorian had returned to Italy in 461 where he disbanded his troops at the border, but right when crossing the border Ricimer had already arrived with his barbarian troops and thus arrested Majorian. Following this Majorian had been deposed as emperor by Ricimer and then Majorian was brought into a cell wherein he was tortured for 5 days, and after 5 days he was beheaded by Ricimer's men right next to the Iria River. Majorian was around 40-years-old when he was executed while he also died never having married and thus having no children whereas Ricimer spread word that Majorian died of natural causes to hide the truth that he had him killed.

After 3 months, Ricimer placed the senator Libius Severus on the throne as his new puppet emperor as Ricimer believed he was much weaker and someone he could manipulate much easily compared to Majorian who had his own ambitions. The new Western emperor however was not recognized by the Eastern Roman emperor Leo I whereas Majorian's generals when hearing of Majorian's death all declared the territories they held independent as an act of protest against Ricimer who they knew killed Majorian; thus, Aegidius who was stationed in Northern Gaul declared it independent and forming his own Kingdom of Soissons, Marcellinus in Illyria did same in declaring his holdings independent, and so did Nepotianus in Hispania. According to the 18th century British historian Edward Gibbon, Majorian "presents the welcome discovery of a great and heroic character, such as some arise, in a degenerate age, to vindicate the honor of the human species".

This illustration of Majorian is not based on any contemporary image that depicts him due to the lack of images depicting Majorian from his time, thus instead this illustration was based on other illustrations depicting late Roman emperors in military attire. As an emperor, Majorian here is seen wearing a golden *Diadem* style crown studded with pearls and a red gem at the center and two strands sticking out of the crown known as a *Pendilla* which has a pearl on each end of it, whereas in terms of facial appearance he is supposed to appear to be in his late 30s-40s which was the age he was when he was the Western Roman emperor. Although Majorian's coins do not really depict what he looks like in terms of facial appearance as well as hair, in this illustration he has rather long brown hair and a short beard. As for his attire, Majorian here wears the late Roman style muscle armor for emperors which has a ceremonial red belt and sash over it, while under the armor he wears a suit of leather armor where white tassels known as *Pteruges* are attached to it which is seen here protecting his upper arms and thighs. Beneath his armor and leather armor suit is a standard long-sleeved late Roman tunic with purple trimmings wherein the purple part is to indicate he is an emperor. Other than that, Majorian here wears long blue trousers with metal greaves over it protecting his lower legs while he too wears the red boots reserved for emperors. On his right hand, he is seen holding a late Roman longsword or *Spatha* held behind his head while on his left side is his sword's sheath attached to the red sash across his torso, and over his armor he wears a red cloak fastened by a brooch with the Greek initials of Christ or *Chi-rho* which was the commonly used symbol by the late Romans to show they were a Christian empire.

C-Q Empress Fausta (289-326)



Flavia Maxima Fausta Augusta who would be known for being the second wife of the Roman emperor Constantine I the Great (r. 306-337)- whom he had executed- was born in 289 in Rome as the daughter of the emperor Maximian (r. 286-305) and his Syrian wife Eutropia while Fausta too had an older brother being the future Western emperor Maxentius (r. 306-312). When Fausta was born, her father was the Western co-emperor in the split Roman Empire system of the emperor Diocletian (r. 284-305) whereas Diocletian was the Eastern emperor. Eventually, this 2-emperor system evolved into a 4-emperor system known as the *Tetrarchy* in 293 when Diocletian further divided the empire into 4 parts wherein each had its own emperor, although this new system would eventually fall apart into chaos following the abdications of Diocletian and Maximian in 305. Following this, Maximian's junior Western co-emperor or *Caesar* Constantius I (r. 293-306) became the new senior Western emperor or *Augustus* but after just a year in 306, he died while campaigning in Britain and was thus succeeded by his son Constantine I who was proclaimed Augustus by his father's troops, however Constantine was eventually demoted from Augustus to Caesar.

The retired Maximian however who could not stand retirement returned to power in 306 as well by declaring himself as the Western Augustus and his son Maxentius as his co-emperor, however they were both not recognized as legitimate. In 307, as Maximian wanted to seal an alliance with the new Western Caesar Constantine, he married off his

daughter Fausta to Constantine, wherein the latter set aside his first wife Minervina who he divorced in order to marry Fausta- although it was also possible that Minervina had already died by 307- thus beginning 307 Fausta was Constantine's *Augusta* or empress. Maximian would be emperor until forced to abdicate in 308 by the retired Diocletian and the Eastern emperor Galerius (r. 293-311), however in 310 Maximian would plot his comeback as emperor but this time only to be put down for good in a conspiracy. Here in 310, Maximian involved his daughter Fausta in a plot to assassinate her husband Constantine, however Fausta revealed the plot to her husband, and thus the attempted assassination on Constantine was disrupted. As Maximian was revealed to be behind the plot, he later died in July of 310 either by suicide or assassination, and thus his reign was over.

The death of Maximian however only led to Constantine going into war with his brother-in-law Maxentius who Constantine defeated in 312 at the Battle of Milvian Bridge outside Rome wherein Maxentius was killed in battle. Following Constantine's victory in 312, he was now the sole ruler of the Western half of the Roman Empire and it was during this time when Fausta would give birth to her children with Constantine being their sons the future emperors Constantine II (b. 316), Constantius II (b. 317), and Constans (b. 323); while Fausta and Constantine also had 3 daughters being Constantina, Helena, and Fausta the Younger. In 324, Constantine won his ultimate victory against his rival eastern emperor Licinius I (r. 308-324), and thus Constantine became the sole ruler of the Roman Empire from here on whereas Fausta was the sole empress too. Nothing much however is known about Fausta during the reign of her husband except that she gave birth to many children, although in 326 she was mysteriously put to death by her husband Constantine following the execution of Crispus, Constantine's first-born son with his first wife Minervina.

According to the late 5th century historian Zosimus, Constantine had his son Crispus put to death for an alleged sexual relationship he had with his stepmother Fausta despite not clarifying it and following this he too had Fausta executed for allegedly having an affair with his son. However according to the 12th century historian Zonaras, Constantine had Crispus executed due to Fausta accusing Crispus of trying to rape her after she tried doing unsuccessful sexual acts towards him, but when Constantine eventually realized Crispus was innocent, he condemned Fausta to death out of his own anger. Whatever the circumstances are for Fausta's execution, it is said that Constantine had her executed by locking her up in the baths which were overheated to the point that Fausta died from suffocation, while at her death she was only 37. Following Fausta's death in 326, Constantine ordered a *Damnatio Memoriae* or "condemnation of memory" for both Fausta and Crispus which is therefore why nothing is really recorded about Fausta and why there are also barely any surviving images of her. However, during the reign of Fausta's son Constantius II (337-361), it is possible that the *Damnatio Memoriae* on her was lifted as in 355, Constantius' cousin Julian- the future emperor (r. 361-363)- in a panegyric to Constantius II praised the latter's mother for her beauty, nobility, and moral virtue.

Since there are very few surviving images of Fausta from her time due to the *Damnatio Memoriae* on her by her husband, the illustration of Fausta as seen here is not

entirely based on anything but rather based on hypothesis on what Roman imperial women wore in the 4th century or in any other time in Roman history before that. Although this illustration was not really based on anything, her hairstyle as seen here was based on a surviving image of Fausta from a coin that depicts her as Salus, the Roman goddess of health and safety wherein her hair just like in this illustration is arranged in long waves, although unlike in the coin which shows her not wearing any headgear, in this illustration she is wearing a *Diadem* crown to show she is the empress. This illustration too depicts her being in her 30s which was the age she was when she was at the height of her power due to her husband Constantine consolidating complete rule over the empire, but also the age she was when she suddenly fell from power when being executed by her husband. The sultry revealing style of her dress as seen here meanwhile is meant to reflect her allegedly sexual nature as seen when she allegedly had an affair with her stepson Crispus. The dress she wears here resembles more of an Ancient Roman than a late Roman style dress as usually late Roman style women's dresses were more conservative whereas this one is not as despite extending all the way to her feet, it exposes her shoulders and upper chest. The dress now is an expensive blue silk one which does not appear to be a fixed dress but rather a large piece of cloth intricately wrapped around her body several times to form a body-hugging strapless gown with an excess piece of cloth fastened into her right shoulder forming a kind of cape. Other than the unique blue dress, Fausta is seen wearing a set of accessories such as golden armbands and bracelets, a golden necklace, and the classic leather Roman *Caligae* sandals for her footwear.

C-K Theodosius I the Great, Roman emperor (379-395)



Very few rulers in world history had achieved as much as the Roman emperor Theodosius I the Great (r. 379-395) in making Christianity an official state religion, reforming the Roman Empire's military structure, winning two major civil wars, and most importantly ruling at the end of an era as Theodosius was the last emperor to rule a united Roman Empire. Theodosius now was born in 347 in the Roman province of Hispania (Spain) to a Roman military family wherein his father Theodosius the Elder was a high-ranking general under the Western Roman emperor Valentinian I (r. 364-375). Theodosius and his family were Roman citizens said to be of Spanish (Iberian) origins, though very little is recorded about his early life except that from a young age he already joined his father the general Theodosius the Elder in military expeditions. One of the son Theodosius' earliest adventures was joining his father in suppressing the Great Conspiracy of Britain from 367-368 wherein Theodosius' father was the hero of it as he successfully stopped the Celtic and Germanic invasions of the island and punished all those who conspired to give up Britain with such brutality.

The son Theodosius then received his first independent command post in 374 being appointed as the commanding officer or *Dux* of the Eastern Roman province of Moesia along the Danube (today's Serbia) wherein he successfully repelled a Sarmatian invasion. However, in 375 Theodosius' family fell out of favor following the death of the emperor Valentinian I of the west wherein Theodosius' father Theodosius the Elder who was in North Africa here was betrayed and executed while his son had to return to his homeland Hispania to retire just to avoid trouble, and back in Hispania Theodosius married Aelia

Flaccilla while in 377 they had their first child being their son Arcadius. However, due to the Goths invading the Eastern Roman Empire in full force which culminated at the Battle of Adrianople in 378 with the death of the Eastern Roman emperor Valens (r. 364-378)- who was the younger brother of Valentinian I- and following that the Goths roaming and raiding freely into Roman territory, Theodosius was recalled from Hispania to the Balkans to return to being a general in order to suppress the Goths. The Western Roman emperor Gratian (r. 367-383) meanwhile who was Valentinian I's son could not handle ruling such a massive empire alone now that his uncle Valens was gone, and so when reaching the Balkans in 379, he selected the general Theodosius to rule the east as Valens' replacement and Gratian's co-emperor due to Theodosius being the nearest capable general around to solve a migration crisis as great as this.

With Theodosius now unexpectedly becoming the Eastern Roman emperor, his first objective was to clear out the Goths mindlessly laying waste to the Balkans, and due to the pillaging Goths blocking the way to Constantinople, Theodosius was first forced to hold his court in Thessaloniki. In order to put the Goths under control, Theodosius resorted to recruiting any able man in the area to the army as well as in hiring other barbarian mercenaries, although these men who were forced to be recruited into Theodosius' army refusing to fight ended up mutilating themselves only to be forced to fight anyway while the Goth mercenaries that were hired just defected to their fellow Goths anyway. The campaign against the Goths in the Balkans thus began terribly for Theodosius that Theodosius seeing no solution to fully expel the Goth migrants from Roman territory resolved to just making peace with them and allowing them to settle in Roman territory as allied forces or *Foederati* to protect the empire and serve whenever they were called to war in order to stop their pillaging. Only in late 380 did Theodosius finally arrive in Constantinople where he permanently set up court there, and being a patron of the arts and architecture, Theodosius in his reign put his attention into making Constantinople worthy of being an imperial capital in which he had a number of obelisks shipped from Egypt to decorate Constantinople's Hippodrome while he too built a new harbor, and sometime later, Theodosius ordered the renovation of a public forum wherein he decorated it with a column dedicated to him, hence this would be the Forum of Theodosius.

In 381, Theodosius attempted to make peace with the Goths by allowing their king Athanaric to retire in Constantinople and when Athanaric died, Theodosius gave him a lavish funeral with full honors only fit for emperors. In 381 as well, Theodosius I as the Eastern Roman emperor convened the Second Church Council also known as the "First Council of Constantinople" which was the council that reconfirmed the Nicene Creed made at the First Church Council in Nicaea back in 325 which defined the Holy Trinity and Natures of Christ, but more importantly the Council of Constantinople in 381 declared that the Orthodox (Nicene) Christian faith which followed the Nicene Creed established in 325 was to be the Roman Empire's official religion and that all other heresies such as Arianism which did not agree with the creed were condemned as heresies all while the Ancient Pagan religion of the Greeks and Romans as well as other Pagan religions of the empire were outlawed. In 382, the conflict with the Goths was fully resolved wherein Theodosius allowed the Goths to settle in lands along the empire's Danube border in exchange for their military service to the empire as allied troops, and these terms were true enough favorable

to the Goths who came into Roman territory to look for land to settle in anyway, though this policy of Theodosius would later on prove to be troublesome as the Goths would soon enough demand more and more land and titles.

In the west meanwhile, Theodosius' western co-emperor Gratian was killed in 383 when the Roman general in Britain Magnus Maximus, who was a long-time friend of Theodosius and fellow Roman-Spaniard rose up in rebellion against Gratian eventually tracking Gratian down to Lugdunum (Lyon) in Gaul where traitors paid off by Maximus killed Gratian. Magnus Maximus too thought of co-ruling the Roman Empire with his old friend Theodosius I wherein Maximus ruled the west and Theodosius over the east, though Theodosius proving his loyalty to the late Gratian and the Valentinian Dynasty refused to accept Maximus as his co-ruler but instead Gratian's younger half-brother Valentinian II. At first though, Theodosius did nothing about the usurper Magnus Maximus except for having troops secure the Alps to defend Italy from his army as Theodosius was preoccupied with his own problems in the east including settling down the Goth migrants along the Danube and enforcing Nicene Christianity as the official religion. In 385, Theodosius achieved making a true peace agreement with the Sassanid Empire- Rome's mortal eastern enemy- wherein Armenia was partitioned between the Romans and Sassanids, and here Theodosius sent his trusted general and aide the half-Roman half-barbarian Flavius Stilicho to travel east to the Sassanid Persian capital Ctesiphon wherein Stilicho himself in behalf of Theodosius secured peace with the Sassanid ruler Shapur III (r. 383-388).

The peace deal between Theodosius and Magnus Maximus however came to an end in 387 when Maximus broke the blockade in the Alps and invaded Italy from Gaul which forced the young Western Roman emperor Valentinian II with his mother Justina and sisters to flee to Theodosius in Constantinople. As for Theodosius with his first wife Aelia Flaccilla having died years earlier, he concluded an alliance with Valentinian II and Justina to take back Italy from Magnus Maximus wherein Theodosius married Justina's and the late Valentinian I's daughter Galla in 387, and in 388 Justina had died while Theodosius with an army led by his other half-barbarian general with the position of *Magister Militum* (Master of Soldiers) Arbogast headed west assured that they would defeat Maximus. Theodosius and Arbogast thus defeated Maximus' forces at the Battle of Poetovio in 388 wherein the defeated Maximus was executed, and later that year Arbogast travelled to Gaul and killed off Maximus' son and co-emperor Flavius Victor. With the civil war over, Valentinian II returned to Italy ruling from Milan though as a puppet of his Magister Militum Arbogast whereas Theodosius returned to enforcing Nicene Christianity as the state religion that at this point, Theodosius who was also under the influence of the Christian extremist Bishop of Milan Ambrose began persecuting Pagans and heretics in an extremist manner.

In 390, a bloody incident happened when a riot broke out in Thessaloniki when its local commander being the Goth Butheric imprisoned the star chariot racer, and the people angry at this killed Butheric only for Theodosius to respond to it with such brutality by ordering an army of his Goth allies to attack Thessaloniki and kill everyone responsible for killing Butheric. Theodosius however who was in Milan at that time tried to reverse the order but it was too late as the Goth troops already made it to Thessaloniki wherein they slaughtered about 7,000 civilians in the Hippodrome in only 3 hours. When hearing of this

massacre in Thessaloniki, the Bishop of Milan Ambrose put a ban on Theodosius from communion and entering the Church for 8 months which was for Theodosius to make up for his sins in ordering the said massacre. After 8 months, in 391 Theodosius was finally allowed back into communion, although to save his soul, Ambrose advised Theodosius to be even more extremist with his anti-heretic and anti-Pagan policies. During the 390s, Theodosius grew more extremist that he ordered Pagan temples empire-wide to be shut down, had Ancient Pagan practices that had been a sacred tradition for centuries including the Vestal Virgins in Rome and sacrifices banned, turned Pagan holidays into workdays, and most famously he put an end to the tradition of the Olympic Games in Greece wherein the last one was held in 394. Theodosius' religious policies true enough were so extremist that he failed to stop Christian zealots in places like Egypt from burning down Pagan temples and libraries and killing Pagan scholars, and in fact Theodosius even tolerated it.

In 392 meanwhile, Theodosius' western co-emperor Valentinian II was found dead by suicide which was however part of his general Arbogast's plot to eliminate him, and with Valentinian II dead Arbogast proclaimed a scholar from Gaul named Eugenius as his new puppet emperor. At first, Theodosius again did nothing to stop the usurpation of Arbogast and Eugenius until discovering that Arbogast and Eugenius were rallying the pro-Pagan population of the Western provinces who felt suppressed by Theodosius' policies to their cause despite Arbogast and Eugenius still being Nicene Christians. Theodosius then by 393 gathered a large army of native Eastern Romans, barbarian Foederati troops, and auxiliaries from the Caucasus to head west and crush the rebellion of Arbogast and Eugenius, while in the process Theodosius and his trusted general Stilicho also recruited the Goth leader Alaric- who Stilicho previously defeated in 391- and his men to his side. The opposing forces of Theodosius and his allies and Arbogast met at the Frigidus River in today's Slovenia in 394 where the battle turned in favor of Theodosius when a strong Alpine wind rushed into the battlefield and blew directly against Arbogast's forces blowing the arrows they fired back at them while the Goths under Alaric too brutally charged into Arbogast's forces. The battle ended with a victory for Theodosius and overall for his ideology of Nicene Christianity over Paganism, although with a large number of men wiped out in both sides, it still greatly deprived the Roman Empire of manpower. The usurper puppet emperor Eugenius was thus executed while Arbogast ironically like Valentinian II was found dead by committing suicide.

Theodosius thus became the sole ruler of the entire Roman Empire, though he did not have much longer to live and just 4 months later in January of 395, he died in Milan at the age of 48 from a severe case of edema. Theodosius I thus died as the last emperor to rule the entire Roman Empire north to south from Britain to Egypt and west to east from Portugal to Syria by himself- at least only in his last 4 months- as following his death, the Roman Empire would be divided between east and west for good wherein the east would live on for a thousand more years as the Byzantine Empire whereas the Western half would die out some 80 years later (476). Theodosius I's eldest son Arcadius (r. 395-408) came to rule the Eastern half from Constantinople while the younger son Honorius (r. 395-423) would rule the Western half from Milan and later from Ravenna though Theodosius' dynasty which he founded known as the Theodosian Dynasty would rule the Eastern half until 457 and the Western half until 455. Overall, Theodosius I somewhat deserves his title

“the Great” despite being such a polarizing historical figure as his reign really defined a massive political, religious, and cultural shift in the world as not only did Nicene Christianity become the Roman Empire’s official religion under him but under his rule, the barbarians have now settled in Roman borders in which they would eventually become a larger threat, an era had ended with the centuries old Pagan practices of Ancient Greece and Rome coming to an end, and the Roman Empire forever divided beginning with Theodosius’ death in 395; therefore, the death of Theodosius I in 395 was what really defined the end of the old Roman civilization and the beginning of its successor in the east being the Byzantine Empire as Theodosius true enough really envisioned the east with Constantinople as the continuation of Rome’s imperial traditions and systems.

This illustration of the emperor Theodosius I the Great here was based on several images and surviving pieces from his time in the late 4th century that depict him. The most notable one that was used as a source for this illustration especially for the armor and *Diadem* style crown is the massive 5m bronze statue of a late Roman emperor found in Southern Italy known as the “Colossus of Barletta”. This statue although does not specify which late Roman emperor it depicts as it could be either Valentinian I, Theodosius I, Honorius, Theodosius II (r. 408-450), Marcian (r. 450-457), Leo I (r. 457-474), or even later emperors like Justinian I (r. 527-565), or Heraclius (r. 610-641). This statue too originally came from Eastern Roman Constantinople wherein it was looted by the army of the 4th Crusade when they captured it in 1204, and although supposed to be brought to Venice it ended up being washed away in the shore of Southern Italy as the ship carrying it was shipwrecked, therefore it still stands in the town of Barletta in Southern Italy today. Just like the emperor in this massive statue, Theodosius here is wearing the same type of “imperial armor” which consists of a cuirass style “muscle armor” like those worn by Roman emperors and generals wherein a thigh-length and long-sleeved tunic is seen beneath it, and over it a cloak. As it is an imperial style armor, it includes many ceremonial elements used for decoration such as the ribbon across the waist and the white leather tassels or *Pteruges* beneath the armor protecting both the upper arms and thighs. The golden color of the armor as well as the white leather for the *Pteruges* was based on the color of illustrated versions of late Roman imperial armor which show the emperor wearing a gold set of armor to indicate his position as emperor whereas the purple color for the ribbon, cloak, and edges of the tassels is after all the imperial color. The golden orb held by Theodosius on his left hand as well as the diadem type of crown he wears which is lined with pearls and has a single jewel at the center of it too was based off on what is seen in the said statue in Barletta. The knee-high leather boots on the other hand were also based on the type of boots seen in the statue, although the statue doesn’t show the emperor wearing short trousers beneath his armor, therefore the one Theodosius is wearing here is an additional piece. The statue in Barletta on the other hand shows the emperor holding a cross on his right hand, whereas Theodosius here instead of raising a cross is holding an imperial banner with the initials of Christ in Greek (the *chi-rho*) on it. The face of Theodosius in this illustration as well as his hairstyle meanwhile were based on his appearance seen in an artifact from his time being a large silver dish known as the *Missorium of Theodosius I*.

