

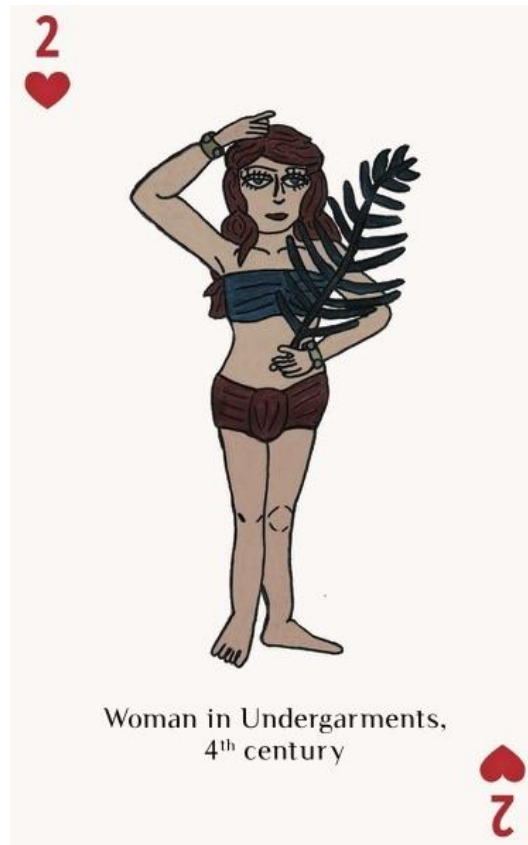
Late Roman Card Descriptions- Hearts

H-A Late Roman Shields



The 5 shields seen in this illustration were based on the shields depicted in the Late Roman document detailing the administrative organization of the Western and Eastern Roman Empires known as the *Notitia Dignitatum*. The illustration of the shields in particular come from a page of a medieval copy of this document commissioned in 1436. The shield designs seen here include 5 oval shaped shields which were used by infantry troops with different patterns on them including a plain blue and red one (upper-left), a red and white one (upper-right), a blue and yellow one with a red border (lower-right), and one black and white one in the form of sun rays (lower-left). The red shield with the *Chi-rho* symbol (center) meanwhile was commonly used by late Roman troops following the Battle of Milvian Bridge in 312 wherein the emperor Constantine I the Great (r. 306-337) defeated the usurper Maxentius as a way to signify that they were Christians as apparently Constantine before the battle received a vision of this symbol which foretold he would win the battle if he fought under this sign, hence he had it painted on his soldiers' shields.

H-2 Woman in Undergarments, 4th Century



One of the best archaeological sites with the best-preserved late Roman mosaics is the Villa Romana del Casale located 3km away from the town of Piazza Armerina in Sicily. This 4th century Roman villa features a large variety of wall and floor mosaics which more or less depict human figures wearing the clothes of this time including the late Roman tunics. One of the most famous mosaic sections in this villa is the *Coronation of the Winner* mosaic which depicts women in what happens to be either the undergarments of Roman times or athletic wear, hence it is commonly known as the “Bikini Mosaic”. This mosaic panel shows a number of women wearing nothing more but similar if not identical breast bands and an undergarment for the lower body.

The woman in this illustration was particularly based on the appearance of the winner in the mosaic who holds a palm branch and a laurel wreath over her head, though in this illustration she doesn't appear to hold a wreath. Just like the winner in the mosaic, this woman has long red hair and only wears a green breast band known to the Romans as a *Strophium* or *Mamillare* and a red undergarment for her lower body known as a *Subligaculum*. The breast band now is basically a strapless bra except it is simply one piece of cloth wrapped around and tied across the woman's bust while the *Subligaculum* is also a cloth wrapped around her lower body. Unlike in the mosaic, the woman here is seen wearing golden bracelets in her right and left arms.

H-3 Hun Bucellarius, 6th Century



Hun Bucellarius,
6th century

In the late Roman army, a specific military unit that were used as either escort troops for important military leaders or as shock cavalry troops were the *Bucellarii* (singular: *Bucellarius*). The name of this unit means “biscuit eater” in Latin and this unit’s name is derived from the type of bread rations they ate known as *bucellatum*. In the 5th and 6th centuries, the Bucellarii provided the best cavalry for the Roman army both to the Western Roman Empire (which fell in 476) and to the Eastern Roman Empire (or Byzantine Empire), and those in the Bucellarii were recruited from Romans, Persians, Goths, Huns, and others, although barbarians whether Germanic ones or Huns were the most preferred ones by late Roman generals. These units too received generally high salaries and were armed with the best armor and weapons from the empire’s factories. One notable general who preferred using Bucellarii most especially Huns was the 6th century Eastern Roman general Flavius Belisarius (500-565), and in his battles, his Hun Bucellarii were really the ones that were instrumental in winning his victories whether against the Sassanid Persians, Goths, or Vandals due to the ruthlessness of these troops and their adept skill in horse riding.

Now, this illustration depicts a Hun Bucellarius cavalryman from Belisarius’ army that is although not mounted on a horse but standing on foot, and he is illustrated this way to show his full set of armor and weapons. The Hun Bucellarius in this illustration wears something more Hunnish than Roman first being his lamellar scale *Spangenhelm* style helmet with 3 feathers sticking above it which appears to look more Oriental. His body armor on the other hand is simply a scale armor vest tied by a belt and beneath it is a

Hunnish style red tunic and trousers, while he also wears high-cut leather boots. As for his weapons, this Hun Bucellarius' primary weapon is a bow where this illustration shows him wielding a Hunnish recurve bow and his secondary weapons are two daggers which here are seen sheathed. This illustration is based on an existing one of a Hunnish Bucellarius cavalryman standing next to the general Belisarius himself and other Eastern Roman army units of that time.

H-4 Hypatia of Alexandria (370-415)



One of the most renowned female philosophers and mathematicians in history is Hypatia of Alexandria, a Greek from Eastern Roman Egypt. Hypatia's year of birth is often unclear as it ranges from 350 to 370, though it is most possible that her year of birth was 370 as the author Damascius (458-538) mentions that Hypatia was around 30 by the year 400, however the author John Malalas (491-578) gives a hint that Hypatia was born in around 350 as he mentions that she was old by the time of her death in 415. Whether Hypatia was born in 350 or 370, she was the daughter of the renowned mathematician and Neoplatonist philosopher Theon of Alexandria (335-405) who ran a school in Alexandria. Hypatia's mother meanwhile remains unknown as nothing is ever mentioned about her. When grown up, Hypatia followed in her father's footsteps in becoming a Neoplatonist philosopher and mathematician residing in Alexandria which was one of the greatest cities of the Eastern Roman Empire and regarded as second only to Athens as the philosophical capital of the Greco-Roman world.

As a philosopher, Hypatia taught the writings of the famous Ancient Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle to students from all over the Mediterranean, while she was also known to have given impromptu lectures on philosophy in the streets of Alexandria, and additionally she chose to remain unmarried as she dedicated her life to science and philosophy. More importantly, Hypatia just like her father taught the philosophy known as Neoplatonism based on the teachings of the 3rd century Roman-Egyptian philosopher Plotinus. It was during Hypatia's time when the Eastern Roman emperor Theodosius I the Great (r. 379-395) declared Nicene Christianity the Roman Empire's official religion, and although Hypatia was a Pagan she was still tolerant towards Christians. This tolerance she had was evident as one of her students was the Christian Synesius of Cyrene who would later become Bishop of Ptolemais in 410, and Synesius too even wrote letters praising Hypatia for her knowledge in philosophy. True enough, Hypatia was even praised by other Christian authors such as her contemporary Socrates of Constantinople who says that she has made such attainments in literature and science and had even surpassed all the other philosophers of her time, while another Christian historian of her time being Philostorgius says that she excelled her father in mathematics.

Hypatia however lived in difficult times to be a Pagan philosopher especially in Alexandria as not only did she live in the reign of the fanatically Christian emperor Theodosius I and his son and successor Arcadius (r. 395-408) but the Patriarch of Alexandria of her time being Theophilus was militantly opposed to Neoplatonic philosophy and the old Pagan faith, and it was during his time as the Archbishop of Alexandria in 391 - also in Hypatia's lifetime - when he ordered the temple in Alexandria known as the *Serapeum* destroyed. Although despite Theophilus being a fanatical Christian, he still saw Hypatia as an ally basically because he supported her student Synesius, and it was basically due to Theophilus' tolerance towards her that the people of Alexandria admired her. Now when it came to her works, Hypatia was not known to be an innovator of science and philosophy, but rather a teacher and commentator as no evidence has been found that she published any works on these subjects. What Hypatia was known to have done was in editing Book III of Ptolemy's *Almagest* which supported the geocentric model of the universe, and here she improved the method for the long division algorithms needed for astronomical computation. As a mathematician, Hypatia wrote a commentary for Diophantus' 13-volume *Arithmetica* written in around 250 as well as on Apollonius of Perga's work on conic sections. On the other hand, Hypatia was also known to have done a number of inventions, as according to a letter by Synesius, he mentions that she taught him how to construct a silver plane astrolabe which was a portable astrolabe that could be used for practical measurements. However, based on Synesius' writings, Hypatia may have not invented the plane astrolabe but rather she had constructed several of them which served as a basis for future plane astrolabes. Based on another letter by Synesius, Hypatia was known to have constructed a "hydroscope" which is now known as a hydrometer which determines the density of specific gravity of liquids in which Synesius claims that she invented it.

However, things would happen to go the other way around for Hypatia and the city of Alexandria as a whole in 412 with the unexpected death of the patriarch Theophilus.

Although Theophilus trained his nephew Cyril as his successor, he did not name him as his successor, and thus a violent power struggle over the diocese broke out between Cyril and his rival Timothy. Cyril however won and thus punished all those who had supported Timothy while the school of Hypatia too had a strong disgust towards the new bishop Cyril. As the new patriarch, Cyril closed all the Jewish synagogues in Alexandria and banished a number of Jews from the city as punishment for a Jewish-led massacre of the city's Christian inhabitants some time back. The Roman Prefect (mayor) of Alexandria Orestes who was a close friend of Hypatia meanwhile was shocked by the patriarch's actions against the Jews that he sent a report to the Eastern Roman emperor Theodosius II (r. 408-450) about it. However, at the same time a riot broke out in Alexandria led by a Christian group known as the *Parabalani* who were under Cyril's authority and this group almost killed Orestes, and thus as retaliation Orestes had Ammonius who was the monk responsible for the rioting tortured to death in public. Orestes' action in having Ammonius killed however only led to conflict to break out between him and Cyril wherein Orestes sought advice from Hypatia in dealing with Cyril. However, Orestes could not do anything about Cyril as Cyril's support base was very strong as it included the same *Parabalani* who now believed Hypatia to be engaged in Satanic practices while also believing that Orestes was under her influence.

Eventually, in March of 415, the same *Parabalani* group of Christians under a certain Peter raided Hypatia's carriage- as she was heading home- where they dragged her out of it and brought her to a former Pagan temple in Alexandria that had been converted into a Christian church. There, the mob stripped Hypatia naked and beat her to death several times using roof tiles, and according to Damascius the mob cut out her eyeballs, tore her body to pieces, and afterwards set her mutilated body parts on fire outside the city. Despite the Roman Empire being Christian in Hypatia's time, Hypatia's murder sent shockwaves across the empire as despite being a Pagan, Hypatia was still a respected philosopher among Christians as well, though it was more of the fact that a philosopher was murdered that shocked the citizens of both the Western and Eastern Roman Empires as for centuries philosophers were seen as untouchable. When word of Hypatia's murder reached the emperor Theodosius II in Constantinople, he ordered an investigation to determine if Cyril had a part in Hypatia's murder. With the investigation completed, both the Eastern Roman emperor Theodosius II and the Western Roman emperor Honorius (r. 395-423) issued an edict in 416 that would limit the power and influence of the *Parabalani*, however the bishop Cyril would still be untouched as he bribed one of Theodosius II's officials to spare him, and thus in the following years Cyril would continue having great influence over Alexandria.

Hypatia true enough just shortly after her death was viewed as a "martyr for philosophy" even by Christians at a time when Christianity was the Roman Empire's official religion, and despite her death her legacy in philosophy and science would live on as many philosophers would continue practicing their work in Alexandria and other parts of the Roman world. In the Middle Ages, Hypatia was viewed as a symbol of Christian virtue even by Christians despite her being a Pagan, in the early-modern era she would be viewed as a symbol of enlightenment, while in the 19th century she was viewed by some authors as the

“last of the Hellenes”, and in the 20th century she would be seen as an icon for women’s rights.

For this illustration, Hypatia is supposed to look like how she is described by the author Damascius who describes her to be in her 30s by the year 400 and “exceedingly beautiful and fair of form”. Hence with this illustration, Hypatia’s birthdate would be at 370 as she is supposed to appear to be around 30 here as this illustration is supposed to depict her in the year 400 during the height of her career, while this illustration too is supposed to depict her as beautiful in appearance as described by Damascius. However, other than Damascius’ description of her, there is nothing else known regarding Hypatia’s physical appearance as no descriptions of her from her time have survived, hence most of this illustration was based on hypothesis. Here in this illustration, Hypatia wears a red classic Greek style sleeveless dress which is held up by a golden brooch and extends all the way down to her feet. She too is seen wearing the classic Roman style sandals known as *Caligae* while a series of golden bands are seen around her waist which holds her dress up. Here, she is also seen wearing a specific dark red cloak over her dress draped on her right side known as a *Tribon* as true enough, according to Damascius she walked around Alexandria wearing this kind of cloak which was associated with philosophers. Additionally, Hypatia is also seen with long flowing dark hair held up by a golden headband, golden bracelets on her wrists, and on her right hand she holds a scroll as a way to identify her as a philosopher and mathematician.

H-5 Empress Helena (248-330)



The 4th century Roman empress Helena who is also known as St. Helena or Flavia Julia Helena Augusta was most famous for being the mother of the Roman emperor Constantine I the Great (r. 306-337) and a key figure in the rise of the Christian faith. According to most sources, Helena was a Greek who most likely came from the region of Bithynia in Asia Minor where she was born in 248 to a lower-class family while her name suggests too she is Greek as Helena was a common Greek name. Nothing is known about the life of Helena until she met her husband-to-be the Illyrian Constantius who at this time was a Roman soldier in the service of the emperor Aurelian (r. 270-275), and it was most likely that Constantius met Helena as he was passing through Bithynia on his way to campaign against the break-away Roman Empire of Palmyra in Syria sometime after 270. It remains unknown when Constantius and Helena married while some sources which were hostile to her family say they never married while some say that their marriage was just a common-law one. Although it remains unknown to when Constantius and Helena married, their son and only child Constantine was born in 272 in Naissus (today's Nis, Serbia).

Eventually, Constantius rose up the ranks of the imperial army and later even became close to the reigning emperor Diocletian (r. 284-305) as both Constantius and Diocletian were long-time friends in the army. As Constantius was rising up the ranks, he had to marry a woman of higher status unlike Helena who was of low birth, and so in 289 he divorced Helena and married Theodora, the stepdaughter of Diocletian's co-emperor Maximian (r. 286-305) while in 293 Constantius I became a junior emperor or *Caesar* of the Roman Empire in Diocletian's 4-emperor system known as the *Tetrarchy*. Helena on the

other hand never married again following her divorce with Constantius while her son Constantine was later sent to the court of Diocletian in Nicomedia (today's Izmit, Turkey) to be educated. From here on until Constantine would become emperor, Helena lived her life in obscurity but remained very close to her only son.

In 305 both Diocletian and Maximian stepped down as *Augusti* (senior emperors) whereas Galerius (r. 293-311) and Constantius I replaced them, though just a year later in 306, Constantius died while in Britain leaving his son Constantine to be proclaimed as the new Augustus by his troops, though he would only be the sole Augustus of the Roman Empire's western half in 312 once he defeated his rival Maxentius (r. 306-312), the son of Maximian. When Constantine became a legitimate Augustus in 312, his mother Helena once again returned to the picture, and it was here when she converted to Christianity according to the Christian historian Eusebius of Caesarea. It was only in 325 though when Constantine gave his mother the title of *Augusta* (empress) thus giving her access to the imperial treasury in order to locate the relics of Christian tradition as here Helena made it her goal to find the important relics of Christianity.

From 326-328, Helena undertook a pilgrimage trip to Palestine to see some of the most important sites in the history of Christianity and to retrieve some of the most sacred Christian relics. During her pilgrimage, she constructed two major churches, one at Bethlehem and one at the Mount of Olives which were respectively the sites of Christ's birth and ascension. Legend also says that Helena travelled all the way to the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt where she had a church constructed over the site of the Burning Bush which would eventually become St. Catherine's Monastery. What Helena is famous for though was travelling to Jerusalem and finding the relic of the True Cross, and here she ordered the destruction of the Temple to Venus which was built over the site of Christ's crucifixion. According to legend, the True Cross was found when Helena asked a sickly woman to touch the 3 crosses that were found at the excavation site once the temple was destroyed, and here when the woman touched the first two crosses she wasn't healed, but when touching the 3rd cross her condition improved, therefore Helena declared that the cross with miraculous powers was the true one. Aside from finding the True Cross in Jerusalem, Helena also found the nails of the crucifixion (the Holy Nails) which she later allegedly placed one on the helmet of her son Constantine and the other on the bridle of his horse. On the site of the discovery of the True Cross, Constantine then ordered the construction of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher which was built over the temple that Helena had destroyed.

Once she finished her pilgrimage in Palestine, Helena travelled to Cyprus where she established a number of monasteries to house the relics she found while local Cypriot tradition also says that she imported hundreds of cats from Egypt and Palestine in order to rid a monastery in Cyprus of snakes, thus according to this legend it is Helena who was responsible for the large population of cats in Cyprus. After her stay in Cyprus, Helena headed to Rome where she brought with her a piece of the True Cross and other relics which she placed at a chapel in her palace. Helena died in 330 in Rome at the age of 82 with her son Constantine at her side, and thus she would be buried at the Mausoleum of Helena outside Rome. Up to this day, Helena is a saint commemorated in the Orthodox, Catholic,

Anglican, and Lutheran Churches while she is also the patron saint of discoveries, and there are also many festivals until today dedicated to her.

This illustration most possibly depicts the empress Helena sometime after she was made empress by her son in 312, although despite her being at an old age at that point, here in this illustration she still has brown hair. To indicate she is an empress, Helena here wears a *Diadem* crown studded with pearls which was inspired from her image in a fresco that depicts her in Trier, Germany. The outfit Helena wears here is based on outfits worn by late Roman period reenactors in which this one consists of a long blue tunic-dress with embroideries and over it a large orange mantle known to the Romans as a *Palla*. Additionally, she is seen wearing a pearl necklace and a leather belt holding up her tunic-dress.

H-6 Ricimer (418-472)



One of the most powerful men in late Roman history that did not hold the title of emperor but had control over puppet emperors was the Romanized Germanic general Flavius Ricimer (418-472) who was the barbarian puppet master and power behind 4 Western Roman emperors in the time period from 456-472. Ricimer was born in around 418, and although his parents' names are not known, it is said that he was of the Germanic Suebi tribe on his father's side and Visigoth on his mother's side wherein his maternal grandfather was in fact the King of the Visigoths Wallia (r. 415-418). Despite his Germanic

origins, Ricimer entered military service for the Western Roman Empire at a young age possibly as a way to escape the instability among the Visigoths and Suebi which he did not want to associate with. When in the Western Roman army, Ricimer served under the *Magister Militum* (Master of Soldiers) Flavius Aetius and alongside the Roman patrician officer Majorian who Ricimer befriended, and it was when serving under Aetius' command that Ricimer built his political connections which would be vital to when he would be in charge of the Western Roman Empire later on in life.

Things however would turn around for the Western Romans with the assassination of Aetius in 454 and in 455 with the assassination of the emperor Valentinian III (r. 425-455) which was followed by the brief 2-month reign of Petronius Maximus who was later hacked to death by the people and following that the 455 Sack of Rome by the Vandals. After the sack of Rome and death of Petronius Maximus, the Visigoth king Theodoric II (r. 453-466) proclaimed the Western Roman diplomat and military commander in Gaul Avitus as emperor, and in 456 Avitus entered Italy where he was formally proclaimed as emperor, and it was here too when Avitus appointed Ricimer to the powerful military position of *Comes*. Here, Ricimer raised an army and navy consisting mostly of Germanic mercenaries to fight off the barbarians invading Italy, and thus later in 456 Ricimer won two major victories against the Vandals that were still raiding Italy, the first victory at the Battle of Agrigentum in Sicily and the next at the Battle of Corsica. The emperor Avitus however lacked a strong support base from the Western Roman population while the Eastern Roman emperor Marcian (r. 450-457) too did not recognize his rule, thus this led to both Ricimer and his long-time friend Majorian to gain power and influence. Majorian and Ricimer thus declared rebellion against Avitus and then clashed with his forces in battle, first in September of 456 where they defeated and later executed Avitus' general Remistus and later in October of 456 where they defeated Avitus himself, captured him, and forced him to become the Bishop of Piacenza, though eventually the deposed emperor turned bishop Avitus was executed possibly by Ricimer and Majorian.

In the meantime, there was no Western Roman emperor, although the most possible candidate for the imperial throne was Majorian as he was a likeable figure being a Roman Italian of patrician status whereas Ricimer despite holding a lot of power did not want to be emperor as this was possibly due to his Germanic blood and being an Arian Christian which was not acceptable for an emperor, although at this time the emperor of the west did not hold real power anymore, instead it was held by the *Magister Militum* which here was Ricimer. In 457, while the west still had no emperor, both Majorian and Ricimer defeated an Alemanni invasion of Italy, and thus following this both generals reached an agreement wherein Majorian was to be proclaimed as emperor. In the meantime in 457 as well, the Eastern Roman emperor Marcian died and was thus succeeded by Leo I the Thracian (r. 457-474) who was originally a lowborn soldier, although as the new emperor Leo in December of 457 recognized Majorian as his co-emperor in the west therefore legitimizing Majorian as emperor while Leo too recognized Ricimer as *Magister Militum*. Now Majorian proved to be a highly competent emperor both in terms of military matters and economic reforms, and in his reign Majorian scored a number of victories across the Western Empire whether in Italy, Gaul, or Hispania wherein he succeeded in expelling barbarian invaders and returning lands back to Western Roman control.

As Majorian was away campaigning, Ricimer was left behind in Italy with the barbarian *Foederati* (allied) troops he commanded while he too was in charge of the Western Roman Senate that grew envious of Majorian's power while Ricimer too started growing nervous especially since Majorian had been acting on his own terms and thus not being the puppet-emperor Ricimer intended to have. In 460, as Majorian prepared for an invasion of the Vandal Kingdom in North Africa wherein he constructed a fleet for it, traitors in his army bribed by the Vandal king Genseric (r. 428-477) burned down the newly built fleet thus forcing Majorian to return home to Italy. Because of this failure, Majorian's popularity had declined to which Ricimer exploited and so when Majorian arrived back in Italy in 461, he was betrayed by Ricimer whose men captured and tortured Majorian to death. Majorian however was still popular especially among his loyalist generals Aegidius and Marcellinus and so when both heard of Majorian's death, Aegidius declared his lands in Gaul known as Soissons independent as an act of going against Ricimer and avenging Majorian, while Marcellinus did the same declaring Dalmatia independent from Western Roman control too. For some 3 months after Majorian was executed, Ricimer ruled the Western Roman Empire alone with no puppet emperor while not even taking the title of emperor for himself. This was until the Senate pressured Ricimer to name a new puppet emperor, and so in late 461 the senator Libius Severus was named as Ricimer's new puppet emperor wherein the former would rule as Emperor Severus III, however the Eastern Roman emperor Leo I refused to recognize Severus as his Western co-emperor. The new emperor Severus now barely did anything when in power, hence Ricimer got the puppet he so wanted, and thus during Severus' reign Ricimer was fully in control of the Western empire, though during this time Vandal attacks on Italy had become more severe.

At this time as well, Ricimer was successful in defeating the Visigoths at Orleans in 463 and in 464 he defeated an invading band of Alans at the Battle of Bergamo in Italy wherein his forces even killed the Alan king. The emperor Severus III however turned out to be completely useless that seeing no more need for him, Ricimer killed him by poisoning him in 465, and thus for the next 2 years Western Rome was left without an emperor making Ricimer once again rule it alone all while the Eastern emperor Leo I was basically the sole ruler of the Roman Empire. It was only in 467 when the west was to have a new emperor, this time it would be the Eastern Roman general and aristocrat Procopius Anthemius who the Eastern emperor Leo I named as his Western co-emperor, and thus in 467 Anthemius sailed from the Eastern Roman capital Constantinople to Italy wherein he would meet Ricimer and subsequently be another puppet emperor of Ricimer despite being recognized by Leo I. To seal an alliance between Ricimer and Anthemius, Anthemius' daughter Alypia was married to Ricimer wherein a lavish ceremony took place in 467 in Rome. At this time too, Marcellinus who had declared Dalmatia independent once again returned his loyalty to Western Rome despite Ricimer still being in control and this was due to Anthemius now becoming the Western emperor as Anthemius and Marcellinus were close allies, while Anthemius on the other hand who did not trust Ricimer gave the title of *Patrician* to Marcellinus to balance the power of Ricimer.

In the meantime in 468, the Eastern emperor Leo I and Western emperor Anthemius launched a joint naval operation to invade North Africa and take it back from the Vandals, however this mission ended in failure wherein half of the massive Roman fleet was destroyed by the Vandals at the naval battle of Cape Bon due to treachery. Due to this defeat, both Eastern and Western Roman Empires were bankrupt while the Visigoths and Burgundians resumed their attacks invading Western Roman Gaul all while the Vandal king Genseric due to his victory continuously attacked Italy leaving Ricimer to defend Italy against the Vandal attacks. At the same time too, following the disastrous Battle of Cape Bon, Marcellinus happened to be murdered in Sicily by Ricimer's men and since Marcellinus was close to Anthemius, his murder began the tensions between Anthemius and Ricimer. Once again, Ricimer had intended Anthemius to be his puppet emperor, but like Majorian, Anthemius had his own ambitions to rule alone, and this was seen in 470 when Anthemius had Ricimer's ally the senator Romanus executed wherein Anthemius ordered the execution by himself without even letting Ricimer know about it. Following this, relations between Ricimer and Anthemius had totally deteriorated to the point that Ricimer left for Milan to gather a large army to go against Anthemius who held himself in Rome. The Bishop of Pavia Epiphanius tried to negotiate peace between Anthemius and Ricimer but at the end it still failed as their hate towards each other had already reached its boiling point.

By 472, war broke out between both of them wherein Ricimer marched his troops to Rome and laid siege to it for 5 months. At the same time, the Vandal king Genseric had also named the Western Roman senator Olybrius as his puppet Western Roman emperor, and when arriving in Italy Olybrius too was proclaimed by Ricimer as his new puppet emperor against Anthemius as Ricimer intercepted a letter from Leo I to Anthemius which gave orders to kill both Ricimer and Olybrius. Thus when discovering this letter, Ricimer in a panic immediately proclaimed Olybrius as his new puppet emperor against Anthemius. After being besieged for months, the Romans now starving opened Rome to Ricimer whereas Anthemius disguised as a beggar fled to the Church of Santa Maria in Trastevere where he was later found and beheaded by Ricimer's men. With Anthemius dead, Ricimer once again stayed as the puppet master, this time to the new emperor Olybrius, though in August of 472 just a month after Anthemius' execution, Ricimer himself had died at the age of 54 from a hemorrhage whereas his nephew Gundobad who was the son of Ricimer's sister and the Burgundian king Gondioc (r. 437-473) succeeded Ricimer as the new power behind Western Rome. However within the year 472, the new emperor Olybrius died as well whereas a year later following the death of his father the Burgundian king, Gundobad returned to his native Burgundian kingdom in Gaul to succeed his father as king. Just 4 years after Ricimer's death in 472, the Western Roman Empire itself had been dissolved (476) whereas the only Roman Empire left was the east based in Constantinople.

Due to there being no historically accurate images of Ricimer from his time or from other centuries, the illustration of Ricimer here was based on the attire of late Roman generals, particularly the Magister Militum which was the rank Ricimer held, therefore this illustration depicts him as Magister Militum. The attire here was based off on illustrations depicting late Roman military men and the outfits worn by reenactors of the late Roman period. Here, Ricimer is seen wearing a golden ridge-helmet studded with multiple jewels

which was something worn by generals in the late Roman period while his facial features was not based on anything, rather he is seen here with a blond beard to indicate him as Germanic in origin. The armor he wears here is the Roman scale armor known as the *Lorica Squamata* wherein this one has white leather tassels known as *Pteruges*- attached to a vest beneath it- sticking out in the upper arms and thighs and at his waist is a red leather belt. Beneath his armor, Ricimer here is wearing a purple trimmed white late Roman tunic and blue trousers, while his lower legs are protected by metal greaves whereas his shoes are Roman military boots. Here, Ricimer is also seen with his *Spatha* longsword sheathed while his right hand holds a scroll possibly with his own orders documented in them.

H-7 Theodoric the Amal, King of the Ostrogoths (475-526)



One of early medieval history's most powerful kings, which was the Ostrogoth King of Italy Theodoric the Amal who is also best remembered as "Theodoric the Great" was born in 454 to the noble Ostrogoth Amal clan as the son of the Ostrogoth king Theodemir and his concubine Ereleuva. Theodoric was born just one year after the Ostrogoths had thrown off nearly a century of domination by the Huns while Theodoric's name in Germanic means "ruler of the people". In 461, Theodoric when still a young child was sent as a hostage to the Eastern Roman capital Constantinople to secure the treaty his father concluded with the Eastern Roman emperor Leo I the Thracian (r. 457-474), while this treaty also secured a payment to Constantinople of some 300 pounds worth of gold each year. In Constantinople, the young Theodoric was well educated by some of the best

teachers in the imperial capital which included the Germanic general Aspar who was the power behind Leo I's rule; and while in Constantinople Theodoric learned to read, write, and perform arithmetic. Theodoric stayed in Constantinople until 469 when he returned to his homeland in Pannonia, and when he had returned home, he crossed the Danube River and defeated a Sarmatian invasion of his homeland wherein the Sarmatian king himself was even slain in battle, and following this Theodoric kept the lands he conquered from the Sarmatians for himself to assert his authority as a prince.

In 475 following the death of his father Theodemir, Theodoric became the King of the Ostrogoths, although despite ruling his own people, he would still remain loyal to the Eastern Roman Empire which educated him, and so he would often go on military campaigns against the enemies of the Eastern Roman Empire. In one instance, during the reign of the Eastern Roman emperor Zeno (474-475/ 476-491), another Ostrogoth general in the Eastern Roman army Theodoric Strabo had gone rogue and rebelled against the emperor, and to take care of Strabo's threat, Zeno asked for assistance from Theodoric the Amal. Although Theodoric the Amal accepted Zeno's offer to battle Strabo, Theodoric felt betrayed by Zeno and thus pillaged his way through the Balkans whereas Strabo's threat continued until Strabo when attempting to march on Constantinople in 481 suddenly fell off his horse into a spear and died. With Strabo's death, his men consisting of barbarian allied *Foederati* troops joined forces with Theodoric the Amal, thus Theodoric's power had gone to such higher levels that Zeno could do nothing about it anymore, so instead in order to appease Theodoric, Zeno granted him the title of *Magister Militum* (Master of Soldiers) in 483 while in the following year (484) Zeno granted Theodoric the position of *consul* making this the first time a foreign ruler would hold this title. During this time as well, Theodoric was sent by Zeno to Asia Minor to deal with the rebel general Illus who had been rebelling against Zeno for some time, however Theodoric did not entirely succeed here, and rather by using the great power he held Theodoric chose to instead blockade Constantinople in an act to force Zeno out of power and take over the city.

In 487 then, Theodoric began his campaign in besieging Constantinople's powerful walls which he did not by laying siege to it with weapons but by cutting off the city's water supply, blockading the city, and occupying the suburbs as a way to starve the city out into submission. Zeno meanwhile did not have the means to battle Theodoric with force, so instead Zeno who here had problems with the King of Italy Odoacer- who dissolved the Western Roman Empire in 476- asked Theodoric to not be his problem anymore and instead be Odoacer's and Italy's problem as Theodoric was after all looking for a place to settle his people in. Once Zeno and Theodoric reached this agreement in 488, Theodoric headed west on a long journey to Italy where the King of the Rugians Frideric joined forces with him, and on the way Theodoric defeated the Gepids at Sirmium in 489 and from there eventually made it to Italy where Theodoric's forces crushed Odoacer's forces first at Isonzo and then at Verona later in 489. Odoacer's forces however gained the upper hand and defeated Theodoric's at the Battle of Faenza in 490, though following this Theodoric still gained the upper hand and defeated Odoacer's forces at the Battle of the Adda River. After laying siege to Ravenna for years, Theodoric finally managed to capture it in 493, and following this he and Odoacer came to an agreement wherein both will rule over Italy while they too would share the palace at Ravenna. This was to be the case however until

Theodoric suddenly killed Odoacer in a banquet wherein Theodoric after making a toast drew his sword and cut down Odoacer from his collarbone to thigh, thus with Odoacer gone Theodoric was now the sole King of Italy.

Now as king with his own permanent kingdom, Theodoric settled his Ostrogoths across Italy and embarked on ambitious construction projects whether in his capital Ravenna, Rome, or in other parts of Italy. In Ravenna, Theodoric repaired the aqueduct and thus restored the city's water supply, and as an Arian Christian he extensively built churches and sites that promoted the faith such as the Arian Baptistery in Ravenna. Additionally, he also constructed his palace in Ravenna modelled after the Great Palace in Constantinople where he spent his childhood in while he too renovated many of the important landmarks in Rome. Although only ruling as king and not as an emperor, Theodoric styled himself to look as if he were an emperor, and this was by for example wearing the purple robes of a Roman emperor of the time, and true enough it was said that Theodoric's kingdom was the most "Roman" of the barbarian states of the time. As an Arian Christian ruler, Theodoric apparently turned out to be actually tolerant towards his subjects whether they were Arian or not as this was his way of maintaining diplomatic ties with the Eastern Roman Empire now ruled by Zeno's successor Anastasius I (r. 491-518) ever since Zeno's death in 491. Additionally, Theodoric too allowed Roman citizens within his kingdom to be subject to Roman law and the Roman judicial system while Goths were to live under their own laws and customs, which thus shows how tolerant he was as a ruler.

In the meantime, Theodoric also tried to maintain diplomatic ties with the other new barbarian kingdoms, and he did so by marriage as first of all he married Audofleda who was the sister of the Frankish king Clovis I (r. 481-511) while Theodoric also married off his sister Amalafida to the Vandal king Thrasamund (r. 496-523), and thus with his sister's marriage to the Vandal king the Vandal Kingdom in North Africa was under Theodoric's protection. From 504-505, Theodoric extended his realm into the Balkans by defeating the Gepids which thus allowed him to annex Pannonia into his kingdom. Meanwhile in 507, the Frankish king Clovis I defeated and killed the Visigoth king Alaric II in battle thus allowing the Franks to acquire Aquitaine from the Visigoths and the Visigoths only left with their holdings in Hispania. It then turns out that the son of Alaric II, Amalaric was the grandson of Theodoric as his mother was Theodoric's daughter, and so with his father's death, his grandfather Theodoric now became his regent. In 511, the Visigoth Kingdom in Hispania itself which was under Amalaric was brought under Theodoric's direct control, thus Theodoric now ruled a massive empire from the Atlantic Ocean to the Danube River. In 522, Theodoric further expanded his territory by invading the Burgundian Kingdom in Gaul as an act of retaliation for Theodoric's grandson Sigeric being killed by his father which was Theodoric's son-in-law Sigismund, thus after this the Burgundian Kingdom too fell under Theodoric's protection though not direct control as direct control over it fell to Theodoric's Arian ally Godomar.

The major problem Theodoric now faced was succession as his son-in-law and intended heir Eutharic died in 523 while his relations with the Eastern Roman Empire under Anastasius I's successor Justin I (r. 518-527) had worsened as despite Justin I maintaining good relations with Theodoric's Ostrogoth kingdom, Justin was under the

influence of his nephew Flavius Petrus Sabbatius- later known as Justinian- who saw Theodoric's Ostrogoth kingdom as illegitimate. In his last years, Theodoric had started growing extremely paranoid and no longer the tolerant leader he once was, and thus instead he turned out to be a fanatical Arian ruler, and this was mostly due to a result of a conspiracy by the still standing Roman Senate in Italy against him in 522. As part of his paranoia, Theodoric in 523 had the philosopher and court official Boethius and Boethius' father-in-law Symmachus arrested on charges of treason related to the plot by the senate whereas in the following year (524) Boethius was executed. Other than Boethius, Theodoric in 526 had Pope John I executed by starving him in his prison cell due to the pope establishing diplomatic ties with Justin I without Theodoric knowing about it.

Theodoric however would also meet his end in 526 at the age of 72 due to dysentery, and this was before he launched an expedition to restore his control over the Vandal Kingdom in North Africa as its new king Hilderic (r. 523-530) was not an Arian but a Catholic (Chalcedonian) Christian, thus he was no longer under Theodoric's protection. Theodoric here was succeeded by his 10-year-old grandson Athalaric who was under the regency of his mother Amalasuintha, Theodoric's daughter; and with Theodoric's death Ostrogoth rule over Hispania had ended as well and thus Theodoric's grandson Amalaric now ruled Visigoth Hispania alone, therefore both Italy and Hispania were now split from each other and no longer one major empire. Theodoric was thus buried in a grand mausoleum in Ravenna while he remains an important figure in Germanic heroic legend known as Dietrich von Bern.

This illustration depicts Theodoric the Amal as the King of the Ostrogoths as seen with the *Diadem* style crown he wears on his head and the scepter he holds on his right. This illustration was not based on one image of Theodoric but on multiple illustrations that depict him whereas his attire meanwhile is supposed to show him being a highly Romanized barbarian king. The attire of Theodoric here consists of a large late Roman style green *Chlamys* or mantle over his armor which is fastened on his right shoulder by a brooch known as a *Fibula* while on the front part of the Chlamys is a large embroidered square section known as a *Tablion*. Beneath the Chlamys is a set of scale armor for the body wherein attached to it on the upper arms and thighs are a set of leather tassels known as *Pteruges*. Beneath the armor, Theodoric is seen wearing a white tunic with gold trimmings whereas below he wears red trousers, leather greaves protecting his lower legs, and Roman style sandals. As for his hair, he is seen here having long blond hair, a beard, and a mustache which was based on an image from a medallion depicting him from Theodoric's time made from 491-501.

H-8 Flavius Belisarius (500-565)



One of the most, if not THE most influential Eastern Roman general was Flavius Belisarius from the 6th century who was instrumental in the ambitious Roman reconquests of North Africa and Italy under Emperor Justinian I the Great (r. 527-565) as Belisarius literally fought the wars in which the emperor Justinian never set foot in himself. In battle, Belisarius is best remembered for his smart military tactics in using deception against the enemy and making use of available resources in order to win battles. He was also known for using a great amount of Hun cavalry as well as Germanic Heruli cavalry warriors in his army as shock troops in battle as these people were known for their ferocity. Belisarius was born in Roman Thrace sometime between the years 500 and 505, entered military service at a young age by serving in the imperial bodyguard force known as the *Excubitors* under Emperor Justin I (r. 518-527) and following that under Justin I's nephew and successor Justinian I beginning 527, and at the beginning Belisarius worked together with a more senior general who was also once a member of the palace guard named Sittas.

Belisarius' first major campaigns were against the empire's eastern neighbor being the Sassanid Empire wherein he scored a major victory over them at the Battle of Dara in 530 by trapping the Sassanid cavalry in ditches thus slowing them down allowing Belisarius' fierce Hun cavalry to descend on them, though in the following year 531 his forces lost to the Sassanids at the Battle of Callinicum, which was not a great loss to the Romans as the emperor Justinian I concluded peace with the new Sassanid ruler or *shah* Khosrow I (r. 531-579). However, in 532 Belisarius further proved himself by crushing the

violent Nika Riot in Constantinople which ended with a brutal massacre of about 30,000 rioters who the imperial troops trapped in Constantinople's Hippodrome.

Following this, Belisarius was sent by the emperor Justinian with an army of around 15,000 to recapture North Africa from the Vandals in 533 and in only a year he succeeded in completely annexing the Vandal Kingdom including its capital Carthage to the Eastern Roman Empire. In the course of just a year, Belisarius crushed the Vandal army under their king Gelimer (r. 530-534) at the Battle of Ad Decimum, captured the Vandal capital Carthage, and later defeated Gelimer again at the Battle of Tricamarum outside Carthage. In North Africa, Belisarius did not order his troops to pillage to show that they came as Roman "liberators" and not as foreign invaders, especially since most of North Africa's population were still Roman descendants, though the Vandal king Gelimer was sent to Constantinople to be paraded in Belisarius' triumphal march but was at least spared and allowed to live in peaceful retirement.

With North Africa under Roman hands again, Justinian sent Belisarius to Italy which was under the Ostrogoth Kingdom in 535 with the mission to do the same in restoring it to Roman rule, however the campaign in Italy against the Ostrogoths went longer than planned. In 536, Belisarius was able to recapture Naples from the Ostrogoths and in 537 he retook Rome which for over a year he defended against the Ostrogoth army and at the end was successful. Belisarius scored further victories against the Ostrogoths in Italy between 538 and 540 despite mistrust breaking out between Belisarius and the other generals such as John and the eunuch Narses, and eventually the war culminated with Belisarius' capture of the Ostrogoth capital of Ravenna in 540 wherein the Ostrogoth king Vitiges (r. 536-540) was captured and brought to Constantinople as a prisoner.

After finishing his part in the Italian campaign against the Ostrogoths, Belisarius was reassigned by Justinian to the eastern frontier to battle the Sassanid Persians as war had resumed with them while in the meantime plague struck the Eastern Roman Empire which too at the same time devastated Italy and thus allowed a faction of the Ostrogoths that still remained there north of the Po River to undo the Eastern Roman campaign and rebuild their kingdom under a new king named Totila (r. 541-552) who even managed to recapture Rome from the Eastern Romans. In 544, Belisarius was sent by Justinian again to Italy to deal with the new Ostrogoth threat, and Belisarius true enough scored a number of victories and even recaptured Rome again from the Ostrogoths, but was not able to finish the war as he was recalled to Constantinople in 548 where he retired from military service and became a senator all while Italy was fully returned to Roman rule by 553 following the death of Totila in battle in 552 against the army led by Narses.

Belisarius however briefly returned to military service one last time in 559 when a group of Huns known as the *Kutrigurs* invaded Eastern Roman Thrace, and with no able general nearby, Belisarius was summoned by the very old Justinian to deal with this threat. With only an army of 300 mostly made up of local peasants and retired veterans, the much older Belisarius who also used his surroundings to his advantage by having his men hit the trees to release dust directed at the enemy was able to defeat this army of Huns and once again retire following this. However, in 562 Belisarius was accused of corruption, tried, and

imprisoned, but was shortly afterwards given full pardon by Justinian, though 3 years later in 565 Belisarius died just months before the emperor Justinian himself died.

This illustration of Belisarius depicts him during his time as a senator after 548 as he is seen wearing the minimalist white robes of a late Roman senator during this time which consists of a large outer cloak or mantle known as a *Chlamys* with a red panel at the center of it on both sides known as a *Tablion* and inside it a white tunic with black embroideries. However, to indicate his career as a general despite him not wearing armor here, he is seen holding a sword. This image was almost entirely based on the mosaic depicting Belisarius who stands next to the emperor Justinian I in the Basilica of San Vitale in Ravenna, Italy where Belisarius in the mosaic wears the exact same clothes while having the exact same facial features, hairstyle, and facial hair too, though the mosaic in Ravenna doesn't show him holding a sword.

H-9 Flavius Stilicho (359-408)



Flavius Stilicho, a half-Roman half-barbarian was one of the most influential men and powerful generals of late Roman history who had a dramatic rise to power but also a dramatic fall. Stilicho was born in 359 as the son of a Vandal cavalry officer in the Roman army and a provincial woman who was a Roman citizen, though despite his father's barbarian origins Stilicho considered himself to be a Roman above anything else, and although it is not clear what his religion was he was most likely a Nicene Christian which

explains why he was able to rise up the ranks in the army. Nothing is known about Stilicho's military career until the reign of Emperor Theodosius I (379-395) who ruled the Eastern half of the Roman Empire from Constantinople, and it was under Theodosius when Stilicho rose up the ranks even becoming close to the emperor himself that Stilicho possibly even became the personal aide of the emperor.

Stilicho's first known military campaigns was during Theodosius I's war against the Goths that had invaded the Roman Empire from when he came to power in 379 until 382 wherein Theodosius settled peace with the Goths and settled them in the empire. In 383, Theodosius I sent Stilicho as an envoy to the court of the Sassanid Empire's ruler or *shah* Shapur III (r. 383-388) to negotiate a peace settlement relating the partition of Armenia between the Romans and Sassanids, and due to the success of this mission, Stilicho when returning to Constantinople in 385 was promoted to the position of *Comes Domesticorum* which was a high-ranking military position. In 393, Theodosius further promoted Stilicho by giving him the rank of *Comes et Magister Utriusque Militae* which meant "Master of Soldiers", and this was given to Stilicho for his campaign against the Goths in the Balkans led by the rogue Visigoth Alaric who here was defeated and enlisted into the army by Theodosius as by this time, the Western Roman general Arbogast following the death of the Western Roman emperor Valentinian II in 392 rebelled and proclaimed his own puppet emperor named Eugenius. At this time as well, Theodosius married off his adopted niece Serena to Stilicho to form a kind of blood tie with Stilicho as Theodosius saw that Stilicho could be a valuable ally, and together Stilicho and Serena would have one son named Eucherius and two daughters named Maria and Thermantia.

Now as Arbogast and Eugenius had taken over the Western half of the empire following Valentinian II's death, Stilicho helped raise the Eastern Roman army of Theodosius I, and thus at the Battle of Frigidus in 394 between the forces of Theodosius I and that of Arbogast and Eugenius, Theodosius emerged victorious thanks to using Alaric and his Goths whereas Stilicho too was one of the commanders in the battle in Theodosius' side who also distinguished himself in it. Because of the bravery and skill Stilicho showed at the Battle of Frigidus, Theodosius now saw him as a man worthy of responsibility for the future safety of the empire, and true enough just 4 months after this battle Theodosius who ruled the entire Roman Empire alone since his victory at the battle unexpectedly died in January of 395. Shortly before his death as the last emperor to rule a united Roman Empire, Theodosius appointed Stilicho as the guardian for his younger son Honorius while also giving him the rank of "supreme commander" of the army. Following Theodosius I's death, the Roman Empire was permanently split in half between east and west among his two sons wherein the older one Arcadius would rule the east from Constantinople while the younger one Honorius would rule the Western half from Milan, and it was Honorius who Stilicho would be the guardian of until he came of age as Honorius here was only 10-years-old.

Stilicho however had his own ambitions as he not only wanted to be the guardian of Honorius which meant ruling the empire for him, rather he wanted to be in control of both Honorius and Arcadius who ruled the east, however when Arcadius came to power in 395 he had already been under the influence of the general Rufinus who was Stilicho's rival.

Despite having his ambitions, Stilicho already right after Honorius came to rule the west and thus becoming his guardian had many problems to deal with, most especially that of Alaric who in 395 went rogue after he was not given by Theodosius and Stilicho the rank he so wanted which was that of Magister Militum despite Alaric doing a lot for the late Theodosius in helping him win the Battle of Frigidus. As Alaric went rogue here in 395 he was proclaimed king by his own Visigoth troops and thus pillaged his way through the Balkans which therefore forced Stilicho to rush to the Balkans from Italy with an army to deal with Alaric. Stilicho thus managed to surround Alaric and his forces in Thessaly where he nearly defeated them, but before doing so he was ordered by the Eastern emperor Arcadius to return the Eastern Roman troops under his command back to Constantinople, and although not willing to do so as he was almost victorious, Stilicho still obeyed the orders anyway, although because of this Alaric managed to escape. The Eastern Roman troops however when returning to Constantinople suddenly murdered Arcadius' guardian Rufinus which was possibly an order given to them by Stilicho to remove his rival.

In the following year (396), Stilicho was back in the Western Roman Empire campaigning against the Franks and other Germanic tribes in Gaul in which he was successful, though in the next year (397) he returned to the Eastern Roman held Balkans to once again deal with the rogue Alaric. This time, Stilicho was able to defeat Alaric's forces in Macedonia but due to Stilicho being overconfident in his victory, Alaric escaped once again, this time to the surrounding mountains. In 398, Stilicho was back in the Western Empire and now being fully in charge of it with Honorius just his puppet, it was Stilicho who would deal with the rebellion of the Governor of North Africa Gildo who declared his intentions to secede North Africa (Carthage) from the Western Roman Empire and place it under the Eastern Roman Empire and thus supply its grain. Not allowing the Western Roman Empire to lose its grain supply which was the North African provinces under Gildo's control, Stilicho sent Gildo's rival brother Mascezel to North Africa to crush Gildo's rebellion in which Mascezel was successful at by capturing Gildo who fled the battle when defeated, and when captured Gildo was either executed or forced to commit suicide. However, despite Mascezel being victorious he was drowned to death back in Italy under mysterious circumstances wherein it is said that Stilicho had him drowned out of fear that Mascezel would one day do as his brother did and rebel. In 398 as well, Stilicho in order to further strengthen his ties with the ruling Theodosian Dynasty married off his daughter Maria to the Western emperor Honorius while some sources also say that Stilicho campaigned against the Picts in Britain in 398 in which the campaign went badly.

In 400 meanwhile, Stilicho had received the highest honor within the Roman state which was being appointed as consul for the year. However in 401, the Vandals and Alans have invaded the Western Roman Empire's border at Raetia and Noricum (Switzerland and Austria respectively) which thus forced Stilicho to lead his troops to confront them. With Stilicho and most of the troops of Western Rome gone defending the borders, Alaric who was in the Balkans saw this as an opportunity and thus invaded Italy in 402 going as far as to laying siege to Milan where the emperor Honorius was. When getting word of Alaric's invasion, Stilicho rushed back to Milan's defense and thus upon arrival in Milan, he broke Alaric's siege forcing Alaric to flee and having Honorius relocate the capital from Milan to the city of Ravenna in the swamps for further protection against invasions. Although Alaric

had fled, Stilicho would clash with him again at the Battle of Pollentia in Easter of 402 wherein Stilicho defeated Alaric's forces once again and even captured Alaric's camp, however Alaric once again escaped but despite this Stilicho celebrated a triumphal march in Rome which would be the last time a triumphal march would be held in Rome. Following this, Stilicho once again clashed with Alaric's forces this time in Verona, and although Alaric escaped once more, a truce was made wherein Alaric would return back to the Balkans so long as he and Stilicho will one day join forces to capture Illyria from the Eastern Roman Empire.

Although with Alaric's threat gone, Stilicho in 405 was forced to deal with another Gothic invasion of Italy, this time it was by Radagaisus who was the king of one of the Gothic tribes north of the Danube who here crossed the Danube and the Alps into Italy with a large army of Goths, Alans, Suebi, and Vandals. Stilicho was then forced to gather up an army of 20,000 to confront this invasion of Italy while Radagaisus split his forces in 3 divisions wherein the one he led laid siege to Florentia, and as Radagaisus was laying siege to Florentia, Stilicho managed to break the siege and capture Radagaisus and almost his entire force. Stilicho then had Radagaisus executed and thus enrolled 12,000 of the latter's men into the Roman army while the rest of Radagaisus' men including their families were sold off as slaves. In 406, Stilicho managed to return the eastern half of Illyricum in the Balkans which was under the Eastern Roman Empire to the control of the Western Roman Empire while at the end of that year as the Rhine River froze, a coalition of Vandals, Alans, Suebi, and Alemanni coming from Central Europe crossed the river into the Western Roman Empire due to the Rhine frontier being undefended as a result of many of the Western Roman Empire's troops being either slain in battle in the previous years or continuously being asked to join Stilicho on campaign.

The invasion of Gaul by these barbarian tribes therefore triggered a Roman military rebellion in Britain in 407 led by Constantine III who proclaimed himself emperor against Honorius as a result of the emperor not responding quick enough to deal with this invasion of Gaul all while Stilicho took the blame for this massive invasion due to previously having to pull out troops from their positions in defending the empire's borders to fight his wars. As Constantine III crossed over from Britain into Gaul, Stilicho sent his subordinate general the Gothic chieftain Sarus to deal with Constantine, and although Sarus was initially successful, a relief force of Constantine drove Sarus back to Italy, thus Stilicho was forced to seal off the Alps in order to prevent Constantine from invading Italy. Meanwhile, Alaric once again threatened to invade Italy if he did not receive a large amount of gold from the Western Roman Senate, though the Senate this time preferred to battle out Alaric rather than paying him off, however Stilicho here persuaded the senators to give into Alaric's demands. Although the Senate finally gave in to Alaric's demands and thus paid him off, Stilicho's reputation among the Senate was forever ruined as from here on the Senate was infuriated with Stilicho for letting them give in to the demands of a barbarian, and thus many of the senators and aristocracy would begin suspecting that Stilicho due to his barbarian blood was sympathetic to the barbarians and thus made a deal with their enemy Alaric.

Furthermore in May of 408, the Eastern Roman emperor Arcadius had died and thus Stilicho had thought of placing his son Eucherius on the Eastern Roman throne to succeed Arcadius, thus this was the last straw for the Senate and the aristocrats who now truly saw Stilicho as an ambitious barbarian who wanted to rule the whole empire for himself. At this point, even Honorius himself who here had fallen under the influence of his advisor Olympius had also turned against his guardian Stilicho as Olympius had been convincing him that Stilicho was evil and that together with Alaric they planned to seize the empire whereas Honorius too began growing suspicious of Stilicho for choosing to pay off Alaric and make a deal with him, not being able to crush the rebellion of Constantine III, and worst of all wanting to place his son on the Eastern Roman throne. True enough, even Stilicho's forces mutinied against him by killing 7 senior military officers while in August of 408, Honorius having enough of Stilicho passed his death sentence. When hearing that he was to be executed, Stilicho did not resist and allowed himself to be executed in Ravenna on August 22 of 408 as he saw when he would die, he would die for Rome. Shortly after Stilicho's execution, his wife Serena and son Eucherius were executed as well while without any strong general around which was namely Stilicho, Alaric once again invaded Italy and this time sacked Rome in 410.

This illustration of Flavius Stilicho was based on the ivory diptych carving from 395 which depicts Stilicho on the right panel and on the left panel his wife Serena and son Eucherius. The position of Stilicho as well as his facial features and attire here in this illustration was patterned after how Stilicho is depicted in this said panel. Here, Stilicho is seen wearing an ornate red mantle or *Chlamys* with gold circle embroideries which is fastened on his right shoulder by a golden brooch known as a *Fibula*. Beneath the *Chlamys*, Stilicho is wearing a standard white late Roman tunic with red embroideries whereas this tunic is held together by a black leather belt which here has a pouch on the right side, and as for his legs he is wearing white stockings which extend all the way to the toes while his shoes are the same kinds as seen in the panel depicting him. Stilicho here, just like in the panel is seen holding a large oval shield on his left side while his right hand holds a long spear or *Hasta* which in this illustration has a shaft with alternating red and yellow colors, while here he is also seen with his *Spatha* longsword sheathed on his left side. The face of Stilicho in this illustration too was based on the panel which depicts him with short hair and a short beard, and here to highlight his Germanic barbarian blood he is seen here having blond hair.

H-10 Maurice, Eastern Roman emperor (582-602)



Flavius Maurice Tiberius who would be Eastern Roman emperor from 582-602 was born in Cappadocia in 539 to a Cappadocian-Greek family that spoke Greek and when grown up he was destined for a military career. Maurice was first mentioned as a *Notarius* or secretary of the Commander of the Excubitors Tiberius, and when Tiberius became the *Caesar* or co-emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire following the abdication of the emperor Justin II (r. 565-574) in 574, Maurice succeeded Tiberius as the *Comes Excubitorum* or basically the commander of the imperial guard force. In 577, Maurice was appointed as the *Magister Militum per Orientem* or supreme military commander of the eastern forces, as here the Eastern Romans were engaged in a bloody war against their eastern neighbor, the Sassanid Empire. Tiberius II became the senior emperor or *Augustus* of the Eastern Roman Empire in 578 following Justin II's death while Maurice for the next 4 years would be busy campaigning against the Sassanids fighting battle after battle wherein he won many battles but was recalled back to Constantinople in 582 when getting word that the emperor Tiberius II fell ill. At his deathbed, Tiberius named Maurice as his successor by offering his daughter Constantina to marry Maurice.

The empire Maurice inherited however was troubled on all fronts as first of all the Sassanid threat continued in the east, the Balkans were constantly devastated by the raids of the Avars and their Slav allies, Eastern Roman Italy was almost entirely lost to the Lombards, and the remains of Eastern Roman Hispania almost completely lost, and although Maurice's solution was to refuse paying tributes to the empire's enemies the way his predecessor Tiberius II did due to Maurice being a strict military man, he soon saw it as

foolish as it cost a lot of men, and thus he resorted to paying tribute to the Avars in the north who even tried attacking Thessaloniki in 584, though Maurice's decision to pay tribute would lead to bankrupting the empire. With the empire attacked on all sides, Maurice appointed the best generals the empire could have to take care of the borders and expel the enemies, while at the same time to further protect the empire, Maurice in 584 created the Exarchate System. In this new reform, Eastern Roman Italy and North Africa were to be their own semi-independent states under a governor known as an *Exarch* who had almost the same authority as an emperor but had still answered directly to the emperor, and this reform was made in order to further protect territories in Italy, North Africa, and Hispania which were too far away for the emperor in Constantinople to protect.

In the meantime, due to the Eastern Romans scoring a large number of victories against the Sassanids in the east, the Sassanid ruler or *shah* Hormizd IV was overthrown in 590 when his general Bahram Chobin who being defeated in battle against the Eastern Romans and humiliated by Hormizd rose up against him. Hormizd was later killed while his son Khosrow fled to Eastern Roman territory as Bahram took over the Sassanid throne, and when in the Eastern Roman Empire Khosrow managed to make an alliance with Maurice who sent Khosrow an army of 35,000 which then defeated Bahram's forces in 591. Khosrow II now came to rule the Sassanid Empire and due to Maurice assisting him in taking power back, both Eastern Roman and Sassanid Empires agreed to an alliance with each other and to further thank Maurice for helping him, Khosrow surrendered most of Armenia to the Eastern Romans, thus enlarging Eastern Roman territory.

With the Sassanid problem taken care of, Maurice returned his attention to the north to once again deal with the Avars who have resumed attacking the Eastern Roman Balkans together with their allied Slavs and Gepids, and here a number of victories were scored against them by the general Priscus and Maurice's brother Peter. Although Maurice's reign saw a lot of military success, he was not very successful in diplomacy especially with the pope Gregory I who Maurice insulted for poorly defending Rome against the Lombards causing the pope to make a treaty with the Lombards behind the emperor's back. In the meantime, perhaps one of the greatest achievements of Maurice was in compiling a book on military strategies known as the *Strategikon* in around 600 which explained the battle tactics and cultural traits of all the enemies of the empire whether they were Germanic people, Avars, Slavs, Sassanid Persians, Huns, or others, and this book is still a useful military manual until today. However, it would apparently be one of the strategies in this book that would lead to Maurice's own downfall as this strategy here was when it came to battling the Avars and Slavs which said that the best time to attack them was during winter wherein the Eastern Roman army would have to set up camp across the Danube River border to prevent them from crossing.

This order by Maurice only led to the soldiers growing more and more discontent especially since not only were they forced to stay in enemy territory during the winter of 602 wherein they were usually permitted to return home, but more so because they were not paid due to the empire's treasury running out. The soldiers in the Danube rather than fulfilling their duties turned on Maurice after being persuaded by a low-ranking centurion (army captain) named Phocas who a large number of soldiers rallied under and marched

towards Constantinople. Phocas at first declared that he was heading to Constantinople to depose Maurice and replace him with the latter's son Theodosius, but as Phocas approached the capital, the people backed by the Senate and the Blue and Green chariot racing factions all rioted in favor of Phocas. Maurice and his family escaped by boat to the Asian shore across Constantinople, but when arriving they were caught by Phocas' soldiers and brought back to Constantinople. Maurice's wife Constantina and their daughters were sent to a nunnery while Maurice after witnessing the beheading of his 6 sons was beheaded too by the order of Phocas. With Maurice killed in 602, Phocas usurped power as the new emperor and purged the government of anyone loyal to Maurice to secure his position all while the Sassanid ruler and ally of Maurice Khosrow II used Maurice's death as his reason to resume war with the Eastern Romans, and the moment Khosrow heard of Maurice's death, he declared war on the Eastern Romans. Maurice's memory though would be avenged in 610 when Heraclius the Younger, son of the Exarch of Africa and Maurice's loyal general Heraclius the Elder sailed to Constantinople and usurped power killing the usurper Phocas in the process and becoming emperor.

In this illustration, the emperor Maurice wears gilded scaled armor with his purple imperial mantle or *Chlamys* over it, in which the mantle was the standard uniform worn by emperors of his time, which too has the addition of a large golden embroidery panel studded with jewels known as a *Tablion*. The purple mantle Maurice wears is fastened by a golden brooch or *Fibula* with a gem at the center seen on his right shoulder. The purple socks covering his lower legs as well as the red boots also show he is an emperor. In order to portray Maurice as the military emperor he was as he was in fact the first Eastern Roman emperor in a hundred years to lead armies in battle, he is seen wearing scale armor here with red leather *Ptergues* or tassels attached to it both protecting his upper arms and thighs, and underneath the armor is a white tunic with golden trimmings as worn by emperors of this time wherein here only the sleeves and bottom part of his inner tunic are visible. The sword meanwhile is another addition to the illustration to also show he is a military emperor. At the same time, this illustration shows Maurice as a large sized man with a large round face, a short beard, and curly hair. The design of the imperial crown Maurice is wearing here as well as his dark colored beard and thick curly hair was based on the image of the face of Maurice from the 15th century manuscript which is a copy of John Zonaras' *History* known as the *Codex Mutinensis Graecus 122* which features miniature portraits of Roman emperors from Augustus Caesar in 27BC to the last Byzantine emperor Constantine XI Palaiologos in 1453 and is found at the Biblioteca Estense in Modena, Italy.

H-J Constantius II, Eastern Roman emperor (337-361)



As the son of the first Roman emperor to rule from Constantinople which was Constantine I the Great (r. 306-337), Constantius II can be considered as the 2nd Eastern Roman (Byzantine) emperor as he was the son of Constantine that ruled from Constantinople. Constantius was born in 317 in Sirmium (in today's Serbia) as the second son of Constantine the Great with his second wife the empress Fausta, and from a young age Constantius was already assigned to military command in the east by his father, while earlier on in 324 Constantius who being only 7-years-old here was already made a *Caesar* by his father. With the death of Constantine the Great in 337, Constantius here being 20 was the first to make it back to the capital Constantinople from protecting the empire's eastern border against the Sassanid Empire since 335; and when back in Constantinople, he supposedly ordered a massacre of his uncles and male cousins to prevent a power struggle in the future, though he spared 3 male cousins due to their young age and also due to the fact that they could be trained to serve the empire in the future.

Shortly after, Constantius II agreed to divide the Roman Empire into 3 parts wherein Constantius was to rule the eastern provinces including Thrace, Greece, Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt from Constantinople; his older brother Constantine II over the Western provinces being Gaul, Britain, and Hispania; and the youngest brother Constans over Italy, North Africa, and most of the Balkans, and all 3 brothers were to rule as *co-Augusti* or senior emperors. Already at the beginning of his reign as the Augustus in the east, Constantius II put all his attention into battling the Sassanid Empire wherein he would spend most of his time away from Constantinople and campaigning in the eastern border

defending it from Sassanid invasions led by the Sassanid ruler or *shah* Shapur II (r. 309-379). In this war which began in 337 with the Sassanids laying siege to the Roman city of Nisibis in Mesopotamia, the Sassanids despite laying siege to several eastern cities in the Roman Empire did not achieve much, and at the end Constantius II succeeded in pushing back Shapur II's invasion. In the meantime, the eldest brother Constantine II greedy for more territory attacked Italy which was controlled by the youngest brother Constans only for Constantine II to get killed in an ambush in 340, thus leaving Constans in control of the entire west including his own original provinces.

Constans however would only rule for 10 more years as in 350, his general Magnentius with a large army loyal to him rebelled and assassinated Constans whereas Magnentius afterwards proclaimed himself emperor of the west. Constantius II however did not recognize the usurper Magnentius as emperor and so in the meantime as Constantius was away battling the Sassanids, he appointed a trusted general named Vetricius as his temporary co-emperor just to defend the Balkans from Magnentius. At the end of 350, Constantius returned to the Balkans whereas Vetricius stepped down dutifully thus allowing Constantius in 351 to march deep into the Balkans wherein he would meet Magnentius and his forces at the Battle of Mursa Major- which was one of the bloodiest battles ever fought between Roman troops- and at the end Constantius won the battle despite losing a lot of men, though Magnentius survived and escaped to Italy. Constantius however did not yet pursue Magnentius after winning the battle, rather he marched north to the Danube in 352 to defend it against Sarmatian raids, and after taking care of the Sarmatian threat he returned to campaigning against the usurper Magnentius. Once Constantius chased Magnentius and his men out of Italy, Magnentius was eventually defeated again by Constantius' forces in 353 at the Battle of Mons Seleucus in Southern Gaul wherein the defeated Magnentius then committed suicide.

Now as the sole Augustus, Constantius II in 354 campaigned against the Germanic Alemanni tribe at the Danube border which was a success for him, though at the same time his religious policies caused further division in the empire as he favored the Arian sect of Christianity which was seen as heretical over Nicene Christianity, and true enough Constantius was even considered an Arian Christian. In Constantius II's reign, Arian missionaries who were not very much accepted in Roman territory were sent to lands beyond the Roman Empire such as the lands of the Goths in Eastern Europe wherein a large number of Goths ended up converting to Arian Christianity. Constantius II too on the other hand had passed a series of laws that favored Arian Christianity but had also targeted the old Pagan faith as some of these laws ordered that Pagan temples be shut down and Pagan sacrifices banned, however these anti-Pagan laws were not really well received by some of the population as by this point the old religion was still rather popular. Additionally, Constantius II too was known to have passed some laws against Jews, although none of them were harsh, but rather it made things more difficult for Jews.

Having too much responsibilities ruling the Roman Empire as a whole, Constantius II appointed his surviving male cousin Constantius Gallus- who was not murdered in 337- to be Caesar in the Eastern provinces ever since 351 before Constantius set off to battle against Magnentius, and thus to seal the alliance Constantius' older sister Constantina was

married to Gallus. Constantius however eventually received shocking reports of Gallus' bad behavior including corruption and cruelty towards his subjects and more so of plotting against Constantius, and thus Constantius ordered Gallus and his wife Constantina to come over to Milan where Constantius based himself in. Constantina however died on the way west and following her death, Gallus hesitated to travel west but eventually did, but on the way to Italy he was arrested by Constantius' troops under the general Barbatio and executed in 354 despite Constantius changing his mind to execute him but it was too late as the order to not execute him did not come in time. In the meantime, in 355 the general Claudius Silvanus who previously served Magnentius but surrendered to Constantius in 353 in exchange for being given the rank of *Magister Militum* (Master of Soldiers) revolted in Gaul after bribing off invading Germanic tribes to support him. Constantius here dealt with Silvanus by sending his other general Ursicinus to Gaul to trick Silvanus, and thus Silvanus' rebellion ended with him being killed as a result of Ursicinus bribing Silvanus' troops to turn him over.

In need for another Caesar this time for the west due to having to face all these headaches, Constantius in 355 appointed his last surviving male cousin Julian who was Gallus' half-brother as his new Caesar thus Constantius married off his younger sister Helena to Julian, and although Julian was at first seen as unfit due to being a serious scholar with no experience in government and military, he was surprisingly capable as Julian managed to expel an Alemanni invasion of Gaul in 357 at the Battle of Strasbourg which thus made him highly popular among his army. Constantius in the meantime in 357 defeated a Sarmatian and Quadi invasion in the Danube River, while during the same year he also visited Rome for the first time in his life. When in Rome, Constantius received envoys from the Sassanid shah Shapur II to return the lands he took from the Sassanids in his previous campaign, and although Constantius tried to avert war with the Sassanids by sending envoys to Shapur II with peace offerings, it failed as Shapur simply launched another invasion of Roman Mesopotamia. Constantius II thus was forced to return east to waging war with the Sassanid Persians in 359 all while the Sassanid forces captured the Eastern Roman fortress city of Amida after a 73-day siege; while in the previous year (358), a massive earthquake razed the city of Nicomedia in Asia Minor to the ground just before Constantius was to hold a Church Council there, thus the council was cancelled.

With limited troops for his renewed campaign against the Sassanids, Constantius decided to test Julian's loyalty by asking for a large reinforcement army, but rather than coming to Constantius' aid, Julian's soldiers who were in Gaul with Julian in 360 proclaimed Julian as Augustus against Constantius following another victory of Julian over the Alemanni. Although Constantius at first tried to find ways to reason with Julian, he eventually saw this as a declaration of war, thus Constantius abandoned his campaign against the Sassanids and marched west while Julian and his forces marched east from Gaul, but before both forces met in battle, Constantius fell ill in a town in Southern Asia Minor where he died in 361 at the age of 44, and shortly before his death he named his cousin Julian his successor as he had no sons and to also avoid civil war. Julian thus succeeded Constantius II as the sole emperor of the Roman Empire, and as Julian reached the capital Constantinople, he had Constantius buried at the Church of the Holy Apostles next to his father Constantine the Great.

This illustration of Constantius II was heavily based on a depiction of him from the *Missorium of Kerch*, though the main difference between the image of Constantius on the missorium and in this colored illustration is that he is not seen riding a horse but instead standing up. The outfit Constantius wears in this illustration being an ornate tunic with a jeweled belt and sash is exactly what he is seen wearing in the missorium depicting him and so is the *Diadem* crown he is wearing, however since the missorium does not present a colored version of him, his gold-brown tunic with purple for the trimmings was based on hypothesis while purple which is also the color of his pants in this illustration is to indicate that he is an emperor. In this illustration, Constantius is seen holding a golden spear which the missorium also shows him wielding as he is on his horse, though this illustration has the addition of a sheathed ornate imperial *Spatha* sword which is not seen in the missorium. The facial features and hairstyle of Constantius in this illustration was based off on his facial features and hairstyle as seen in the missorium as well as in other coins and busts of him. Since the 4th century Roman historian Ammianus Marcellinus had also described Constantius II as “peculiarly long of body and short in the leg”, he is depicted that way in this illustration.

H-Q Empress Pulcheria (399-453)



The Eastern Roman empress Aelia Pulcheria who would later rule as her brother Emperor Theodosius II's (r. 408-450) regent and later as empress-regent for the Eastern

Roman Empire was born in 399 into the ruling Theodosian Dynasty as the daughter of the Eastern Roman emperor Arcadius (r. 395-408) and his wife Aelia Eudoxia. In 404, Pulcheria's mother the empress Aelia Eudoxia died while in 408 it was her father the emperor Arcadius that died, and thus in 408 her younger brother Theodosius II was left as the sole ruler of the Eastern Roman Empire at only 7-years-old. Due to Theodosius II's young age, control over the empire's government matters was left to the *Prefect* (mayor) of Constantinople Flavius Anthemius while the Persian imperial chamberlain Antiochus was tasked to educate the young emperor. By 414 however, the prefect Anthemius disappeared from the historical records, thus here at this point Pulcheria who now had come of age took Anthemius' place as her brother's guardian not only personally but for government affairs as well, thus the young Theodosius II here proclaimed his older sister as his *Augusta* or empress.

At the same time too in 414, Pulcheria and her other sisters had taken a vow of virginity as a way to keep off potential suitors which would also mean keeping away a potential husband who may be a threat to Theodosius' power in the future; and now following taking her vow of virginity she would therefore advise her brother in terms of religious matters. Due to Pulcheria and her sisters taking a vow of virginity, the imperial court of Theodosius II had somewhat turned into monastery in terms of atmosphere. For Pulcheria, it was her duty to train her brother Theodosius II to not only be a successful emperor but a pious Christian ruler as well, though in this sense Pulcheria would turn out to be the fanatical Christian power behind her brother's rule, and true enough her influence over her brother was mostly ecclesiastical. It was under Pulcheria's influence for instance that Theodosius II held the important Church Council at Ephesus in 431. Under Pulcheria's influence too, Theodosius II passed anti-Jewish laws such as one that forbade the construction of synagogues and required the destruction of those in existence. In one instance, Theodosius II and Pulcheria ordered the execution of a group of Jews after strife among Christians in Palestine. However, Pulcheria was also known for her philanthropy wherein she had erected many churches- wherein some survive today- and homes for the poor in the Eastern Roman capital Constantinople.

In the meantime, her time as Augusta was also marked by war against the Sassanid Persian Empire in the east, although with her in charge of the empire during that war from 421-422, it had inconclusive results except that her virginity was used as a propaganda tool for Roman troops as due to her who devoted herself to God being their leader, the hand of God would help the Roman troops in battle against the Sassanids. In the meantime, it was also Pulcheria that arranged for Theodosius to marry a woman named Athenais- renamed Eudocia- in which they married in 421, however over the years a strong rivalry grew between Eudocia and Pulcheria motivated by Eudocia's envy towards Pulcheria's power in court. Even later on in Theodosius II's reign despite him being fully grown up, he would still rely on Pulcheria's influence, until his wife Eudocia and eunuch minister Chrysaphius gained the upper hand over him as both convinced him to rely less on his sister but rather on them more.

Pulcheria would however return to being the power behind Theodosius II when Theodosius' wife Eudocia left him for good for a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 443, and her

influence would once again be seen in 449 when she influenced her brother to summon another council at Ephesus to resolve religious disputes. In the following year (450) however, Theodosius II had died from a horse-riding accident after a rule of 42 years, and thus for the next few months Pulcheria was in charge of the Eastern Roman Empire as empress-regent as Theodosius II died having no sons to succeed him, thus it was up to his sister Pulcheria to handle the succession. Although having taken a vow of virginity years ago, Pulcheria had no choice but to be married to continue the succession, and so she married the military officer of low birth Marcian at the suggestion of the influential Germanic general Aspar, another power behind the rule of the late Theodosius II. Marcian thus became the new emperor after marrying Pulcheria on the condition that he did not break her vow of virginity, and in order for their marriage to not seem scandalous, the Church proclaimed that Christ himself sponsored their union.

Following their marriage and Marcian becoming emperor, the eunuch Chrysaphius who was Pulcheria's rival was executed. In their reign, Marcian and Pulcheria were most famous for convening the Church Council of Chalcedon in 451 which finally established a new doctrine on Christ's natures, and thus Marcian and Pulcheria were respectively hailed as the "new Constantine" and "new Helena". In her last years, Pulcheria devoted herself to the *Theotokos* (Virgin Mary) and had 3 churches in Constantinople constructed and dedicated to her. Pulcheria then died in 453 in Constantinople while her death had shocked the capital's inhabitants as she had formed a bond with them. After her death, she was declared a saint wherein she is venerated in both Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches.

This illustration of the empress Pulcheria was not based on any image of her from her time but rather from the image of Serena, the wife of the early 5th century late Roman general Flavius Stilicho from the ivory diptych depicting them wherein Stilicho is on the right and Serena with their son on the left. Here in this illustration, Pulcheria's more simplistic and modest style of dress only consisting of two colors and less jewelry is supposed to reflect her personality as a pious Christian as well as her vow of virginity. What Pulcheria wears here is simply a long and loose white tunic-dress with short sleeves and over that a red outer mantle known as a *Palla*. As for her jewelry, Pulcheria doesn't appear to be wearing much except for a simple pearl necklace, jeweled bracelets, and a jeweled belt holding her dress up whereas her hair is tied up in a circular formation like most late Roman hairstyles for women while she too wears a pair of earrings.

H-K Justinian I the Great, Eastern Roman emperor (527-565)



Perhaps already THE MOST influential and well-known figure in Eastern Roman (Byzantine) history is Emperor Justinian I the Great who ruled the Eastern Roman Empire at its height of power in the 6th century. Justinian the Great too is the person synonymous with Eastern Roman history, and this is for so many reasons as it was under the highly energetic and ambitious 38-year reign of Justinian when Eastern Rome reached its height of territorial extent spanning the entire Mediterranean Sea and not to mention at its height as a cultural superpower, while out of all the Eastern Roman emperors it is Justinian I who had left behind such a great legacy that lives on today as seen with landmarks like the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople and the mosaics of Ravenna which were great feats of architecture and art that were made under his rule. More significantly, Justinian had left behind his code of laws known as the *Corpus Juris Civilis* which until today serves as a basis for the structure of modern law. Now, no matter how brilliant and influential Justinian I was, he too had an impressive and surprising origin story coming from low-birth being born to a peasant family in the Balkans (today's North Macedonia) in 482 with the name Flavius Petrus Sabbatius.

Petrus' uncle Justin however travelled to Constantinople earlier on to escape both poverty and his farm being attacked by barbarians, and in Constantinople Justin somehow ended up joining the exclusive imperial guard force known as the *Excubitors* where he served in it for about 40 years under the Eastern Roman emperors namely Zeno (r. 474-475/ 476-491) and Anastasius I (r. 491-518). When serving in the Excubitors, Justin rose up the ranks to the point of becoming the commander of the Excubitors while also gaining a

lot of wealth after being a hardened war veteran fighting many wars, and during his time in the Excubitors, Justin now becoming rich too had his family including the young Petrus moved to Constantinople. Petrus was then adopted by Justin thus changing his name to "Justinian" in honor of his uncle, and as Justin was a hardened soldier, his nephew Justinian spent his time studying politics, law, history, and theology apparently receiving the best education. Things would however take a complete turn for both Justin and Justinian in 518 when the emperor Anastasius I died, and with the emperor having no children, it was Justin as the head of the palace guards who succeeded as emperor after of course bribing the other palace guards to support him.

Justin I despite his low birth and still being illiterate despite him serving in the palace guard for decades was now the emperor, although his much learned nephew Justinian was the power behind his policy-making whether domestic or foreign, and it was true enough Justinian who helped Justin make decisions especially when it involved strengthening the position of the Chalcedonian (Orthodox) Christian faith, attacking their main enemy being the Sassanid Persian Empire in the east through proxy wars using neighboring smaller kingdoms, and most notably reconciling with the Church of Rome in 519. With Justin becoming emperor, his nephew Justinian succeeded him as the new commander of the palace guard force despite Justinian having no military background, then in 520 Justinian secretly killed off the ex-fugitive general Vitalian who Justin pardoned since Justinian knew in advance that Vitalian would be a threat to his uncle and possibly later on to his own rule. In 521, Justinian was consul for the year and soon enough, he met the love of his life being the former actress Theodora who was 18 years younger than him. At this time, it was forbidden by law for patrician men like Justinian here at this point to marry actresses who were seen as at the bottom of society, although Justinian had his uncle revise this law which he did and thus Justinian and Theodora married in 525.

In 527, Justinian was made his uncle's co-emperor shortly before his uncle Justin I died, and thus Justinian I at age 45 was emperor with his wife Theodora as his empress, and already as his reign began Justinian would not stop working on making policies and planning out new construction projects which is why he would be remembered as the "emperor that never slept". Only 2 years into his reign in 529, Justinian ordered the ambitious project of the codification of all Roman laws since the time of Augustus Caesar in the 1st century AD into one universal law code known as the "Corpus Juris Civilis", and this code of laws was to make all laws made by the Roman emperors of the past more consistent while it also removed repetitive elements but also added new ones especially since Justinian's laws were to be favorable to Orthodox Christians though discriminating against the heretical Christian branches such as the Monophysites and Arians, Pagans, and Jews, and in charge of compiling these laws into one code was the brilliant jurist Tribonian. On the other hand, Justinian focused a lot on financial policy wherein he wanted to put an end to the rich getting tax exemptions and the poor having to suffer, thus Justinian appointed the iron-fisted John the Cappadocian as the finance minister who was said to have tortured rich tax evaders to force them to pay up their taxes, which turned out to be successful. Theodora too had an active role in her husband's reign by advising him in passing laws which protected women's rights, especially for actresses as she was one before.

In the meantime, Justinian too could not do everything at the same time, especially if it meant going to battle, so rather than leading the troops in battle himself as Justinian preferred to remain as a “palace emperor”, he appointed highly competent generals to lead the army such as the Thracian Flavius Belisarius who at such a young age already possessed so much military skill. Now by the time Justinian I came to power, war broke out with their eastern neighbor being the Sassanid Empire over control of Armenia and Georgia (then the Kingdoms of Lazica and Iberia), although in 530 the Eastern Roman army led by the young Belisarius scored a decisive victory at the Battle of Dara in Syria over the Sassanids, though in the following year 531 Belisarius’ forces lost to a larger Sassanid army at the Battle of Callinicum. The war with the Sassanids though came to an end also in 531 when their ruler or *shah* Kavad I died, and as his son took over as the new shah Khosrow I, a peace deal was made with the Eastern Romans known as an “eternal peace” wherein Justinian was to pay the Sassanids an annual tribute of 11,000 pounds of gold as Khosrow also knew Justinian had ambitions to reconquer the now lost Western Roman provinces, thus to cripple Justinian would mean forcing him to pay a heavy tribute.

The first real test though to Justinian’s reign came in 532 with the “Nika Riot” which was carried out by Constantinople’s rival Green and Blue chariot racing factions which now had turned into unruly and dangerous political parties supported by powerful senators and aristocrats. Here in 532, as Justinian tried to limit the power of both factions despite being a strong supporter of the Blues by executing the leaders of a previous riot, the execution failed thus leading to further rioting that went on for days burning down most of the city including the old Hagia Sophia cathedral and the palace’s main gate while liberating prisoners as well. Justinian at first tried to appease the rioters by firing both the finance minister John the Cappadocian and the jurist Tribonian as these people who hated them wanted them out of power in the first place. However, despite John and Tribonian being “fired”, the people still continued rioting and burning down the city and even proclaiming Hypatius who was a nephew of the former emperor Anastasius I as emperor that Justinian came to the point of contemplating to flee the city by boat even if it meant losing the throne as he could possibly take it back only for Theodora to object by making a speech saying that it would be better to die royal than shamefully lose the throne. This speech of Theodora then made Justinian decide on dealing with the violent rioting with violence thus making Justinian send out the troops commanded by no other than Belisarius as well as the barbarian-descended general Mundus, and the eunuch Narses to kill off the rioters by trapping them in the Hippodrome, and true enough at the end about 30,000 rioters were slain. With the riots over, Justinian had the conspirators behind it including Hypatius executed, John and Tribonian restored to their positions, and most of the city rebuilt as Justinian saw the destruction of the city from the riots as an opportunity to rebuild the capital in a much grander scale. Part of Justinian’s construction projects here was to rebuild the Hagia Sophia into a massive and stunning church like no other before it, and to do the job he hired the Greek mathematicians Anthemius of Tralles and Isidore of Miletus, who however as mathematicians never constructed anything in their lives, especially a structure so large and grand. The construction of the Hagia Sophia however required endless funds, thus to fund this, Justinian set his eyes on conquering the Vandal Kingdom in North Africa

which was once a Roman province until it fell to the Germanic barbarian Vandals about a century earlier.

Justinian too would only declare war and invade a foreign power if there was a just reason to do so, and in this case with the Vandals, their former king Hilderic (r. 523-530) who was an ally of Justinian was overthrown in 530 by the former's cousin Gelimer. Now to punish Gelimer for usurping the Vandal throne, Justinian in 533 sent Belisarius with an army of about 16,000 to invade North Africa coming from Constantinople, and in surprisingly only a year Belisarius crushed the Vandal army, captured their capital Carthage, and forced Gelimer to surrender thus sending Gelimer off to Constantinople where he was paraded in Belisarius' triumphal march and presented to Justinian, although Gelimer was spared and allowed to live peacefully in retirement at an estate in Asia Minor whereas Justinian's ally the former Vandal king Hilderic was found dead in prison by the time Belisarius arrived in North Africa. By 534, the entire Vandal Kingdom which consisted of parts of North Africa, Sardinia, Corsica, and the Balearic Islands was wiped off the map and annexed to the Eastern Roman Empire while all the loot taken from it was used to construct the Hagia Sophia church and other structures Justinian had in mind.

Just a year after the conquest of the Vandal Kingdom however in 535, Justinian got word that in the Ostrogoth Kingdom of Italy, his other ally being the queen-regent Amalasuintha was killed in her bath by the anti-Roman faction of the Ostrogoth nobility led by her cousin Theodahad who then became the new Ostrogoth king. Not recognizing the new King of Italy and also having had the dream of restoring Italy and particularly Rome where the Roman civilization all began back to Roman hands, Justinian here in 535 once again sent Belisarius with the mission of conquering Italy counting on him as he easily conquered North Africa from the Vandals. The conquest of Italy however was not as easy for Belisarius as it was with North Africa as the Ostrogoth armies kept going back and forth across the land while Justinian sent reinforcements to Italy as the war progressed while for the Ostrogoths, their king Theodahad was assassinated in 536 and thus replaced as king by Vitiges. Meanwhile in 536, the mysterious event happened wherein light from the sun was partially blocked by a thick cloud of ash that covered the sky for about the entire year which eventually caused crop failures, and although no one knew what it was back then, modern science explained that it was caused by several volcanic eruptions that happened across the world. In 537 meanwhile, the Hagia Sophia cathedral with its first "flat-shaped" dome was completed in just 5 years, although not completely decorated yet but as Justinian entered it for the first time, he was reported to have shouted "Solomon, I have outdone you". Back in Italy however, despite Belisarius getting into minor conflicts with the other Eastern Roman generals such as Narses and John, the conquest of at least most of Italy was successful culminating in 540 with Belisarius' capture of the Ostrogoth capital which was once the Western Roman capital Ravenna- until the fall of Western Rome in 476- and here the Ostrogoth king Vitiges like Gelimer before him was shipped off to Constantinople and paraded in Belisarius' triumphal parade.

However, despite the Eastern Roman victory over the Ostrogoths in Italy which returned most of Italy up until the Po River in the north back to Roman hands, the Sassanid shah Khosrow I in 540 broke the "eternal peace" with Justinian and once again declared

war due to the Armenians living along the border of both Eastern Roman and Sassanid Empires not happy with Justinian's rule and preferring Khosrow over him, while Vitiges before being captured sent Ostrogoth envoys to Khosrow in Persia asking him to resume war with Eastern Rome to distract the Roman forces who here were battling the Ostrogoths. Belisarius was then sent east in 540 after returning from Italy to this time deal with the Sassanids whereas Khosrow even managed to invade Eastern Roman Syria and temporarily capture Antioch. Now with the conquest of Italy from the Ostrogoths completed by 540, Constantinople was at its height as an imperial metropolis with people from different parts of the world coming and going to trade and admire the impressive sites. However, things would turn in the blink of an eye especially for the Eastern Romans beginning in 541 when the bubonic plague broke out in a port in Egypt, and by 542 it reached Constantinople via ships coming from Egypt, and from there the plague spread so quickly especially in the densely populated capital that the historian of this time Procopius reported that up to 10,000 people in the capital died each day from the plague, and Justinian too was a victim of it falling into a coma for a long time while his wife Theodora ran the show for the time being. People too believed that this plague in 542 was the end of days as the death toll was so high that dead bodies were scattered all over the streets due to not enough of the living to bury them, and true enough this plague which became known as the "Plague of Justinian" wiped out about 1/3 of the Eastern Roman Empire's population and due to such a massive death toll, the empire's economy too was crippled as there were no longer enough people alive to pay taxes.

Justinian although survived the plague despite being already 60-years-old, though in the recently reconquered Italy, due to the plague killing off a large number of the Eastern Roman soldiers and civilians as well which also led to famines at the same time, the Ostrogoths who were pushed north across the Po River due to not being as affected by the plague regrouped after electing a new king being the energetic and ambitious Totila who taking advantage of Eastern Roman Italy affected by the plague began attacking Eastern Roman territory to the point of taking back whatever the Eastern Romans conquered in the past few years. In 544, Belisarius after battling the Sassanids in the east returned to Italy to deal with Totila but failed to stop him as Belisarius this time did not have much of an army due to Justinian beginning to envy him while in 548, Belisarius was recalled again to Constantinople and this time to retire from military command and instead become a senator. It also happened that in 548, the empress Theodora died without even producing any heirs with Justinian, and with Theodora dead Justinian being heartbroken vowed to not marry again even if it would destabilize the empire considering that there will be no heir. Although heartbroken due to Theodora's death, Justinian still continued to lead his empire at a very effective way despite the empire too still being affected by the plague that in 552, Justinian sent monks to distant China to steal their superior silk making secrets and when they returned to the empire, a silk manufacturing industry was established using Chinese silk making techniques, while in 553 Justinian held the Second Council of Constantinople (Constantinople II) which was an attempt to reconcile the Orthodox with the Monophysite Christians.

Back in Italy meanwhile, the war against the Ostrogoths continued to go on, and with Belisarius retiring, the same very old eunuch Narses took over from where Belisarius

left off, and thus it was under Narses when the final phase of the war continued which ended with a decisive victory for the Eastern Romans at the Battle of Taginae in Umbria in 552 with Totila himself killed in battle. By 553, the Eastern Romans had secured all of Italy finishing off the Ostrogoth Kingdom for good only for the Franks from Gaul to suddenly invade Italy for a brief period of time as in 554, one group of the Frankish army was destroyed by Narses' army while the other group of Franks all got the plague and died. With Italy now completely under Eastern Roman hands, the next and last Roman reconquest for Justinian was Hispania which here was under the Visigoth Kingdom, and taking advantage of a Visigoth civil war in Hispania between the king Agila and the rebel Athanagild but also to further protect Eastern Roman North Africa from a potential Visigoth invasion, Justinian in 554 sent an army from Italy led by the aged general Liberius to invade at least Southern Hispania while taking the side of Athanagild in the Visigoth civil war. Now by 555, with at least the Southern and Eastern coast of Spain annexed to the Eastern Roman Empire as a province, the Eastern Roman Empire was at its height of territorial extent controlling almost the entire Mediterranean- except for the Southern coast of Gaul- thus turning the Mediterranean once again into a "Roman lake", and the empire here stretched north to south from the Crimea (in Ukraine) to Egypt and west to east from Southern Spain to Syria, although despite all these successes, all the wars with the plague included decimated a large percent of the population especially in Italy which practically became a wasteland due to all the wars, plagues, and famines.

As for Justinian, his last years as emperor would be relatively peaceful and stable the moment all conquests were finished in 555, although a number of tragedies would still happen such as the massive earthquake in Constantinople in 557 which led to the collapse of the Hagia Sophia's original dome by 558, although by 562 the dome was rebuilt as a semi-spherical one which is the same one seen today. In 559, Belisarius was recalled from retirement by Justinian to deal with a sudden invasion of Thrace by the Huns who came very close to Constantinople, and here with only 300 men Belisarius defeated the Huns sending them way. In the meantime, a number of battles in the east continued between Eastern Romans and Sassanids until Justinian in 562 once again concluded a peace deal with the Sassanid shah Khosrow I wherein the Eastern Romans were to again pay tribute. In 565, first Belisarius met his end and in the same year just months after Belisarius' death, Justinian at the old age of 83 died, though he had not properly named a successor, although it was his eldest but inexperienced nephew Justin II that succeeded him as emperor.

Before his death though, Justinian approved the construction of the Orthodox monastery of St. Catherine in the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt. Justinian I at least died seeing his empire massive and intact as not too long after his death, most of his achievements would be undone with new foreign enemies such as the Lombards, Avars, Slavs, and decades later the Arabs coming into the scene. For basically achieving so much in only 38 years as emperor which included wiping off two kingdoms from the map being the Vandals and Ostrogoths, holding a major Church council, ruling through a deadly plague pandemic, constructing some of the most impressive landmarks like no other which included the Hagia Sophia, and establishing a legal system that would still be in use today, there is no way to doubt that Justinian is the most influential of all Eastern Roman emperors. Although at the end, a lot of his achievements especially the reconquest of the Western Roman

provinces from the barbarian kingdoms had still drained the imperial treasury that it would eventually lead to more tragedies than success for the Eastern Romans to come in the years ahead.

This illustration of the 6th century Eastern Roman emperor Justinian I the Great seen here was almost if not entirely based off on no other than the famous full-body portrayal of Justinian being his mosaic at the Church of San Vitale in Ravenna Italy made during his reign which shows him standing together with the generals Belisarius and Narses, senators, palace guards, and clergymen. In this illustration like in the famous mosaic, Justinian here wears a large golden crown studded with red and blue jewels and lined with pearls while attached to it at the bottom are strains of pearls known as a *Pendilia*. For his attire, Justinian here is seen wearing the standard imperial robes of Roman emperors from the 5th, 6th, and 7th centuries which consists of a large purple mantle or *Chlamys*- in which purple is the color to indicate him as an emperor- which has a large embroidered square panel sewn into the center of it on both sides known as a *Tablion*, while the entire Chlamys itself is held together at his right shoulder by an ornate jeweled brooch known as a *Fibula*. Inside the Chlamys is a white tunic which has the special feature of golden borders and a round decorative pattern on the visible right shoulder to indicate Justinian's imperial rank, whereas below that he is seen wearing purple stockings and a pair of red leather shoes studded with jewels- as seen in the famous mosaic too. Just like in the mosaic, Justinian here appears to be holding a large golden ceremonial bowl which were used for Masses, and although almost everything about Justinian seen here looks identical to his image in the mosaic, the only difference is that here he is facing slightly to the left, unlike in the mosaic where he is facing forward. In terms of appearance, Justinian was made to look younger here, therefore in this illustration he is somewhere in his late 40s which was during his first years as emperor with his hair still thick and dark brown.