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Imitatio Imperii? Elements of Imperial Rule in the Barbarian Successor States of the Roman West

Introduction

In nearly all of the “Barbarian”¹ kingdoms which were created on formerly Roman soil during the Migration Period, the monarchs adopted certain elements of the ruling style employed by the Roman or Byzantine emperors. In German Medieval Studies, it has become common to use a Latin term for this adoption of Imperial rule: *imitatio imperii*. This term is problematic, however, because it can neither be found in the sources about the Roman Empire nor in those about the Barbarian kingdoms founded in the fifth and sixth centuries. The phrase *imitatio imperii* is taken from the “Constitutum Constantini” or Donation of Constantine² which was not composed before

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- 1 The word “barbarian” will be used in this article as a neutral term referring to non-Romans. The term formerly used by researchers, “Germanic”, is rejected both for a lack of clarity – it simply cannot be said for sure who were the “Germans” in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages – and for the ideological misuse in the past, cf. for the problems relating to the term “Germanic” Jarnut, Jörg: “Germanisch. Plädoyer für die Abschaffung eines obsoleten Zentralbegriffes der Frühmittelalterforschung”. In: Pohl, Walter (ed.): *Die Suche nach den Ursprüngen. Von der Bedeutung des frühen Mittelalters*. (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-Historische Klasse. Denkschriften 322 / Forschungen zur Geschichte des Mittelalters 8). Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften: Vienna 2004, pp. 107–113. For the Migration Period, Walter Pohl prefers the term “barbarian” to the term “Germanic” as well, cf. Id.: “Vom Nutzen des Germanenbegriffes zwischen Antike und Mittelalter: eine forschungsgeschichtliche Perspektive”. In: Hägermann, Dieter / Haubrichs, Wolfgang / Jarnut, Jörg (eds.): *Akkulturation. Probleme einer germanisch-romanischen Kultursynthese in Spätantike und frühem Mittelalter*. (Ergänzungsbände zum Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde 41). De Gruyter: Berlin / New York 2004, pp. 18–34, here p. 22.
 - 2 Paffgen, Bernd: “Imitatio Imperii – die Nachahmung des Kaisertums in den germanischen regna des 5. bis 8. Jahrhunderts”. In: Puhle, Matthias / Köster,

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the late eighth century, and thus more than 200 years after the Migration Period. Chapter sixteen of the famous forgery says that emperor Constantine had placed a *phrygium* – later called *tiara* – on pope Silvester's head *ad imitationem imperii nostri*, meaning “to imitate our (Imperial) rule”.³

Due to its ecclesiastical origin, the term *imitatio imperii* was first used by the German historian Percy Ernst Schramm in the 1940s to denote the imitation of Imperial rule by the Papacy.⁴ It was another famous historian of the Middle Ages, Karl Hauck, who in 1967 expanded the meaning of *imitatio imperii* to the Barbarian rulers of the Early Middle Ages adopting elements of Imperial rule.⁵ It is in this sense that the term *imitatio imperii* has become common in German Medieval Studies and in this meaning the term will be used in this article.

This paper addresses several questions concerning the imitation of Imperial rule by the Barbarian rulers: first of all, it will be asked why nearly all of the Barbarian kings imitated elements of Imperial rule. In a second step, the paper will examine which Imperial elements were adopted and which were not. In this context, it will be asked which elements the Barbarian rulers were reluctant to adopt and – more important – why they intentionally shrank away from them.

Gabriele (eds.): *Otto der Große und das Römische Reich. Kaisertum von der Antike zum Mittelalter. Ausstellungskatalog. Landesausstellung Sachsen-Anhalt aus Anlass des 1100. Geburtstages Ottos des Großen*. Schnell & Steiner: Regensburg 2012, pp. 283–285, here p. 283; Becker, Hans-Jürgen: “Imitatio Imperii”. In: *Handwörterbuch zur deutschen Rechtsgeschichte*, vol. 2, cc. 1173–1175, here c. 1173.

- 3 Fuhrmann, Horst (ed.): *Das Constitutum Constantini (Konstantinische Schenkung)*. Text. (Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Fontes iuris Germanici antiqui in usum scholarum separatim editi 10). Hahnsche Buchhandlung: Hannover 1968, pp. 92–93. Cf. regarding the meaning of “imitatio imperii” in this context Fried, Johannes: *Donation of Constantine and Constitutum Constantini. The Misinterpretation of a Fiction and its Original Meaning*. (Millennium-Studien 3). De Gruyter: Berlin / New York 2007, pp. 44–45.
- 4 Schramm, Percy Ernst: “Sacerdotium und regnum im Austausch ihrer Vorrechte. Eine Skizze der Entwicklung zur Beleuchtung des “Dictatus papae””. *Studi gregoriani per la storia di Gregorio VII e della riforma gregoriana* 2, 1947, pp. 403–457.
- 5 Hauck, Karl: “Von einer spätantiken Randkultur zum karolingischen Europa”. *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 1, 1967, pp. 1–93, here pp. 53–55, 92–93.

Reasons for the imitation of Imperial rule

The first answer to the general question as to why the Barbarian kings imitated certain elements of Imperial rule is quite obvious: of course, Barbarian kings could increase their status by copying elements formerly employed by the Roman emperors, thus enlarging their symbolic, cultural and social capital.⁶ Apart from that, they did so to enhance their legitimacy among the indigenous, Roman population who had already been living in the Barbarian kingdoms before the arrival of the new rulers.⁷ The consideration of the Roman population also explains why the leaders of the Barbarian *gentes* had hardly ever imitated Imperial rule before the establishment of Barbarian kingdoms in Spain, France, Northern Africa or Italy. As long as a Barbarian leader was the head of non-Romans only, he did not have to care about being accepted by the Roman population; in this case, it was sufficient to be accepted by the members of the *gens* and this kind of acceptance primarily depended on military success and loot,⁸ not the imitation

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- 6 Cf. to different forms of “capital” Bourdieu, Pierre: “Ökonomisches Kapital, kulturelles Kapital, soziales Kapital”. In: Kreckel, Reinhard (ed.): *Soziale Ungleichheiten*. (Soziale Welt. Sonderheft 2). Schwartz: Göttingen 1983, pp. 183–98. An English translation of Bourdieu’s text, done by Richard Nice, is available online, cf. <https://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/fr/bourdieu-forms-capital.htm> [retrieved: 2 August 2016].
- 7 Christian Rohr exemplifies this on the basis of Theodoric’s rule over Italy, cf. Id.: “Das Streben des Ostgoten Königs Theoderich nach Legitimität und Kontinuität im Spiegel seiner Kulturpolitik”. In: Pohl, Walter / Diesenberger, Maximilian (eds.): *Integration und Herrschaft. Ethnische Identitäten und soziale Organisation im Frühmittelalter*. (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-Historische Klasse. Denkschriften 301 / Forschungen zur Geschichte des Mittelalters 3). Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften: Vienna 2002, pp. 227–231, here p. 229.
- 8 It was indispensable for the leaders of the Late Antique and Early Medieval *gentes* to be militarily successful because loot constituted the major source of income for their soldiers. As soon as military success and loot failed to appear, there was the danger of either being overthrown or being left by the members of the tribe, who in this case joined the leaders of other, more successful tribes. In this respect, the *gentes* resembled armies much more than peoples with their own customs or traditions. Mainly responsible for this new view of the *gentes* was Wenskus, Reinhard: *Stammesbildung und Verfassung. Das Werden der frühmittelalterlichen gentes*. Böhlau: Cologne 1961.

of the emperor. But as soon as the Barbarians had settled down within the (former) Roman Empire, their leaders also exercised power over the indigenous Romans, who greatly outnumbered the Barbarian population. Thus, it was impossible for the Barbarians to establish a successful rule without being recognized by the locals, especially by the senatorial upper class,⁹ who in Roman times had held the most important positions in local administration. To gain the support of the indigenous Romans in general and the senatorial nobility in particular, the kings of the Goths, Franks, Vandals etc. wished to convey the impression that the Barbarians' seizure of power had not caused any significant changes and that everything would go on as before, prior to the Barbarian invasions.¹⁰ There was only one difference according to this view: the tasks formerly accomplished by the Roman emperors were now accomplished by the Barbarian kings.¹¹

Imperial elements adopted by the Barbarian rulers

The elements of Imperial rule which were adopted by the Barbarian kings can be grouped into three categories: inner policy, foreign policy and representation. The fact that Barbarian kings tried to represent themselves in a way similar to the Roman emperors becomes already obvious in their

9 The importance of the senatorial upper class for the barbarian rulers is highlighted by Rohr, Christian: "Wie aus Barbaren Römer gemacht werden – das Beispiel Theoderich. Zur politischen Funktion der lateinischen Hochsprache bei Ennodius und Cassiodor". In: Pohl, Walter / Zeller, Bernhard (eds.): *Sprache und Identität im frühen Mittelalter*. (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-Historische Klasse. Denkschriften 426 / Forschungen zur Geschichte des Mittelalters 20). Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften: Vienna 2012, pp. 211–217, here p. 216.

10 Again, this becomes obvious when the reign of Theodoric is considered, cf. Claude, Dietrich: "Universale und partikulare Züge in der Politik Theoderichs". *Francia. Forschungen zur westeuropäischen Geschichte* 6, 1978, pp. 19–58, here p. 51.

11 However, the adoption of Imperial elements did not necessarily cause continuity, but could also lead to a break with the past. This was the case when acts of the emperors in Byzantium were copied, which had not been performed in the West before. Cf. on this aspect the further course of this article.

titles.¹² Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths for example, did not simply carry the title *rex*, meaning “king”, but he expanded his official title to *Flavius Theodoricus rex*.¹³ Although the name *Flavius* had already developed into a sort of title in Late Roman Antiquity, referring to a member of the ruling class, Theodoric’s use of the name clearly alludes to emperor Constantine, whose official name was Flavius Valerius Constantinus.¹⁴ After Theodoric, other Ostrogothic kings such as Theodahad as well as several kings of the Visigoths and Langobards called themselves Flavius, too.¹⁵ Apart from this name, a number of Barbarian kings, for example those of the Vandals, Burgundians and Visigoths, used adjectives such as *gloriosissimus* when they entitled themselves or they were addressed as *dominus noster* or *pius victor*,¹⁶ all of which had formerly been prerogatives of the Roman emperors. This culminated in an Italian inscription which praised the Ostrogothic king Theodoric the Great as “Our Lord, the most glorious and celebrated king Theodoric, victor and triumphator, ever augustus.”¹⁷ It is important to mention, however, that Theodoric never bore a title such as “augustus” or “imperator” himself; he was only praised as such in this description.

Apart from Theodoric, it was the Frankish king Clovis, who – according to Gregory of Tours – was called “augustus” after he celebrated a

12 On royal titles in the Early Middle Ages in general, cf. Wolfram, Herwig: *Intitulatio, vol. 1. Lateinische Königs- und Fürstentitel bis zum Ende des 8. Jahrhunderts*. (Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung. Ergänzungsband 21). Böhlau: Graz / Vienna / Cologne 1967.

13 *Ibid.*, p. 58.

14 Pääfgen 2012, p. 283; Wolfram, Herwig: *Geschichte der Goten. Von den Anfängen bis zur Mitte des sechsten Jahrhunderts. Entwurf einer historischen Ethnographie*. Beck: Munich 1979, p. 356.

15 Wolfram 1967, p. 61.

16 Pääfgen 2012, p. 284; Fanning, Steven C.: “Clovis Augustus and Merovingian *Imitatio Imperii*”. In: Mitchell, Kathleen / Wood, Ian (eds.): *The World of Gregory of Tours*. (Cultures, Beliefs and Traditions 8). Brill: Leiden / Boston / Cologne 2002, pp. 321–335, here pp. 326, 329.

17 Dessau, Hermann (ed.): *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae, vol. 1*. Weidmannsche Buchhandlung: Berlin 1954, nr. 827, p. 184: *Dominus noster gloriosissimus adque inclutus rex Theodericus, victor ac triumphator, semper Augustus*. Translation after Fanning 2002, p. 327. Cf. Claude 1978, p. 53.

triumphal *adventus* into the city of Tours in 508.¹⁸ German scholars in the 19th century held the opinion that this was the first coronation of an emperor in Germany. Modern research, however, is meanwhile sure that Clovis was only appointed honorary consul by the Byzantine emperor Anastasios I Dicorus, which allowed him to bear the title “augustus” as a special honour.¹⁹

A further privilege originally granted to emperors only was praising the ruler in panegyrics. The most famous panegyric for a Barbarian king is certainly that of Ennodius, bishop of Parma, which he composed for Theodoric.²⁰ Therein, he portrays the Gothic king as a *princeps venerabilis* who is full of virtues and acts like an “imperator”. Venantius Fortunatus composed similar panegyrics for the Frankish kings Charibert and Chilperich,²¹ claiming that they possessed the same qualities as the later Roman emperors.

Last but not least, the Barbarian kings introduced a court ceremonial modelled on the example of Byzantium. Part of this ceremonial were diadems, crowns, coronations, splendid clothing and thrones, which the Bar-

18 Krusch, Bruno / Levison, Wilhelm (eds.): *Gregorii episcopi Turonensis Libri historiarum X, vol. 1.* (Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum 1,1). Hahnsche Buchhandlung: Hannover 1951, book 2, chapter 38, pp. 88–89: *Igitur ab Anastasio imperatore codecillos de consolato accepit [...] et ab ea die tamquam consul aut augustus est vocitatus.* Michael McCormick has shown, by the way, that Clovis celebrated his entry into Tours like an Eastern Roman general, not like the (Western-)Roman or Byzantine emperor, cf. Id.: “Clovis at Tours, Byzantine Public Ritual and the Origins of Medieval Ruler Symbolism”. In: Chrysos, Evangelos K. / Schwarcz, Andreas (eds.): *Das Reich und die Barbaren.* (Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung 29). Böhlau: Vienna / Cologne 1989, pp. 155–180.

19 Becher, Matthias: *Chlodwig I. Der Aufstieg der Merowinger und das Ende der antiken Welt.* Beck: Munich 2011, pp. 236–237. Cf. also Ausbüttel, Frank M.: *Die Germanen.* Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft: Darmstadt 2010, p. 110.

20 Rohr, Christian (ed.): *Der Theoderich-Panegyricus des Ennodius.* (Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Studien und Texte 12). Hahnsche Buchhandlung: Hannover 1995. Cf. Rohr 2002, p. 230.

21 Leo, Friedrich (ed.): *Venanti Honori Clementiani Fortunati presbyteri Italici Opera poetica.* (Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Auctores Antiquissimi 4,1). Weidmannsche Buchhandlung: Berlin 1881, pp. 13–22. Cf. Fanning 2002, p. 323.

barians did not use before settling down in the Roman world. An example of the introduction of such a court ceremonial is given by Isidore of Seville, who in his “History of the Goths” writes that the Visigothic king Liuvigild “was the first one to sit in royal garments on his throne, because so far, the Goths have had equal seats and clothes with their kings”.²²

The next examples of *imitatio imperii* deal with the area of inner policy. An important prerogative of the emperors in this field had been legislation. As a consequence, the kings of the Franks, Burgundians and Visigoths had the laws of their peoples codified to demonstrate that they had replaced the Roman emperors as legislators.²³ These laws, the *Leges Barbarorum*, were composed in Latin by Roman scribes, which shows that the Barbarian kings established their administration and chancelleries according to the tradition of the Roman emperors. Theodoric the Great even went a step further and appointed members of the senate,²⁴ officially still the highest

22 Mommsen, Theodor (ed.): *Isidori iunioris episcopi hispalensis historia Gothorum, Wandalorum, Sueborum*. (Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Auctores Antiquissimi 11). Weidmannsche Buchhandlung: Berlin 1894, p. 288: [*Levigildus*] *primusque inter suos regali veste opertus solio resedit: nam ante eum et habitus et consessus communis ut populo, ita et regibus erat*.

23 Famous law codes initiated by Barbarian rulers are the Edictum Theoderici, either issued by the Ostrogothic king Theodoric the Great or the Visigothic king Theodoric II, the Lex Salica by the Frankish king Clovis as well as several law codes in the Visigothic kingdom. The legislation of the Ostrogoth Theodoric is highlighted, for example, in an anonymous chronicle from the middle of the 6th century. This chronicle says that Theodoric was considered to be “the strongest king” due to his edict, cf. König, Ingemar (ed.): *Theodericiana primum ab Henrico Valesia edita. Denuo edita, translata, adnotationibus exegeticis criticisque instructa. Aus der Zeit Theoderichs des Grossen. Einleitung, Text, Übersetzung und Kommentar einer anonymen Quelle*. (Texte zur Forschung 69). Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft: Darmstadt 1997, p. 80: [*Theodericus*] *et a Gothis secundum edictum suum, quo eius constitit, rex fortissimus in omnibus iudicaretur*.

24 Wolfram 1979, p. 358; Epp, Verena: “Goten und Römer unter Theoderich dem Großen”. In: Beer, Mathias / Kintzinger, Martin / Krauss, Marita (eds.): *Migration und Integration. Aufnahme und Eingliederung im historischen Wandel*. (Stuttgarter Beiträge zur Historischen Migrationsforschung 3). Franz Steiner Verlag: Stuttgart 1997, pp. 55–73, here p. 59. Cf. on Theodoric’s administration in general Ausbüttel, Frank M.: *Theoderich der Große*. (Gestalten der Antike). Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft: Darmstadt 2003, pp. 77–88.

organ of administration and one of the most important carriers of continuation between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages in Italy,²⁵ just like the emperors of Antiquity had done.

Another way of following in the footsteps of the emperors was the free distribution of grain, the so-called *annona civica*, to the inhabitants of Rome, as well as the organization of circus games. As an anonymous chronicler from Ravenna tells us, both was done by Theodoric whom the Romans – according to the chronicler – therefore “called a Trajan or a Valentinian”.²⁶ Gregory of Tours finally mentions that apart from Theodoric, the Merovingian king Chilperic organized games in a circus he ordered to be erected.²⁷ The effects of the games organised by Theodoric and Chilperic were different, however. Theodoric, after all, organised these games – probably *venationes*, i.e. the hunting and killing of wild animals – in Italy around the year 500, whereas Chilperic organized chariot races 80 years later in France. The difference is that circus games in Italy had not come to end when Theodoric seized power. Consequently, Theodoric continued the traditions of the past when he exhibited the games. In France, however, the tradition of the circus had already died out around the year 400 so that Chilperic organized the first games after nearly 200 years. Therefore, as Bernhard Jussen has pointed out, Chilperic did not follow the traditions of the Western circus but imitated the circus of Byzantium, which, however, was fundamentally different from that in the West. Thus, the examples of Theodoric and Chilperic show that similar acts of *imitatio imperii*, in these two cases the organization of circus games, could have completely different implications: whereas Theodoric’s circus games were in accordance with

25 Cf. to the senate in Ostrogothic times Schäfer, Christoph: *Der weströmische Senat als Träger antiker Kontinuität unter den Ostgotenkönigen (490–540 n. Chr.)*. Scripta Mercaturae: St. Katharinen 1991.

26 König 1997, p. 80: [*Theodericus*] *ut etiam a Romanis Traianus vel Valentinianus, quorum tempora sectatus est, appelaretur. [...] [D]ona et annonas largitus, exhibens ludos circensium et amphitheatrum.*

27 Krusch / Levison 1951, book 5, chapter 17, p. 216: *Quod ille [Chilpericus] dispiciens, apud Sessionas atque Parisius circus aedificare praecepit, eosque populis spectaculum praebens.*

the past and caused continuity, those of Chilperic broke with the past and caused discontinuity.²⁸

Irrespective of whether the circus games caused continuity or discontinuity, the construction of circuses leads me to the next point, building activity, which was maybe the best way to widely demonstrate that the Barbarian kings had assumed the role of the former emperors. Famous in this respect was Theodoric the Great, again, who not only repaired public buildings and facilities such as aqueducts which had been constructed under the former emperors, but he also had new palaces, baths, colonnades, amphitheatres and city walls built in Ravenna, Verona and Ticinum [= Pavia].²⁹ Most outstanding, however, is the gigantic mausoleum which was built on Theodoric's order in his capital Ravenna (cf. figure 1),³⁰ in front of which was placed a bronze equestrian statue of Theodoric.³¹ Roof

28 Cf. to the circus games organized by Chilperic, causing discontinuity, Jussen, Bernhard: "Um 567. Wie die poströmischen Könige sich in Selbstdarstellungen üben". In: Id. (ed.): *Die Macht des Königs. Herrschaft in Europa vom Frühmittelalter bis in die Neuzeit*. Munich: Beck, pp. 14–26, here pp. 17–19, 21–23. Jussen, however, states that the imitations of the emperor by the barbarian rulers necessarily were imports from the East and thus always caused discontinuity, cf. *ibid.*, p. 18. While this is certainly true in the case of Chilperic and later rulers, it is not in accord with Theodoric's imitations of the emperors in general and his organizations of circus games in particular.

29 König 1997, p. 84: [*Theodericus*] *erat enim amator fabricarum et restaurator civitatum. Hic aquae ductum Ravennae restauravit, quem princeps Traianus fecerat, et post multa tempora aquam introduxit. Palatium usque ad perfectum fecit, quod non dedicavit. Portica circa palatium fecit. Item Veronae thermas et palatium fecit et a porta usque ad palatium porticum addidit. Aquae ductum, quod per multa tempora destructum fuerat, renovavit et aquam intromisit. Muros alios novos circumit civitatem. Item Tricini palatium thermas amphitheatrum et alios muros civitatis fecit.*

30 Bovini, Giuseppe / von Heintze, Helga (transl.): *Das Grabmal Theoderichs des Grossen*. (Bände der römischen, christlichen, byzantinischen, hochmittelalterlichen Antike. Neue Serie 7). Ed. Dante: Ravenna: 1977.

31 This statue was later imported to Aachen by Charlemagne, which shows that the latter considered Theodoric as an important ruler who was suitable for justifying his own claim to the Imperial throne, cf. Epp, Verena: "499–799. Von Theoderich dem Großen zu Karl dem Großen". In: Godman, Peter / Jarnut, Jörg / Johanek, Peter (eds.): *Am Vorabend der Kaiserkrönung. Das Epos "Karolus Magnus et Leo papa" und der Papstbesuch in Paderborn*

of the mausoleum was a monolith of 109 m³ which the Goths had imported from Istria, thus proving their sophisticated skills in transporting and lifting technologies.³²

Apart from the gigantic mausoleum, the most evident example of Theodoric's desire to imitate the Roman emperors in his urban policy is a city which Theodoric called "Theodoricopolis" after himself,³³ thus following the tradition of Constantine the Great, the founder of "Constantinopolis". Just like Constantine and Theodoric, Charlemagne named "Karlsburg" after himself,³⁴ whereas the Vandal king Huneric renamed the African city Hadrumetum "Hunericopolis".³⁵ Last but not least, the Visigothic king

799. Akademie Verlag: Berlin 2002, pp. 219–229; Thürlemann, Felix: "Die Bedeutung der Aachener Theoderich-Statue für Karl den Großen (801) und bei Walahfrid Strabo (829). Materialien zu einer Semiotik visueller Objekte im frühen Mittelalter". *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 59, 1977, pp. 25–65, here pp. 36–38; Löwe, Heinz: "Von Theoderich dem Großen zu Karl dem Großen. Das Werden des Abendlandes im Geschichtsbild des frühen Mittelalters". In: Id.: *Von Cassiodor zu Dante. Ausgewählte Aufsätze zur Geschichtsschreibung und politischen Ideenwelt des Mittelalters*. De Gruyter: Berlin / New York 1973, pp. 33–74, here pp. 66–70.

32 Hänseroth, Thomas / Mauersberger, Klaus: "Spekulative Betrachtungen über die Entwicklung des technischen Wissens im Mittelalter, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung vom Heben und Versetzen von Lasten". In: Lindgren, Uta (ed.): *Europäische Technik im Mittelalter. 800–1200. Tradition und Innovation. Ein Handbuch*. Mann: Berlin 1996, pp. 87–93, here p. 87. For the transport and lifting of the monolith, cf. Korres, Manolis: "Wie kam der Kuppelstein auf den Mauerring? Die einzigartige Bauweise des Grabmals Theoderichs des Großen zu Ravenna und das Bewegen schwerer Lasten". *Römische Mitteilungen* 104 (1997), pp. 219–258.

33 Wolfram 1979, p. 360. According to Bryan Ward-Perkins, "Theodoricopolis, [...] apparently located north of the Alps, is something of an enigma" because it is never referred to in the contemporary Ostrogothic sources, cf. Id.: "Constantinople. Imperial Capital of the Fifth and Sixth Centuries". In: Ripoll López, Gisela / Gurt Esparraguera, José María (eds.): *Sedes regiae* (ann. 400–800). (Real Acadèmia de Bones Lletres. Series maior 6 / Memorias de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona 25). Reial Acadèmia de bones lletres: Barcelona 2000, pp. 63–81, here p. 78.

34 "Karlsburg" is probably the modern town of Paderborn, cf. Becher, Matthias: *Karl der Große*. Beck: Munich 1999, p. 59.

35 Ward-Perkins 2000, p. 78.

Liuvigild founded a new city in Spain in 578 and called it “Reccopolis”, after his son Reccared.³⁶

Clovis, king of the Franks, chose another way of imitating Constantine. He did not call a city after himself, but built a church in Paris consecrated to the twelve Apostles as a burial place for him and his family. This church was modelled on the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople, which had been commissioned by Constantine and where he was buried after the church was finished.³⁷

After these examples taken from the area of inner policy, this paper now turns to *imitatio imperii* in foreign policy. Especially prominent in this respect was Theodoric the Great, again. Just like the Roman emperors, he used, for example, sophisticated technology to impress and intimidate his foreign rivals.³⁸ This became evident when Theodoric tried to prevent the Burgundians from entering the war of the Franks against his allies, the Visigoths.³⁹ To achieve this aim, Theodoric sent the Burgundian king Gundobad both a water and a sun clock in order to demonstrate the technological and thus cultural superiority of the Goths. In a letter about this diplomatic mission, written by his chancellor Cassiodorus and sent to the Roman patrician Boethius who was commissioned to find both clocks, Theodoric was full of expectation concerning the Burgundians’ reaction to receiving the presents:

So, by obtaining and enjoying these pleasures [that means the pleasures of the presents], they will experience a wonder which to me is a common-place. [...] How often will they not believe their eyes? How often will they think this truth the delusion of a dream? And, when they have turned from their amazement, they will not dare to think themselves the equals of us, among whom, as they know, sages have thought up such devices.⁴⁰

36 Ripoll López, Gisela: “Reccopolis”. In: *Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde*, vol. 24. De Gruyter: Berlin 2003, pp. 204–208.

37 Becher 2011, pp. 268–269.

38 Claude 1978, pp. 25–27.

39 *Ibid.*, pp. 25–26.

40 Mommsen, Theodor (ed.): *Cassiodori Senatoris Variae*. (Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Auctores Antiquissimi 12). Weidmannsche Buchhandlung: Berlin 1898, book 1, letter 45, pp. 39–41, here pp. 39 and 41: *Quatenus impetratis delectationibus perfruendo, quod nobis cottidianum, illis videatur esse miraculum. [...] Quotiens [Burgundi] non sunt credituri quae viderint? Quotiens hanc*

In a letter accompanying the two clocks, sent to Gundobad himself, Theodoric goes on to state that

Under your rule, let Burgundy learn to scrutinise devices of the highest ingenuity, and to praise the inventions of the ancients. Through you, it lays aside its tribal way of life, and in its regard for the wisdom of the king, it properly covets the achievements of the sages. Let it distinguish the parts of the day by their inventions; let it fix the hours of the day with precision. The order of life becomes confused if this separation is not truly known. Indeed, it is the habit of beasts to feel the hours by their bellies' hunger, and to be unsure of something obviously granted for human purposes.⁴¹

In the words of Ian Wood, “[i]n these two letters Theodoric’s sense of superiority is almost tangible.”⁴² Both letters leave no doubt as to Theodoric’s claim that in technological and cultural terms, the Goths were far superior to the Burgundians in particular and all other Barbarian kingdoms in general. After all, the Burgundians are portrayed as primitive and beast-like, who desperately need the Ostrogoths in order to escape this tribal, ‘uncivilized’ way of life. Theodoric behaved similarly when he sent a lyre-player to the Frankish ruler Clovis. This lyre-player also should “tame the savage hearts of the barbarians” with his “Orpheus-like, sweet sound”,⁴³ thus

veritatem lusoria somnia putabunt? Et quando fuerint ab stupore conversi, non audebunt se aquales nobis dicere, apud quos sciunt sapientes talia cogitasse. English translation: Barnish, Samuel J. B.: *The Variae of Magnus Aurelius Cassiodorus Senator: the Right Honourable and Illustrious Ex-Quaestor of the Palace, Ex-Ordinary Consul, Ex-Master of the Offices, Praetorian Prefect and Patrician. Being Documents of the Kingdom of the Ostrogoths in Italy, Chosen to Illustrate the Life of the Author and the History of his Family.* (Translated Texts for Historians 12). Liverpool University Press: Liverpool 1992, pp. 20 and 23.

- 41 Mommsen 1898, book 1, letter 46, p. 42: *Discat sub vobis Burgundia res subtilissimas inspicere et antiquorum inventa laudare: Per vos propositum gentile deponit et dum prudentiam regis sui respicit, iure facta sapientium concupiscit. Distinguat spatia diei actibus suis, horarum aptissime momenta constituat. Ordo vitae confusus agitur, si talis discretio sub veritate nescitur. Beluarum quippe ritus est ex ventris esurie horas sentire et non habere certum, quod constat humanis usibus contributum.* English translation: Barnish 1992, p. 24.
- 42 Wood, Ian: “The Latin Culture of Gundobad and Sigismund”. In: Hägermann / Haubrichs / Jarnut 2004, pp. 367–380, quotation p. 367.
- 43 Mommsen 1898, book 2, letter 40, p. 72: *citharoedum [...] facturus aliquid Orphei, cum dulci sono gentilium fera corda domuerit.* English translation: Barnish 1992, pp. 42–43.

trying to prevent the Franks from continuing their aggression against the Visigoths in Southern France.

From this alleged superiority – as Ian Wood has shown, it was in fact rather the Burgundians who were culturally superior to the Ostrogoths⁴⁴ –, Theodoric deduced the claim of an Ostrogothic hegemony over the West. To underline this assertion, he established a system of alliances by which he tried to exert influence over the actions of the other Barbarian kings.⁴⁵ For that purpose, he had married off several of his female relatives to the rulers of the Burgundians, Vandals and Thuringians, whereas he himself married the sister of Clovis, king of the Franks. The fact that Theodoric tried to gain influence over the other kings by this marriage policy becomes especially obvious in the marriage between his sister Amalafriada and the Vandal king Thrasamund. After all, the Byzantine historiographer Procopius of Caesarea tells us that his sister was accompanied by several thousand soldiers⁴⁶ who, in fact, rather functioned as an occupational force, securing the Gothic influence in Northern Africa, than as an escort for Amalafriada.⁴⁷

Theodoric's attempt to establish superiority either by precious presents or by his marriage policy failed, however: not only could he not prevent that Hilderic, Thrasamund's successor as king of the Vandals, captured and later killed Amalafriada along with the Gothic soldiers,⁴⁸ he was not able to prevent

44 Wood 2004, p. 368.

45 On Theodoric's marriage policy, cf. Ensslin, Wilhelm: *Theoderich der Große*. Münchener Verlag: Munich: 1959, pp. 80–81.

46 Dewing, Henry B. (transl.): *Procopius in Seven Volumes, vol. 2: History of the Wars, Books III and IV*. (The Loeb Classical Library). William Heinemann / Harvard University Press: London / Cambridge, Mass. 1953, pp. 77: "And Theodoric sent him not only his sister but also a thousand of the notable Goths as a bodyguard, who were followed by a host of attendants amounting to about five thousand fighting men."

47 Kampers, Gerd: *Geschichte der Westgoten*. Ferdinand Schöningh: Paderborn et al. 2008, p. 159.

48 Dewing 1953 (The Vandalic War), book 3, chapter 9, pp. 83–85: "During the reign of this Ilderich, [...] they [= the Vandals] became enemies instead of allies and friends to Theodoric and the Goths in Italy. For they put Amalafriada in prison and destroyed all the Goths." Shortly thereafter, but probably only after Theodoric's death in 526, Amalafriada was executed, cf. Merrills, Andy / Miles, Richard: *The Vandals*. (The Peoples of Europe). Wiley-Blackwell: Chichester 2010, p. 133.

the defeat of his Visigothic ‘brethren’ in the aforementioned war against the Franks, either. Theodoric made the best of the Visigothic defeat, however, and seized the power over their kingdom, expanding his rule from Italy to Spain and thus reuniting a considerable part of the former Western Empire.⁴⁹

Imperial elements not adopted by the Barbarian rulers

After having examined several elements of Imperial rule which were adopted by Barbarian kings, this paper now turns to those Imperial elements which were not imitated by the Barbarians. Thanks to the chronicle of Cassiodorus, we know, for example, that Odoacer, who dethroned the last Roman emperor Romulus Augustulus in 476, neither used the imperial insignia nor the colour purple, which was used by the emperor in Byzantium only.⁵⁰ The Ostrogothic chancellery under Theodoric avoided purple, as well.⁵¹ In the Frankish kingdoms, it was not before Charles the Bald in the ninth century that the rulers began to sign their deeds in purple.⁵² The only exception to that rule was the Visigothic king Theodoric II who used purple.⁵³ The Ostrogoth Theodoric, however, avoided not only the colour purple, but also refused to call the laws passed by him *leges*, but only called them *edicta*, because the passing of *leges* had been the prerogative of the emperor, whereas *edicta* could also be passed by Roman magistrates or prefects.⁵⁴ Besides, most of the coins minted in the Barbarian kingdoms showed the portrait of the emperor in Byzantium,

49 Cf. on Theodoric’s reign over Visigothic Spain Kampers 2008, pp. 157–164.

50 The chronicle says about the year 476: *His cons. ab Odovacere Orestes et frater eius Paulus extincti sunt nomenque regis Odovacer adsumsit, cum tamen nec purpura nec regalibus uteretur insignibus*. Cf. Barnwell, Paul S.: *Emperor, Prefects and Kings. The Roman West, 395–565*. Duckworth: London 1992, p. 134.

51 Claude 1978, p. 49.

52 Trost, Vera: *Gold- und Silbertinten. Technologische Untersuchungen zur abendländischen Chrysographie und Argyrographie von der Spätantike bis zum hohen Mittelalter*. (Beiträge zum Buch- und Bibliothekswesen 28). Otto Harrassowitz: Wiesbaden 1991, pp. 4, 13.

53 Fanning 2002, p. 329.

54 Claude 1978, p. 50; Jones, Arnold Hugh Martin: “The Constitutional Position of Odoacer and Theodoric”. *The Journal of Roman Studies* 52, 1962, pp. 126–130, here p. 129.

not that of the Barbarian kings.⁵⁵ But above all, there was no Barbarian ruler until Charlemagne in the year 800 who bore the Imperial title “imperator” or “augustus”.

The first one to voluntarily shrink away from these titles was Odoacer. Numerous usurpers in the decades and centuries before had proclaimed themselves “emperor” after having overthrown the incumbent. Yet, as the aforementioned chronicle of Cassiodorus tells us, Odoacer was content with assuming the title “rex”.⁵⁶ He even sent the insignia of the Western emperors, the *ornamenti palatii*, to the emperor in Constantinople to show him that he renounced the title “imperator”.⁵⁷ Similarly, Procopius writes about Theodoric that “he did not claim the right to assume either the garb or the name of emperor of the Romans, but was called ‘rex’ to the end of his life”.⁵⁸

There were basically two reasons why rulers like Odoacer and Theodoric intentionally shrank away from the title “emperor”. Odoacer first and foremost did so in order to establish a secure and stable rule. As the decades before had shown, the title “emperor” was a hindrance to that; after all, there had been as many as nine emperors between the 450s and 470s. By refusing to proclaim himself “emperor”, Odoacer made sure that one important bone of contention, videlicet the title “emperor”, had disappeared.⁵⁹ And indeed, Odoacer’s decision was crowned with success: with him as “rex” instead of “imperator”, Italy enjoyed the first longer period of peace

55 Claude 1978, pp. 49–50. For the pictorial representation of Barbarian rulers, cf. Rummel, Philipp von: *Habitus barbarus. Kleidung und Repräsentation spätantiker Eliten im 4. und 5. Jahrhundert*. (Ergänzungsbände zum Reallexikon der germanischen Altertumskunde 55). De Gruyter: Berlin / New York 2007, pp. 256–268.

56 Cf. note 50.

57 Ausbüttel 2003, p. 50.

58 Dewing, Henry B. (trans.): *Procopius in Seven Volumes, vol. 3: History of the Wars, Books V and VI*. (The Loeb Classical Library). William Heinemann / Harvard University Press: London / Cambridge, Mass. 1953, book 5, chapter 1, pp. 10–11.

59 Pohl, Walter: *Die Völkerwanderung. Eroberung und Integration*. Kohlhammer: Stuttgart / Berlin / Cologne 2005, p. 34.

after decades, taking twelve years⁶⁰ until Theodoric invaded Italy on behalf of the Byzantine emperor.

The fact that Theodoric was sent to Italy by the emperor in Byzantium hints at the second reason why the Barbarian kings refused to call themselves “emperor”. Theodoric, after all, had signed a treaty with the Byzantine emperor Zeno according to which Theodoric was supposed to conquer Italy and afterwards rule the country until the emperor himself appeared to seize power.⁶¹ This treaty and especially Zeno’s intention to seize power over Italy shows that the emperors in Constantinople still considered the Western Mediterranean as belonging to their Empire although “the West” had been conquered by the Barbarians.

As various letters written by the Barbarian kings to the Byzantine emperors demonstrate, the Barbarians were willing to recognize this claim, thus formally acknowledging the superiority of the emperor in Byzantium. The Burgundian king Sigismund, for example, stated in a letter to emperor Anastasius that “my people are yours”, that “though we may seem to rule our own people, we think of ourselves as nothing other than your soldiers” and, finally, that “our country is your sphere.”⁶² A similar letter was sent by Theodoric to the same emperor, saying: “You are the fairest ornament of all realms; you are the healthful defence of the whole world, to which

60 Ausbüttel 2003, pp. 47, 51. For the period of peace after the end of the empire also cf. Pohl, Walter: “Rome and the Barbarians in the Fifth Century”. *Antiquité tardive* 16, 2008, pp. 93–101, here p. 99.

61 The treaty between Zeno and Theodoric is mentioned by the anonymus chronicler from Ravenna, cf. König 1997, pp. 76–77: *Zeno [...] mittens eum [Theodericum] ad Italiam. Cui Theodericus pactuatus est, ut, si victus fuisset Odoacer, pro merito laborum suorum loco eius, dum adveniret, tantum praeregnaret. Ergo superveniente Theoderico patricio de civitate Nova cum gente Gothica, missus ab imperatore Zenone de partibus Orientis ad defendendam sibi Italiam.* Cf. Wolfram 1979 pp. 354–356; Pohl 2005, p. 16.

62 Peiper, Rudolf (ed.): *Alcimi Ecdicii Aviti Viennensis episcopi Opera quae supersunt.* (Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Auctores Antiquissimi 6,2). Weidmannsche Buchhandlung: Berlin 1883, letter 93, p. 100: *Vester quidem est populus meus. [...] Cumque gentem nostram videamur regere, non aliud nos quam milites vestros credimus. [...] Patria nostra vester orbis est.* English translation: Shanzer, Danuta / Wood, Ian: *Avitus of Vienne. Letters and Selected Prose.* (Translated Texts for Historians 38). Liverpool University Press: Liverpool 2002, letter 93, pp. 146–147.

all other rulers rightfully look up with reverence. [...] Our royalty is an imitation of yours [...], a copy of the unique Empire.”⁶³ Here, we even have the word “imitatio”, but it is improbable that this letter had any impacts on the formulation of the phrase “imitatio imperii” in the Donation of Constantine a few hundred years later.⁶⁴ Irrespective of this, the two letters commissioned by the Burgundian and Ostrogothic kings reveal that the rulers of the Barbarian kingdoms refused to bear the title “emperor” and contented themselves with titles like “*rex*” in order to demonstrate their formal subordination to the Byzantine emperors.

The fact that Byzantium put huge emphasis on the Barbarians’ subordination becomes evident in a passage written by Procopius of Caesarea. This passage deals with the Vandal king Gelimer, who – according to Procopius – sent a letter to emperor Justinian beginning with the words “Basileus Gelimer to basileus Justinian” (*Βασιλεὺς Γελίμερ Ἰουστινιανῶ βασιλεῖ*), thus pretending to be on an equal level with the emperor.⁶⁵ The latter, who, according to Procopius, had already been angry with Gelimer before, “was still more eager to punish him [...] upon receiving this letter.”⁶⁶ There is no doubt that Gelimer would never have used a formulation like that because he knew that the title “basileus” was a prerogative of the Byzantine emperor; officially, it was not before the reign of Heraclius (610–641) that the Byzantine emperors called themselves “basileus”, but unofficially this title had already been used, for example in literary sources, for a long time.⁶⁷

63 Mommsen 1898, book 1, letter 1: *Vos enim estis regnorum omnium pulcherrimum decus. [...] Regnum nostrum imitatio vestra est, [...] unci exemplar imperii.* English translation: Hodgkin, Thomas: *The Letters of Cassiodorus. Being a Condensed Translation of the Variae Epistolae of Magnus Aurelius Cassiodorus Senator.* Henry Frowde: London 1886, p. 141.

64 Fried 2007, p. 45, note 140.

65 Dewing 1953 (The Vandalic War), book 3, chapter 9, pp. 88–89. Cf. about this passage Demandt, Alexander: “Von der Antike zum Mittelalter”. In: Id.: *Zeitenwende. Aufsätze zur Spätantike.* (Beiträge zur Altertumskunde). De Gruyter: Berlin 2013, pp. 467–488, here p. 483.

66 *Ibid.*, p. 91.

67 Chrysos, Evangelos K.: “The title basileus in Early Byzantine International Relations”. *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 32 (1978), pp. 29–75, here p. 59. Even before its official introduction in 629, the Byzantine emperors never conceded the title “basileus” to any of the Barbarian rulers, cf. *ibid.*, p. 33.

Consequently, there is no doubt that this passage was invented by Procopius. He did so to justify Justinian's attack on the Vandals, which shows that in Byzantine eyes the non-recognition of the emperor's superiority in rank was sufficient to provide the reason for a *bellum iustum*. As a consequence, the Barbarians had to be extremely cautious to avoid any conflicts with the Byzantine Empire which was both economically and militarily much stronger than any of the Barbarian kingdoms.

The risks accompanying the title "emperor" are also shown in another passage in Procopius' work. In his "History of the Gothic War", the Byzantine historiographer informs his readers that the Goths were willing to declare the Byzantine general Belisarius "emperor of the West" (*βασιλέα τῆς ἑσπερίας*) after he had conquered the Ostrogothic capital of Ravenna and captured their king Vitiges.⁶⁸ Belisarius, however, "was quite unwilling to assume the ruling power against the will of the emperor; for he had an extraordinary loathing for the name of tyrant."⁶⁹ Later on, the Goths make a second try, suggesting that their newly elected king Ildibad would come to Belisarius to "lay down the purple at his feet and do obeisance to Belisarius as *basileus* of the Goths and Italians."⁷⁰ Again, however, Belisarius refused the "Imperial name" (*βασιλείας ὄνομα*), saying "that never, while the emperor Justinian lived, would [he] usurp the title of *basileus*" (*ποτε ζῶντος Ἰουστινιανοῦ βασιλέως Βελισάριος ἐπιβατεῖοι τοῦ τῆς βασιλείας ὀνόματος*).⁷¹

In these passages, Procopius makes it crystal-clear that adopting the title *basileus*, which at his time at least unofficially had been the title of the emperor in Byzantium, was a cause for war because someone adopting this title

68 Dewing, Henry B. (transl.): *Procopius in Seven Volumes, vol. 4: History of the Wars, Books VI (continued) and VII*. (The Loeb Classical Library). Harvard University Press / William Heinemann: Cambridge, Mass. / London 1954, book 6, chapter 29, pp. 129–131: "All the best of the Goths decided to declare Belisarius emperor of the West."

69 *Ibid.*, p. 131.

70 *Ibid.*, book 6, chapter 30, p. 145.

71 *Ibid.* When referring to Belisarius, Dewing translates the word *basileus* as "king", but due to the significance of the title *basileus*, which Belisarius – according to Procopius – was not willing to adopt because he did not want to seem like a usurper, I prefer the meaning "emperor" here.

did not recognize the superiority of the Byzantine emperor, but pretended to be an equal partner. An Imperial ruler, however, could not accept an equal partner because this would contradict the Imperial claim of sole and universal rulership, stretching over the whole of the world.⁷²

The tradition of avoiding the title “emperor” became so strong in the West that even Charlemagne, the most powerful ruler in Western Europe for centuries, had to justify his actions when he had himself crowned emperor in the year 800. As the annals of Lorsch tell us, this justification consisted of the well-known claim that the Greeks at that time only had a *feminum imperium* and thus lacked a “real” emperor.⁷³ This line of argumentation was based on the fact that Byzantium had been ruled by a woman, Empress Irene, between 797 and 802. Thus, even hundreds of years after the end of the Empire in the West, it was not possible to make someone “emperor” without delivering a justification.

Conclusion

This paper has shown various examples of Barbarian kings adopting elements of Imperial rule. Especially prominent in this respect was the king of the Ostrogoths, Theodoric the Great. This is hardly surprising because he was ruling Italy, the heartland of the former Western Empire, just a few years after the deposition of the last emperor Romulus Augustulus. Therefore, in Theodoric’s kingdom both Roman institutions and Imperial

72 Burkhardt, Stefan: *Mediterranes Kaisertum und imperiale Ordnungen. Das lateinische Kaiserreich von Konstantinopel*. (Europa im Mittelalter 25). Akademie Verlag / De Gruyter: Berlin / Boston 2014, pp. 213–216. Cf. also Burkhardt’s article in this volume.

73 *Annales Laureshamenses ad annum 801*. In: Pertz, Heinrich Georg (ed.): *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores in Folio, vol. 1*. Hahnsche Buchhandlung: Hannover 1826, pp. 22–39, here p. 38: *Et quia iam tunc cessabat a parte Graecorum nomen imperatoris, et femineum imperium apud se abebant, tunc visum est et ipso apostolico Leoni et universis sanctis patribus qui in ipso concilio aderant, seu reliquo christiano populo, ut ipsum Carolum regem Franchorum imperatorem nominare debuissent*. On Charlemagne’s coronation as emperor, cf. Classen, Peter: *Karl der Große, das Papsttum und Byzanz. Die Begründung des karolingischen Kaisertums*. (Beiträge zur Geschichte und Quellenkunde des Mittelalters 9). Sigmaringen: Thorbecke 1985, as well as the contribution of Jan Clauß in this volume.

traditions were still particularly strong so that he had to make special efforts in order to present himself as the successor of the former emperors. However, the farther the Barbarian kingdoms were away from Italy and the more time passed on since the end of the Western Empire, the less efforts were necessary to portray oneself as successor of the emperor. Hence, *imitatio imperii* was much less extensively practiced by the Barbarian leaders after Theodoric's times.

What is more, the later Barbarian kings increasingly orientated themselves towards Byzantium when imitating the emperor because the Imperial traditions in the West became increasingly extinct. However, as Byzantium had developed its own Imperial tradition, the *imitatio* of the Eastern emperor often had a different effect than the imitation of the Western one: imitating the Western emperor caused continuity because a Barbarian leader like Theodoric replaced the emperor and accomplished the tasks formerly accomplished by him. In contrast to that, the *imitatio* of the Eastern emperor often saw the introduction of new elements of Imperial rule into the West, which had never existed there before, and thus caused discontinuity.

To conclude, it is beyond doubt that in the Barbarian kingdoms of the early Middle Ages, the adoption of Imperial elements comprised both risks and chances: on the one hand, the kings could legitimize their rule and increase their symbolic capital by imitating the emperors. But if they went too far and evoked the impression of being on equal terms with the emperor in Constantinople, for example by calling themselves "imperator" or "basileus", they were in great danger of falling prey to the Byzantine Empire.

Figure 1: *The Mausoleum of Theodoric the Great in Ravenna*, URL: https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theoderich_der_Gro%C3%9F#/media/File:RA_Theoderich-Mausoleum_2010.JPG (Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0).



