**Adaptations of late Roman imperial ideologies in George of Pisidia’s panegyrics**

Nikolas Hächler[[1]](#footnote-1)\*

The panegyrics of George of Pisidia are extremely important for understanding the late Roman imperial ideology of the early seventh century. In his endeavor to legitimize the reign of Emperor Heraclius in times of acute political and military crises, George tailored traditional concepts of imperial rule to contemporary circumstances. Heraclius rose to power in a violent civil war and later waged campaigns against the Sasanians, Avars, and Muslims. Despite this, the emperor is depicted by George, against the backdrop of the eschatological hopes of his contemporaries, as a peace-loving and Christ-like ruler acting with the sanction of God. By addressing a select elite audience in Constantinople, George participated in ongoing negotiations with relevant pressure groups regarding their various expectations of the emperor and imperial rule.[[2]](#footnote-2)

This paper seeks to provide a deeper understanding of how George adapted late Roman imperial ideology to frame Heraclius as a worthy monarch in deeply troubled times. I examine the poet’s depiction of Heraclius as a philosopher-king following his successful campaign against Phocas; examine how George portrayed the ruler as a holy man in the context of the cult of military saints, and, finally, investigate the representation of the emperor as the Christ-like savior of Byzantium following his triumphs over the Sasanian Persians. Excerpts from the poetical work by George of Pisidia are included in the appendix with English translations.[[3]](#footnote-3)

**Heraclius in 610 – a pious philosopher-king to replace the tyranny of Phocas**

George of Pisidia’s earliest surviving poem, *In Heraclium ex Africa redeuntem,* was composed shortly after Heraclius’ successful usurpation of the Byzantine throne––a process that started around 607–608 in Carthage and culminated in Constantinople in 610 with the overthrow of Phocas and Heraclius’ coronation as emperor.[[4]](#footnote-4) In the opening lines [App. 1], George of Pisidia distinguishes himself from his poet peers by claiming to be one of the very few people capable of recognizing not only the military achievements of Heraclius (ll. 4–8) but also the emperor’s regal qualities and spirit. According to George, by aligning his mind and actions with God’s just and eternal commandments, Heraclius succeeded in his ascent toward God, enabling him to bring about divine justice in the world. In turn, his knowledge of Holy Scripture protected him like armor (ll. 10–11). Supported by God, he defeated the violent tyrant Phocas and would yet bring about internal and external peace by establishing a stable government. He does so not primarily by force of arms. Instead, he convinces his opponents through his natural gentleness and magnanimity. His peace-loving character even persuades the beast-like Sasanians to embrace a more peaceful existence (ll. 14–23). The likening of the emperor’s mind to a “wind-fast horse” (ll. 24–26) reaching the highest levels of the human intellect is reminiscent of Plato’s “soul horses” from the dialogue *Phaedrus*.[[5]](#footnote-6) These horses, too, could ascend to heaven and lift the human soul to the highest point of its existence.

George creates an analogy between the new emperor and an archer (ll. 27–29) who convinces his enemies with honey-like arrows out of love for his subjects, the classical φιλανθρωπία.[[6]](#footnote-8) In doing so, the poet evokes images of his namesake Heracles in his hunter persona, the hero Orpheus, and the archer god Apollo, the patron deity of order, music, and the fine arts. When it seemed that insurmountable problems surrounded the empire, Heraclius appeared as a virtuous and capable helmsman who steered the ship of the state out of violent storms (ll. 30–34). He is cast not as fighting to overthrow Phocas out of a lust for power but because of his divine sense of duty to preserve the state. As God’s chosen one, he combatted the numerous evils of tyranny, driven not by pride and personal ambition but by care for the wellbeing of his future subjects. In doing so, he was even willing to make personal sacrifices and suffer (ll. 35–54). The goal of these efforts was always to bring peace and stability to the shaken Roman world (ll. 67–69) with war as only a means to achieve this end.

However, due to Heraclius’ extraordinary personal qualities and embodiment of truly divine virtues, George, at the end of his panegyric (ll. 1–3; 72–89), admits that words could barely do justice to his greatness. The concept of the λόγος forms the center of the poet’s deliberations. This is a clear allusion to the Word of Christ (Λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ) that elevates the emperor above his subjects and, consequently, above the poetic work itself, i.e., George’s own λόγοι.[[7]](#footnote-9)

George of Pisidia’s skillful depiction of Heraclius as a self-aware and pious philosopher-king is not new in the context of the late Roman political theory.[[8]](#footnote-10) Similar notions can also be found, for instance, in the political treatise Περὶ πολιτικῆς ἐπιστήμης / *Dialogus de scientia politica*, written between 507–535:[[9]](#footnote-11)

The philosophical emperor <and> the imperial philosopher who discovered in this way […], in accordance with Plato, who he was, as we said, and where his place was in the world, would reasonably seek to rule to the best of his ability like him whose likeness and image he was. If not, he would not truly be emperor but merely an empty name.[[10]](#footnote-12)

Against this backdrop, George’s first panegyrical poem should be seen as an attempt to adapt widely known ideals of political rule to legitimize Heraclius’ newly achieved emperorship. To achieve this legitimization, his philanthropic and virtuous nature was emphasized. This focus on his καλοκἀγαθία created the impression that Heraclius represented a return to traditional forms of imperial rule. In the literature produced during Heraclius’ reign, the exaltation of the emperor is in sharp contrast with the disparagement of his predecessor Phocas. Mischa MEIER highlights four strategies in dealing with the deposed predecessor, namely the suppression of Phocas’ name in literary testimonies (*abolitio nominis*), the characterization of his rule as tyranny, dehumanization, and blaming him alone for the destruction of Byzantium’s public order at the beginning of the 7th century.[[11]](#footnote-13) This presentation was motivated by delegitimizing Phocas in the eyes of the empire’s inhabitants. The reign of the unjustly murdered Maurice was to be immediately followed by that of his righteous avenger, Heraclius.[[12]](#footnote-14) In this context, it was easy to attribute Phocas with other negative characteristics in later historiographical depictions, namely drunkenness, excessive lust, barbarian origins, lack of education, and cruelty.[[13]](#footnote-15) Phocas was represented as the source of all the evil that had befallen the empire.[[14]](#footnote-16) Heraclius, in contrast, is portrayed as preserving and, later, even redeeming and renewing the Roman state by his restoration of traditional imperial virtues.[[15]](#footnote-17)

**Heraclius as a military saint in the wars against the Sasaians**

A transformation of imperial ideology can be observed during Heraclius’ military campaigns against the Persian Empire starting in 622, during which the emperor personally led his armies against the enemy. His decision marks an exceptional moment in the empire’s history as he was the first ruler since Theodosius I (379–394) to personally lead his forces into war, thus breaking with the ideals of the so-called “palace monarchy” (“Palastmonarchie”).[[16]](#footnote-18) The fact that Heraclius’ new military commitments were by no means uncontroversial, especially among representatives of the senatorial elite in Constantinople, was reflected by George of Pisidia. The poet presents a debate in the senate, where different views on the emperors’ plans were expressed to determine the best course of action in the war against the Sasanians.[[17]](#footnote-19) According to George, the emperors’ personal involvement in the war was necessary to deal with the extraordinary threat the empire was facing.

Despite initial doubts, Heraclius’ plans to wage war against the Persians in person opened new opportunities to stabilize his rule.[[18]](#footnote-20) To justify the campaign, the Persians were portrayed as unprovoked aggressors who did not shy away from conducting brutal raids into the empire, desecrating its churches, and murdering its peaceful population. The capture of Jerusalem and the abduction of the True Cross in 614 were considered particularly serious.[[19]](#footnote-21) Additionally, the behavior of the Persian king Khosrow II was framed as an act of hubris and injustice towards the Roman Empire and the Christian God.[[20]](#footnote-22) Heraclius, in contrast, was depicted as a just avenger acting on behalf of God, who sought to restore order to the world through his actions.

George of Pisidia recounts the emperor’s campaigns in detail, especially in his *Expeditio Persica*, written in 623. According to his account, Heraclius began his expedition by traveling from Constantinople to Asia Minor in 622, where he personally set about training his troops and preparing them for the upcoming confrontation. This training apparently involved actual mock battles [App. 2, a–b].[[21]](#footnote-23) According to the poet, all the soldiers followed the example of their glorious leader, whose rule and military expertise enjoyed the sanction of God (Georg. Pis., *Exp. Pers*. 2,24: Ὡς εὖ κρατοῦσα σὺν Θεῷ μοναρχία).[[22]](#footnote-24) An emperor commanding and training his soldiers personally was noteworthy in the context of the early 7th century but was not unheard of in the context of traditional Roman imperial ideology. In fact, commanding soldiers was considered part of an emperor’s duties to ensure peace for the state by waging war if necessary, as shown by Synesius’ address to emperor Arcadius (395–408):

The emperor who wages war strives in truth for peace more than anyone else. For only he who can punish the unjust will enjoy peace. [...] Peace, then, is a happier state than war; [...]. Indeed, it is an end, and because it is an end, it must be preferred to the means connected with it. In a state like ours, which is clearly distinguished by its armed masses and its defenseless subjects, it is of great importance to devote oneself alternately to both parties. After having been to the members of the military, one should turn to the citizens and the provincials to assure them, thanks to the soldiers, of the tranquility of agriculture and civil life.[[23]](#footnote-25)

Peace in the state, which benefits all its inhabitants, can, in fact, only be realized if the ruler engages with the soldiers and the craft of war. Peace always remained the goal of imperial action, even if it had to be secured by military means, if necessary. In a similar vein, the already mentioned *Dialogus de scientia politica* gives clear instructions to a leading commander on how to lead troops, even recommending mock battles for training purposes:

<To> give orders, you should engage in the battle yourself. You must place yourself now before the front ranks; now, on the wings; now, at the tail of the columns; and now amongst the rearguard. You should give orders in person to both junior and senior officers and make your speeches both concise and military in style, so far as audibility and the circumstances permit. […]. So, when everyone has been equipped and prepared in this way, then, as the sun begins to decline, let the trumpets sound the mock battle. As the two phalanxes engage, let the officers give orders for the maneuvers we have described. The general should, as we have said, move rapidly up and down each sector of the battlefield, making flying visits to everyone, and both encourage and oversee each one. Instead of himself fighting with his hands, he should pay close attention to and reflect on what is happening. After the battle –even though it is not real– has been raging without a break for some three or four hours, let the signal for rest be sounded. The next day at sunrise, the commanding officer should gather all the officers and men of the army together and hold a critical review of the exercise–representing it to everyone as more exacting and serious than it actually is.[[24]](#footnote-26)

Such ideals certainly influenced Heraclius and, in turn, George of Pisidia, who presented the emperor’s actions as part of successful imperial measures in times of military challenges. Without going into detail regarding the course of Heraclius’ Persian campaigns,[[25]](#footnote-27) this section concentrates on George’s innovative representation of monarchical rule.

Strikingly, the poet portrays Heraclius in many instances as a marvelous strategist and, indeed, also as a holy man.[[26]](#footnote-28) I want to add to ongoing discussions about how Heraclius was also consciously presented as part of the growing cult of military saints, who were especially popular among the rank and file and in the Eastern provinces of the empire.[[27]](#footnote-29) According to George of Pisidia [App. 2,c], the ruler suffered a “small martyrdom” when he crossed over to Asia Minor in 622. Personified Envy (ὁ Φθόνος) wounded the tip of one of his toes after he survived violent storms together with his army due to his true Christian faith so that a stream of blood “baptized” the earth of Asia Minor (Georg. Pis*., Exp. Pers.* 1,244–245: θερμὴ δ’ ἀνηκόντιζεν αἵματος χύσις / βάπτουσα τὴν γῆν καὶ καλοῦσα μάρτυρα). Despite the multilingual composition of his armies, the emperor could address all soldiers during his speeches like one of the holy apostles speaking in tongues [App. 2,d]. Immediately before the siege of Constantinople in 626,[[28]](#footnote-30) Heraclius provided the defenders of the capital with military instructions via letters, animating them to defend themselves. Although he was absent during the actual siege, fighting the Persians far away in the east, he simultaneously seemed to be present in Constantinople to repel the Avars’ attacks, miraculously transcending space and time for the benefit of his subjects.[[29]](#footnote-31) Destroying a famous Persian temple near Ganzak, he demonstrated the superiority of the Christian faith over the Zoroastrian fire.[[30]](#footnote-32) To his soldiers, Heraclius appeared more powerful, impressive, and even beautiful when waging war against Rome’s enemies than when enthroned in Constantinople [App. 2,e]. Divine support on the battlefield was also secured utilizing holy relics that he carried with him into battle.[[31]](#footnote-33)

Already before Heraclius’ reign, military saints played an important role in the late Roman Empire. Justinian I, for instance, built the church of Sts. Sergius and Bacchus in Constantinople. In addition, both Justinian I and Maurice attempted to obtain relics of St. Demetrius of Thessalonica for the capital.[[32]](#footnote-34) The veneration of these martial saints remained important under Heraclius also. Among the most popular soldier saints of the time was St. Theodore, whom Christopher WALTER regards as archetypical for subsequent depictions of similar saints’ activities.[[33]](#footnote-35) St. Theodore often appears as the representative of absolute and perfect divine justice on earth.[[34]](#footnote-36) His cult center was Euchaïta in Asia Minor, where a church in his honor had already been built around 400.[[35]](#footnote-37) Another important saint of the 7th century was St. George. His cult was widespread around 600, as evidenced by relief representations in Georgia together with an *eulogium* written before 642 by Arcadius, patriarch of Cyprus.[[36]](#footnote-38) S. George is presented as an indestructible shield of Christ’s soldiers and as a faithful ally of the emperors. His veneration played a fundamental role for Theodore of Sykeon, in particular, a widely revered bishop, who was in touch with various leading political decision-makers of his time.[[37]](#footnote-39) After the abbot’s death in 613, Heraclius had his bones and the relics of St. George, originally preserved in Euchaïta, brought to Constantinople.[[38]](#footnote-40) St. Demetrius is said to have actively defended Thessalonica against attacks by Slavs and Avars in the first half of the 7th century.[[39]](#footnote-41) St. Anastasius, according to his *miracula*, performed miracles in military contexts and even competed with already-established soldier saints such as St. Theodore.[[40]](#footnote-42)

To further strengthen Heraclius’s claim to power, George of Pisidia actively participated in securely establishing his dynasty in the capital, which was represented by the emperor’s eldest son Heraclius Constantine III *in situ*.[[41]](#footnote-43) In the second half of *In sanctam Jesu Christi Dei nostri resurrectionem* [App. 3], we find a detailed characterization of the young ruler, who appears as a *puer senex*, destined to succeed his father as emperor one day (ll. 64).

The boy is presented as being already in full control of his own emotions and as constantly having the welfare of his subjects in mind (ll. 69–78). He deliberately keeps away from the vulgar pleasures of the circus games (ll. 79–93). The portrayal of the youth is inspired by notions of an ideal philosopher-king who aims to imitate God in his just reign (ll. 100–108), similar to the depiction of Heraclius in the first panegyric *In Heraclium ex Africa redeuntem*. Heraclius Constantine III was to train his body and soul to turn his mind towards higher (political) ideals and to imitate his fathers, i.e., God and Heraclius (ll. 112–129). In doing so, he would successfully secure the future of the empire and continue what Heraclius had begun–bringing peace and prosperity to the commonwealth. The empire’s residents were expected, accordingly, to put their trust in the Heraclian dynasty despite, or precisely because of, the empire’s imperiled state.

**Heraclius as a Christ-like savior of Byzantium, c. 630**

After Heraclius’ decisive victories in 628 against the Persians, George of Pisidia further explored the notion of the divinely exalted monarch. In the epic poem *Heraclias* [App. 4], the emperor appears as a completely transformed figure in body, mind, and soul. Thanks to his constant personal efforts, he overcame his weaknesses as a human and became the savior of the almost doomed empire. In his depiction of the victorious emperor, the poet recalls traditional aspects of imperial abnegation (κένωσις). It was through his acts of superhuman humility that Heraclius surpassed his predecessors and proved himself as a true ruler of the Roman state in times of need (ll. 194–199). His victories over the Persians testified to his virtuous behavior and its consequences for all to see. The concept of exalted imperial humility was also conveyed in Latin depictions of Heraclius’ glorious entry into Jerusalem and the subsequent restitution of the True Cross: the *Reversio Sanctae Crucis*, written around 645 and based on an earlier, lost text composed in the east between 630–636, as well as the closely related sermon *De Exaltatione S. Crucis*. Both texts were highly influential during the Middle Ages and shaped the notion of Heraclius as a victorious and humble champion of Christianity in the Latin West.[[42]](#footnote-44)

According to George’s *Heraclias*, the sweat and blood that Heraclius shed during his campaigns testify to his personal hardships. His robes never appear dirty but radiate in pure white, reflecting his purity for all to witness. Paradoxically, they simultaneously appear in the noblest purple since Heraclius had proved himself a true ruler of the commonwealth with his military accomplishments. He was responsible for the rebirth of the entire Later Roman world, which now rejoiced together with him over his victories. Like Christ entering Jerusalem, the emperor joyfully set foot in Constantinople, where he was celebrated as the ultimate Christian vanquisher of Byzantium’s enemies (ll. 194–217).[[43]](#footnote-45) Based on Hartmut Leppin, Mischa Meier argues that George of Pisidia attempted to combine aspects of “Christocentric” (the emperor associated with Christ), “Old Testament” (the emperor associated with King David as a penitent sinner), and “hierocratic” (the emperor associated with God) notions of Roman monarchy within a newly framed concept of “messianic” imperial rulership.[[44]](#footnote-46) Heraclius is now shown as the “κοσμορύστης,” the redeemer of the whole Roman world.[[45]](#footnote-47) Other literary depictions present similar notions. As the historiographer Theophanes informs us, based on a lost account by George of Pisidia, the emperor’s six-year campaign between 622 and 628 was equated with the days of creation – Heraclius, thus, even appears as a representation of God the Father on earth:

Now, the emperor, having defeated Persia in the course of six years, made peace in the seventh and returned with great joy to Constantinople, thereby fulfilling a certain mystical allegory: for God completed all of creation in six days and called the seventh a day of rest. So the emperor also, after undergoing many toils for six years, returned in the seventh to the City amid peace and joy and took his rest.[[46]](#footnote-48)

A culmination of these ideas is found in the restitution of the True Cross, which George of Pisidia records in *In Resitutionem S. Crucis* [App. 5]. Golgotha itself is said to have heralded the triumph of the emperor who returned the holy relic to the Holy City (ll. 1–9) in an act of heroism that is likened to Jason’s recovery of the golden fleece from its jealous guardian, the dragon, in the form of the Persian king Khosrow II (ll. 19–26). The focus is primarily on the solemn act and its significance for the entire Roman world. The poet states that the Cross was received with imperial honors amid prayers, tears, vigils, and festive poems (ll. 27–28). It is emphasized that the holy relic fulfilled its designated role during the battles against the Persians by weakening them from within and, at the same time, calling to the Romans for rescue.[[47]](#footnote-49) Heraclius, as George of Pisidia notes from line 49 onward, had successfully inscribed himself in the history of the Cross due to his triumphs and thus appears as a true scion of Constantine I. Even more than the Ark of the Covenant assisted the Israelites, the Cross supported and continued to aid Heraclius in his fight against external enemies (ll. 73-79). With confidence based on his decisive and God-willed victories, the emperor could anticipate all the battles still to come, which he would subsequently judge like a referee. Many expected a period of long-lasting peace.

For the poet, the emperor’s triumph finally resolves religious tensions in the state. In *Contra Severum* [App. 6], he supported the emperor’s religious policies, which aimed at reaching a religious agreement between orthodox followers of the Council of Chalcedon and the so-called Miaphysites. Together with patriarch Sergius of Constantinople, the ruler advocated a monoenergetic-monotheletic formula of union between the quarreling Christian confessions.[[48]](#footnote-50) In line with his role during the Persian Wars, George’s poetic skills were thereby to be used as a rhetorical weapon in the name of religious peace. He presents Heraclius as having to deal with the consequences of Khosrow’s evil nature, whose plan to bring down Rome entailed the dilution of Christianity by supporting the Miaphysites in Syria (ll. 34–41; 46–50). Once more, George of Pisidia expresses great confidence that Heraclius would succeed in settling these disputes by unifying the many-headed confessional chimera of the empire. At the same time, he presented himself as a scholar proficient in the theological and philosophical debates of his time, emphasizing yet another facet of his artistic and philosophical capabilities.[[49]](#footnote-51) The war against the Persians on the empire’s borders was depicted as transitioning almost seamlessly into resolving the confessional conflicts within the state. In both instances, the definitive end to the empire’s struggles was expected by many, as clearly reflected in the poet’s works.

**Conclusion**

The works of George of Pisidia are more than poetry or propaganda. They are an extremely important source for understanding the transformation of imperial ideology under Heraclius. The complex process of negotiations of the emperor with his context and important public pressure groups to establish, evaluate, and re-affirm a new state ideology are clearly visible in the poet’s panegyrics. At the outset of Heraclius’ reign, George depicted the emperor in line with well-established ideals of late antique political thought. During the Persian campaigns, Heraclius was then presented as a holy man who miraculously challenged Persian superiority with his strategic knowledge and true Christian faith. Finally, George depicted the emperor as a Christ-like figure who introduced and guaranteed a period of long-lasting peace in Byzantium. In their wider historical contexts, George’s poetic writings served a crucial political purpose in that they highlighted the emperor’s deeds as just and God-willed actions that legitimized his rule. However, this image of the ruler could only be sustained as long as the situation on the ground supported claims of his divinely ordained rule. The Muslim expansion after 630 thus led to a radical break with the claims of the “messianic” emperorship systematically elaborated by George of Pisidia, causing new challenges and problems that Heraclius’ successors had to address.

Appendix: Selected passages from the poems by George of Pisidia with English translation

App. 1) *In Heraclium ex Africa redeuntem*

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| [GREEK TEXT] | Reason does not hold us back from saying  that by the decision of the divine *Logos*  you were placed above these fleeting words.  I see, my emperor, that many sing  of armed horsemen, well-aiming beast slayers,  in whom the all-wise mind is not inscribed  and divine character did not arise.  To us, it is appropriate to celebrate the divine wisdom  of the movements of your thoughts.  10 Somehow receiving it from above like an armament,  you guard your mind with God-inspired scriptures:  With an alert memory, you pursue them fast,  and through them ascend towards God.  From your daily watch, you always track down anger  in all its forms like wild beasts.  You wish to destroy wickedness,  through which the sojourning common race  is caught by treacherous traps.  Because of your nature, oh most powerful one,  20 even the wild animals often are taught to be civilized.  Thus, the Medes, who are the image of these wild beasts,  and barbarians, who often live savagely  were extinguished by your mild words.  Like a horse running lightning fast,  your mind, moving in all directions,  appears to traverse the earth and carry you up to heaven.  And a bow you hold and out of an impulse of human love  you always bring forth honeyed words,  by which everyone is sweetly pierced.  30 You accomplish this and overpower time,  whenever the problems flood  the world with a tide of punishment.  However, there is hope that the worries about the current  difficulties will end everywhere thanks to your care.  For often, when the state is destroyed  through the negligence of those who held the power,  even now, the government of one,  who rules piously through good conduct, was saved by God.  Before it was evident even to us that we were suffering  40 at a time when the cruel wounds inflicted by the tyrant  were distributed and clinging to all our limbs,  you chose to remain without struggles,  lest you be part of the origin of evil.  But you, emperor, did no less stay away from those  who were struck by immeasurable misfortune, by which  each one was terribly bit  by the deeds of the ruling beast.  Gladly running towards such hardships, you alone,  having thought slightly of your own blood,  50 desired to save all from bloodshed.  For you were not afraid of the long journey across the sea,  nor could you then hold back against your mother’s weeping.  Some desire fulfilled you to burn for God:  to extinguish the roaring storm  that brought the state to ruin.  And such hope was not disappointed, but  like the trustworthy Fineas, you had in your mind  the intention to end the massacres.  And indeed, since you freed us from the harm of the tyrant  60 and, by the will of God, rule over us as your subjects,  the monstrous bloodshed, from which the stream of evils  has sprung, has dried up.  It will be the case that the everlasting memory, most powerful  one, combined with all the hopes directed to God on high,  will make you realize that God himself  is the savior of your hope for the second time.  It will be He who, through your zealous work, will open  everywhere before us the doors leading to peace, showing you  the throne where peace sits with your reign.  70 I believe that she was wisely hiding,  blushing at the sight of the unlawful massacres.  Oh giver of virtuous graces,  which did not lead to ongoing uncertainties,  but to a permanently stable situation,  accept my small tribute and teach what is greater!  He who gave you a generous heart,  so that you are sufficient for all, without lacking anywhere,  He will prove that now you will lead matters out of the storm,  towards the tranquility that you possess.  80 Thus, finally, freed from distress,  we will imprint the beauty of your soul  in our own hearts like in an image.  Of the inextinguishable grace we will tell,  when we show what a wonderful flower was hidden  under the intertwining of bushes.  Praising you with these insignificant words,  You demonstrated how unfit I really am for the task.  Rightly, then, I am learning the lesson, “Know thyself!”  because I, too, like everyone else, long for a beautiful defeat. |

App. 2, a–e) Heraclius’ Persian campaigns (excerpts from the *Expeditio Persica*, the *Bellum Avaricum,* and the *Heraclias*)

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| [GREEK TEXT]  [[50]](#footnote-52) | But who was the leader? The emperor before all others.  20 Who taught the laws of military tactics thoroughly?  They all looked at your person straightaway.  Who was the sure counselor in times of need?  Once again, the weight of the eyes fell unto you.  How well monarchy reigns with God!  For anarchy was not multi-faceted,  but monarchy reigned with God. |
| [GREEK TEXT] | The battle line was armed, ready for inspection  there were trumpets, rows of shields,  spears, quivers, arrows, and swords;  [...].  When they were divided as though they were opponents  their ranks were tightly closed,  the walls of the armed looked like fortresses.  and all the troops converged, the sword pushed back  the shields and the shield the swords,  140 in violent collisions everywhere.  And although it was only a mock battle, you had  the impression that the swords were dripping with blood.  And there was terror, fear, and confusion,  and the convergence resembled a slaughter without blood. |
| [GREEK TEXT] | Envy saw all this and sighed deeply  240 –at the sight of these saved in a short time,  it understood that it had been harmed seriously–  and wounded the tip of a toe of your foot,  seemingly taking the shape of a stone.  A warm stream of blood gushed forth,  baptizing the earth and making it a witness. |
| [GREEK TEXT] | How were you alone enough for such a multitude?  And how did you manage, with the help of harmonious words  of your melodious voice, to direct the varied  multitude with different customs not only towards you,  not unlike the mythical singer did with beasts,  but towards a single understanding  that unites people across the confusion of languages?  170 It is not unlikely that the most holy Spirit,  who even today does not cease to work,  did not descend in the form of fiery tongues,  but revealed Himself again in your speech,  by gifting you appropriate grace. |
| [GREEK TEXT] | Thereupon, one said to his comrade in arms:  “Look at this! The emperor and ruler  is prepared for battle like one of us,  and now a brazen instead of a purple robe  envelops his shoulders and presses his neck,  a quantity of dust gathers in his hair  and hides the grace of his beautiful face,  100 and the hot sun he apparently endures,  although he is completely drenched with hot sweat.  Bitter weariness inevitably departs from his body  when his limbs are forced to do so.”  This he spoke, and he sighed from the depth of his heart,  and, together with his words, flowed tears.  The other replied to him directly:  “In fact, what strikes me just now  is not our ruler being tired from hard work.  Rather, I am surprised that  110 he voluntarily exposes himself to dangers,  and enjoys the craft of war.  When he wields his spear, he appears more handsome  Than when wielding the scepter of power.  He carries a shield with much skill,  and, it seems, he prefers wearing it to the crown.  And if before, out of love, through us he quenched the battles, now, out of love, through us he arms again for slaughter.  And now stretching out his foot wearing a black sandal,  to those who are indigent he is more seemly  120 although they do not suit him, his appearance is very noble:  He wishes to redden it with the blood of Persians.  What hearts of stone could he not soften?  What cowardly spirits could he not sharpen to fight?” | |

App. 3) Excerpts from *In sanctam Jesu Christi Dei nostri resurrectionem*

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| [GREEK TEXT] | Oh, wise offspring and *puer senex*!  […]  Conqueror of the old serpent!  70 In you, there is no longer a trace of its effects:  neither foolish and senseless anger, nor lust for riches,  […]  You did not stretch out hands to enrich yourself in other’s ruin,  but always want to help and lessen the suffering of others.  […]  You take no pleasure in childish hippodrome games,  mixed with chaotic shouting and clamor.  The engaged fans of the horse races  80 raise their hands in useless applause for the horses.  They stand on their toes and even lean far forward,  with their eyes threatening  to roll out of their sockets, and stretch out their limbs;  […].  But in you, there is no evil thought,  not a cruel look, not a harmful word,  not a sharp tongue, no inappropriate laughter  that bares your teeth obscenely.  And although you are a truly talented archer,  you use your bow only to strike with your arrow  that one archer who is responsible for all evil.  100 You use a sphere in two ways: to train your body  in playful games and to sharpen your mind  when you direct your heart upwards  and ask about the connections of the higher spheres.  In this way, you have demonstrated that you are  the chosen vessel[[51]](#footnote-53) and treasure chest of the paternal image.  […]  But up now with the shield of eloquence!  […]  It is necessary that you also train in arms and battles.  You must fight those who prefer fighting,  120 […]  Therefore, seize the sharp weapons of your father.  Neutralize the poison of the Persian vipers,  break the backbones of the scorpions populating the lands of Istria!  You have comrades-in-arms ready to face anguish,  so that you remain unwounded. These soldiers you have  by Him who created you in an immaterial way. |

App. 4) Impact of Heraclius’ victory against the Persian Sasanians according to the *Heraclias*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| [GREEK TEXT] | Oh, you who now show yourself dressed in true purple,  a purple that has been dyed with a color that will last forever,  for it has been constantly soaked with your sweat.  And yet it remains radiant white, despite its purple color,  and shines all the purer due to your new  and glorious deeds, the more it is worn by you.  200 Hail, oh commander of the rebirth of the world!  Every region and every city knows that  through your courageous struggle, life has been resurrected.  You walked this path five times,  sweating, marching, encouraging, running along,  until you took down Khosrow, the evildoer.  Great was the amazement of the horsemen accompanying you,  when the wheels of your cart stopped  after the lengthy extension of your journey.  From all four cardinal quarters, the people of the world  210 sang a song of joy in the Theater of Life.  When you appeared, everyone decorated the City  by collecting living flowers  and crowned you with prayers that were like roses,  because He, who is the Judge and Lord of all battles,  opened the gates of the world to you, and you,  as the absolute champion, passed through them,  carrying the immaculate, heavenly image in your hands. |

App. 5) Excerpts from *In Restitutionem S. Crucis*

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| --- | --- |
| [GREEK TEXT] | Rejoice, O Golgotha! Once again, all creation returns  to honor you and to call you a place welcoming the Lord:  The emperor, who came from Persia, proclaims  that the Cross will be firmly anchored in your ground!  Praise him with joyful songs!  But if indeed the stones have no mouth,  prepare new palm branches  for the meeting of the new victor.  He took away from you the errors of pagan worship.  10 Had he not conquered the Cross,  the arrogant magicians would have had much to laugh.  […]  You proved to be a hero in God when you took  the golden fleece from the dragon you had slain.  You killed that monster not with the help of Medea’s sorceries  but by piercing it with the wood of the Cross.  False and perjured Israelites, finally desist  from the unbelief of your fathers!  The Cross was received with imperial honors,  with entreaties, prayers, tears, vigils,  articulated poems and musical sounds.  30 It granted to our emperor a great trophy,  enemies, namely, who love him and fear him even more.  […]  Let Constantine the Great praise you.  No one else would be enough to celebrate your achievements.  Constantine, show yourself once more to Rome!  50 Receive praise for your son for how he restored your dominion,  which he had obtained in a state of great confusion.  It is fitting that you leave the heavenly city  to join our joyful dances down here in the earthly city.  Sad and afflicted was your spirit until you learned  that the Cross had returned and brought victory:  the same Cross, indeed, that you found hidden  first in its original place,  and which your son had not only returned to its original place  after it had been hidden, but after it came  60 into the fiery furnaces of the Persians.  For the providence of God has given you a son,  as if Constantine had appeared, again  strengthened by the wood of the Cross that gives life.  […]  And now you are advancing with a purified soul,  dancing together with the angels on the joyfully illuminated path.  The Cross that was placed in you, as it were,  appeared to the enemies as a new and even more powerful ark.  […]  When these glad tidings were announced to us  on the most welcome and victorious day,  when He who formed our existence  advanced against the lords of the tombs  by restoring life to the body of Lazarus  –it was necessary, I believe, that the resurrection of the dead  coincided with the recovery of the Cross–  110 the whole City gathered in masses, like sand,  like a torrent, like immense waves,  dragging tremendous quantities of material.  They were in a hurry, like the gazelle in the summer heat,  thirsty and digging for water to promptly receive  the refreshing splashes of your words, Oh strongest one. |

App. 6) Excerpts from *Contra Severum*

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| [GREEK TEXT] | Having survived the whirlwind of the barbarians and the armed storm of arrows,  we are free to live peacefully after the termination of the battles,  which our most powerful benefactor put an end to  due to his craftsmanship on life:  It was he who ended the disease that pulsated through the world,  30 in which the cruelty of tyrants  and the fire of the barbarians flared up impiously,  until he ended the spreading of wounds  and stopped the blood flow.  But since both in life and in death, Khosrow  raised up against us frosty storms of battles  […]  manifold became a tragedy among us,  40 since it ignited in our midst  unholy sparks about the incarnated Word.  […]  The intention of impious Khosrow was not,  no, it was not to wage war only against our bodies:  he wanted, above all, to wound our hearts,  50 setting our faith on siege fire, as he did with the cities. |

1. \* I would like to thank the editors of this volume for their helpful remarks on this paper. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. On this point, see Viermann (2021), 189–191,(Should these page numbers not be inside the brackets?) based on Wienand (2012), who emphasizes that the poet should not be seen as a simple mouthpiece of imperial propaganda. Rather, he occupied an important strategic position at the intersection between the demands of imperial representation, artistic requirements, and the expectations of his target audience in Constantinople. He, thus, functioned, as it were, as a critical “link” (“Scharnierstelle”) between the emperor, who was usually absent from Constantinople during the 620s, and the capital’s population. Scholars in the first half of the 20th century regarded George of Pisidia primarily as a poet of profane political propaganda with little genuine artistic skill, see, for instance, the similar conclusions presented by Krumbacher (1897), 709–712; Bardenhewer (1932), 168–173. Beck (1959), 448–449 and Hunger (1978), II, 112–113; 167. More recent research, however, credits him with a high degree of creativity, see Frendo (1984), 162; Olster (1993), 51–71; Whitby (2002), 173; Lauxtermann (2003), I, 27–40; 56–66; 131–147; 180–224; Whitby (2003), 174; Howard-Johnston (2010), 16–31; Rhoby (2011), 117–142; Lauxtermann (2019), II, 26–47; 136–158; 193–223. The fundamental importance currently attributed to George of Pisidia for Heraclius’ reign is exemplified in contributions by Nicole Kröll, Alice Cosme, Anna Maria Taragna, Nadine Viermann and Mary Whitby in the “Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik 70”. In addition to the studies cited thus far, publications by the following authors are of importance for the topic: Ludwig (1991), 73–128; Whitby (1994), 197–225; Whitby (1995), 115–129; Whitby (1998), 247–273; Whitby (2002), 157–173; Meier (2015), 167–192. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. These are referred to in the text in square brackets. Unless otherwise stated, translations are by the author of this contribution. I would like to thank Ana Kotarcic (Zurich) for her helpful comments on the English translations. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Hier bitte Referenzen zur Datierung. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Pl., *Phdr*. 246a–b. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Whitby (1998), 248, Kaegi (2003), 58; Sirotenko (2020), 40–43. For traditional depictions of φιλανθρωπία in Byzantine literature, see Hunger (1963), 1–20; Hunger (1964), 103–153; Hunger (1965), 103–107; Pertusi (1985), 555–560. The love of humanity mentioned here usually included several additional virtues, namely mercy, gentleness, conciliation, compliance, benevolence, and generosity. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
7. On the Christian concept of λόγος, see Löhr (2010), 327–435. On the use of the term in George of Pisidia, see Ludwig (1991), 83–84; Whitby (2003), 181–186; Meier (2014), 158. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
8. Fögen (1993), 46–49. The ideal emperor should know himself to be chosen by God. This in turn should be reflected in his just rule over the state. Despite his extraordinary position, a ruler should remain approachable to all his subjects and to take care of their needs with equal benevolence. He should constantly surround himself with reliable advisors and capable officeholders so that his orders may be carried out correctly in all parts of the empire. Under no circumstances should the emperor be focused solely on the accumulation of personal wealth or be exclusively concerned with the increase of his own happiness on earth. Instead, he should again and again prove himself worthy of God by maintaining a steady and righteous nature and always acting prudently. The emperor is thus supposed constantly to align himself with and imitate God (ὁμοίωσις θεῷ or *similitudo dei* / μίμησις θεοῦ or *imitatio dei*) in his actions, thus ruling as a virtuous person and bringing peace and stability to the state. By tradition, the catalogue of imperial virtues includes piety, gratitude and reverence towards God, justice and related (voluntary) obedience to divine (and secular) law, self-control and prudence, grace and mercy, reliability and constancy, education and wisdom, incorruptibility, and fatherly care towards all subjects. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
9. See Fögen (1993), 72; O’Meara (2003), 171–184; Bell (2009), 49–79; Rebenich (2012), 1188. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
10. Tr. Bell (2009), 171. *De scientia politica dialogus* 5,123, ed. Mazzucchi (2002), 45,1–6: Τὸν δὴ τρόπον […] εὑρὼν ὁ κατὰ Πλάτωνα βασιλεύων φιλοσφόφως (καὶ) φιλοσοφῶν βασιλικῶς τίς τε ἂν εἴη […] καὶ ποῖ κόσμου τεταγμένος, εἰκότως ἂν καὶ ὁμοίως ἐκείνῳ κατὰ τὸ δυνατὸν ἐφιοῖτο βασιλεύειν, οὗ ἐστιν ὁμοίωμά τε καὶ εἰκών· ἤν δὲ μή, οὐκ ὄντως ἄν εἴη βασιλεύς, ὄνομα δὲ μόνον ἄλλως κενόν. Similar Joh. Lyd., *De mag.* 1,3,4–7, ed. Dubuisson / Schamp (2006), 10,8–25 as well as *Theoph. Sim*. 1,1, ed. de Boor / Wirth (1972), 41,13–42,11. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
11. See Meier (2014); cf. Olster (1993), 2; Szidat (2010), 27–28. George of Pisidia was not the only author who dealt with Phocas’ reign. The contemporary historiographer Theophylact Simocatta, for instance, discusses the reign of Phocas (though only tangentially) in the famous preface to his *Breviarium*, which is conceived as a dialogue between personifications of Philosophy and History. In his *Short History*, Patriarch Nicephorus starts with Heraclius’ reign and passes over Phocas. Under Heraclius, Phocas received various negative depictions in literature, such as “ferocious animal” (Georg. Pis., *In Rest. S. Cruc.* 23; *Heracl*. 2,16), “Calydonian tyrant” (Theoph. Sim., *Dial*. 4; *Hist*. 8,10,4), “extravagant centaur” (Theoph. Sim., *Dial*. 4; *Hist*. 8,10,4; Georg. Pis., *Heracl*. 2,38), “descendant of the Cyclopes” (Theoph. Sim., *Dial*. 4), “Gorgo-face” (Georg. Pis., *Heracl*. 2,11), “monster” (Georg. Pis., *Heracl*. 2,11), “monstrous tyrant” (Georg. Pis., *Heracl*. 2,22), “life-destroying dragon” (Georg. Pis., *BA* 50), “murderer” (Theoph. Sim., *Hist*. 8,10,6) or “evil reincarnate” (Theoph. Sim., *Hist*. 8,10,5). Compare as well Theoph., *Chron*. AM 6094, ed. de Boor (1883), I, 289. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
12. Tinnefeld (1971), 50–51; Szidat (2010), 27–28. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
13. See Meier (2014), 169, n. 113. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
14. Georg. Pis., *In Heracl. ex Afr. red*. 34–47; 55; *Heracl*. 2,7; 22–23. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
15. Georg. Pis., *In Heracl. ex Afr. red*. 2–3; *Exp. Pers.* 2,24–31; 92–97; *In Bonum* 7; 58; *Heracl*. 1,201; 2,34–54; 62–65; 66–81; *Hexam*. 1800; *Chron. pasch*. 707, ed. Dindorf (1832), I. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
16. See Maier (2019). On the notion that late antique emperors should primarily reside in the imperial palace as representatives of the divine order, while the actual business of governing the state should be carried out by their chosen governors and military commanders, see also Fürst (2006), 64–67. Meier (2017), 513–524; 538–543 presents a detailed development of the “metropolitan” form of Later Roman monarchy (“‘hauptstädtisches’ Kaisertum in Byzanz”) between the 4th and5th centuries. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
17. Georg. Pis., *Exp. Pers*. 1,104–129, ed. Tartaglia (1998), 78–80. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
18. Meier (2017), 538–539. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
19. This is the scholarly *communis opinio*, see Butler (1978), 59–62; Mango (1992), 3–4; Schick (1995), 38–39; Foss (2003), 152–153; Kaegi (2003), 79–80; Greisiger (2011), 32–34; Stoyanov (2011), 7; Howard-Johnston (2021), 87–96.

    [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
20. See Georg. Pis., *Exp. Pers*. 2,303–326; *Heracl*. 1,1–59*; In Rest. S. Cruc*. 2; *Heracl*. 1–52. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
21. Goerge’s account was used by Theoph., *Chron*. AM 6116, ed. de Boor (1883), I, 303,8–17; 24–26; 304,3–9. For the depiction of these military exercises, see Mango (1985), 150–151; Haldon (1993), 1–67. For comparable military practices in the Later Roman army, see Le Bohec (2006), 114–115. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
22. On the formation and strength of Heraclius’ army against the Persians, see Haldon (1979), 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
23. Synes., *De regno* 22, ed. dell’Era (1968), 436: Εἴη μὲν ὁ πολεμικὸς παντὸς μᾶλλον εἰρηνικός· μόνῳ γὰρ ἔξεστιν εἰρήνην ἄγειν τῷ δυναμένῳ τὸν ἀδικοῦντα κακῶσαι, […]. Ἔστι μὴν εἰρήνη πολέμου μακαριώτερον, […]· τέλος οὖν ὄν, τῶν δι’ αὐτὸ δικαίως ἄν προτιμῷτο· καλῶς οὖν ἔχει τῷ σώματι τῆς ἡγεμονίας διχῇ διαιρεθέντι κατὰ τὸν ὄχλον τὸν ὡπλισμένον καὶ ἄσπλον, ἀνὰ μέρος ἑαυτὸν ἑκάστῳ διδόναι καὶ συνεῖναι μετὰ τοὺς μαχίμους ταῖς πόλεσι καὶ τοῖς δήμοις, οἷς διὰ τῶν μαχίμων ἄδειαν γεωργίας καὶ πολιτείας ἐπορισάμεθα. On Synesius and his literary output, see Henry (1967), 281–308; Blum (1981), 31–34; Vollenweider 2013, 2–3. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
24. Tr. Bell [2009], 123; 128, with minor adaptations*. De scientia politica dialogus* 4,1–4; 16–18, ed. Mazzucchi (2002), 1,1–18; 4,2–15: <Ὡς ἂν> προστάττοι παραγγέλματα περιθείτω τὸν πόλεμον, νῦν μὲν κατὰ τὰ ὦπα γιγνόμενος τῶν παρατάξεων, νῦν δὲ πρὸς τοῖς κέρασι, καὶ νῦν μὲν πρὸς ταῖς οὐραγίαις, νῦν δὲ πρὸς τοῖς ὀπισθοφύλαξιν, δι’ αὑτοῦ παραγγέλλων τοῖς ἄρχουσι(ν) μικροῖς τε ἅμα καὶ μεγάλοις ἔν τε τῷ στρατῷ δημηγορῶ(ν) ὀλίγοις τε ἅμα καὶ στρατιωτικώτερον ὡς ἂν ἥ τε ἀκοὴ καὶ ὁ καιρὸς παρέχοιτο, ἐκεῖνο ἐν τοῖς μάλιστα ἐπιτηδεύω(ν), τὸ ὀνομακλήδην ὀνομαζειν ἄνδρα ἕκαστον, ὃ Κύρῳ τῷ Πέρσῆ κατορθωθὲν φίλτρον τε ἐπορίσατο ἔν τε ταῖς στρατηγίαις τὰ μέγιστα συνεβάλλετο· καὶ ἅμα μὲν δεικνὺς οὐ μόνον τοῦ τέλους αὑτὸν τοῦ πολέμου, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν κατὰ ἄνδρα ἕκαστον ἀνδρείας τε πέρι καὶ ἀνανδρίας εἶναι θεωρὸν ἀκριβῆ τε ἐξεταστήν, πειθοῖ πρὸς τοῦτο χρώμενος ὀφθαλμῶν βλέμματι εἰς ἕκαστον ἰδίᾳ τρανέστερόν τε καὶ σχετικώτερον ὁρώντων, ἅμα δὲ καὶ χρηστοτέρας ἐλπίδας ὑπὲρ τῶν παρόντων κινδύνων παρεχόμενος καὶ ταύτῃ προθυμοτέρους ποιῶν τοὺς ἀγωνισομένους. […]. Οὕτω δὴ οὖν ἁπάντων κεκοσμημένων τε καὶ παρασκευασαμένων, κλίνοντος ἤδη πρὸς δύσιν τοῦ ἡλίου σημαινέσθω τοῖς σάλπιγξιν ὁ τυπικὸς πόλεμος· τῆς δὲ τῶν φαλάγγων συμπλοκῆς γιγομένης, οἱ σημάντορες σημαινέτωσαν ὅσα διεληλύθαμεν τοῦ πολέμου σχήματα. Ὁ μὲν στρατηγὸς ἄνω καὶ κάτω, ὡς ἐρρήθη, περιθέω(ν) τοῦ τε πολέμου πανταχοῦ καὶ πᾶσι δρομικαῖς παρίτω ἐπιφοιτήσεσι, ἐποτρύνων τε ἕκαστον ἅμα δὲ καὶ ἐποπτεύων, ἀντὶ δὲ τοῦ χερσὶν πολεμεῖν, νῷ τε καὶ ὄψει ἐπερχέσθω ἀκριβῶς τὰ γιγνόμενα. Τῆς δὲ μάχης καρτερῶς, εἰ καὶ οὐκ ἀληθῶς, γενομένης ἐπὶ ὥρας ἀμέλει τρεῖς ἢ τέτταρας, παῦλα σημαινέσθω τοῦ πολέμου· τῆς δὲ ἐπιούσης ἡμέρας ἀνίσχοντος ἡλίου ὁ στρατίαρχος ἀθροιζέτω τοῦ στρατοῦ πάντας ἄρχοντάς τε καὶ ἀρχομέους καὶ τὴν τῆς μελέτης ζήτησιν ἀκριβῶς μὲν ποιησάμενος, ἀκριβεστέρα(ν) δὲ καὶ σπουδαιοτέραν ἤ γίγνεται τοῖς πᾶσι γίγνεσθαι δεικνύς. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
25. For a comprehensive account of Heraclius’ conflicts with the Persians see Howard-Johnston (2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
26. See Viermann (2020). The notion of the “holy man” on the imperial throne was already established under Justinian I and further adapted under subsequent emperors, see Meier (2003), 608–641; Meier (2017), 533–534. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
27. On the definition of “military saints” (“saints militaires”) see Delehaye (1909). The author included reports on the hagiographies of St. George, St. Theodore, St. Mercurius, St. Procopius as well as St. Demetrius and was interested in characteristics of cult events and questions about the historicity of the venerated figures. However, his approaches were criticized in modern scholarship, see, for instance, Hahn (2001). The depiction of soldier saints has repeatedly received attention in history of art, see Parani (2003), 101–158; Woodfin (2006), 111–144; Grotowski (2010); Déroche (2016), 260–261. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
28. The siege of Constantinople has been analyzed recently by Hurbanič (2019); see also Wienand’s chapter in this volume. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
29. Georg. Pis., *BA* 266–275. Cf. Georg. Pis., *In Bonum* 49–55; 111–113; 146–147; Theod. Synk. 302; 303–304 [12; 14]. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
30. Georg. Pis., *Heracl*. 2,213–230. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
31. Georg. Pisid., *Exp. Pers*. 1,138–154. Similar Georg. Pis., *Exp. Pers*. 2,24–26; 74–79; 86; 132–153. See also Theoph., *Chron*. AM 6113, ed. de Boor (1883), I, 303,17–21, where Heraclius’ enterprise to save the empire is named an actual “ἀγών”. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
32. Schreiner (1994), 375. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
33. Oikonomides (1986b), 327–335; Walter (1999), 163–210; Walter (2003), 45. The deeds of the saint, already described by Gregory of Nyssa, are presented again in the miracle reports by Chrysippus of Jerusalem in the 5th century. For representations of St. Theodore before the iconoclastic controversy, see Fourlas (2008), 519–527. On S. Theodore see the contribution by Kai Trampedach in this volume. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
34. Kantorowicz (1961), 368–393. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
35. Trombley (1985), 65–90. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
36. Howell (1969), 121–136; Walter (2003), 114; 125–126; Déroche (2016), 263. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
37. See the contribution of Kai Trampedach in this volume. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
38. *Encom. in. S. Theod. Sic.* 44–46, ed. Kirch (1901), 268–269, see Kaegi (2003), 105–106; Rickelt (2020), 171. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
39. See for instance *Mirac. s. Dem.* 2,2,188. On the importance of the cult of St. Demetrius in Thessalonica itself, and its reception in subsequent periods see Tapkova-Zaimova (1969), 119–123; Tapkova-Zaimova (1987), 139–146; Speck (1993), 255–532; Speck (1994), 319–429; Skedros (1999); Woods (2000), 221–234; Bakirtzis (2002), 175–192; Russell (2010); Bauer (2013).

    [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
40. *Acta Anast*., ed. Festugière (1992a), I, 142–144. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
41. Hächler (2022), 86–90. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
42. Van Tongeren (2000), 41–68; Brandes (2002), 35–36 and in particular Borgehammer (2009), 148; 157–160 [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
43. See Viermann (2021), 186–250. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
44. Leppin (2013), 165–170; Meier (2017), 542–543: “Herakleios ließ sich nicht nur als neuer David feiern, der selbst mit seinen Sünden rang; er bezog sich nicht nur in bisher ungekannter Intensität, bis hin zu einer regelrechten Verschmelzung in der Repräsentation auf Christus; und er zelebrierte nicht nur seine eigene ihm stets innewohnende Heiligkeit. Vielmehr – und darin tritt die messianische Komponente hinzu – erstand den Römern in ihm zugleich auch der Erlöser der Welt.” [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
45. Georg. Pis., *Heracl*. 1,70; *Hexam*. 1800; *C. Sever*. 452; *In Bonum* 7. See as well Cameron (1979), 3-35. See Meier (2015), 190–192; Raum (2016), 51–54; Meier (2017), 543 [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
46. Tr. Mango / Scott [1997], 457. Theoph., *Chron.* A.M. 6119, ed. de Boor (1883), I, 327,24–328,2: ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς ἐν ἓξ ἔτεσι καταπολεμήσας τὴν Περσίδα, τῷ ζ’ ἔτει εἰρηνεύσας μετὰ χαρᾶς μεγάλης ἐπὶ Κωνσταντινούπολιν ὑπέστρψε μυστικήν τινα θεωρίαν ἐν τούτῳ πληρώσας. ἐν γὰρ ἓξ ἡμέραις πᾶσαν τὴν κτίσιν δημιουργήσας ὁ θεὸς τὴν ἑβδόμην ἀναπαύσεως ἡμέραν ἐκάλεσεν· οὕτω καὶ αὐτὸς ἐν τοῖς ἓξ χρόνοις πολλοὺς πόνους διανύσας τῷ ἑβδόμῳ ἔτει μετ’ εἰρήνης καὶ χαρᾶς ἐν τῇ πόλει ὑποστρέψας ἀνεπαύσατο.“ Compare Georg. Pis., Frg. 54,a–b, ed. Tartaglia 1997, 237.

    [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
47. A similar account is presented by Sophr., *Anacr*. 18, 1–90 and *Acta S. Anast*. 1,6 (BHG 84), ed. Flusin (1992a), I, 47; *Acta S. Anast*. 2,1, (BHG 88), ed. Flusin (1992a), I, 99. However, both authors emphasize the power of the Cross and diminish the emperor’s role as instrument of divine providence. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
48. See the contribution by Nadine Viermann in this volume. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
49. On the complex religious policies of Heraclius and patriarch Sergius as well as their critical assessment in current scholarship, see, for instance, Winkelmann (1987), 515–559; Booth (2017), 418–430; Ohme (2022). [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
50. See as well Georg. Pis*., Exp. Pers*. I 104–136. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
51. Acts 9,15. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)