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# **Kaiserin Theophano: The political, economic, diplomatic and cultural deeds of a Byzantine princess who became empress of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation**

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**Abstract:** With the present contribution, we analyze in brief the deeds in politics, economics, diplomacy, religion and culture of a Byzantine medieval princess, Theophano, who became a *Kaiserin*, that is, an Empress of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, during her reign between 973–983 AD. We argue that under her rule she contributed to the strengthening of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation in the following centuries.

**JEL Classification:** N23, N43, N74, Z10

**Keywords:** Eastern Roman Empire, Byzantium, Holy Roman Empire, Empress Theophano, Emperor Otto II

## **1. Introduction<sup>1</sup>**

The Byzantine Empire (as it was never called by its inhabitants as the name was given by 19<sup>th</sup> century historians) was the continuation of the Eastern Roman Empire during the period 330-1453 CE. During its period of dominance, from the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, the empire was a multinational one and stretched from parts of Southern Italy to the greater part of the Balkans, from Asia Minor to Georgia and Armenia, Cyprus and the northern part of today's Syria and Iraq, and part of the Crimea. Its inhabitants called themselves Romans and their emperors, *Augustus*.

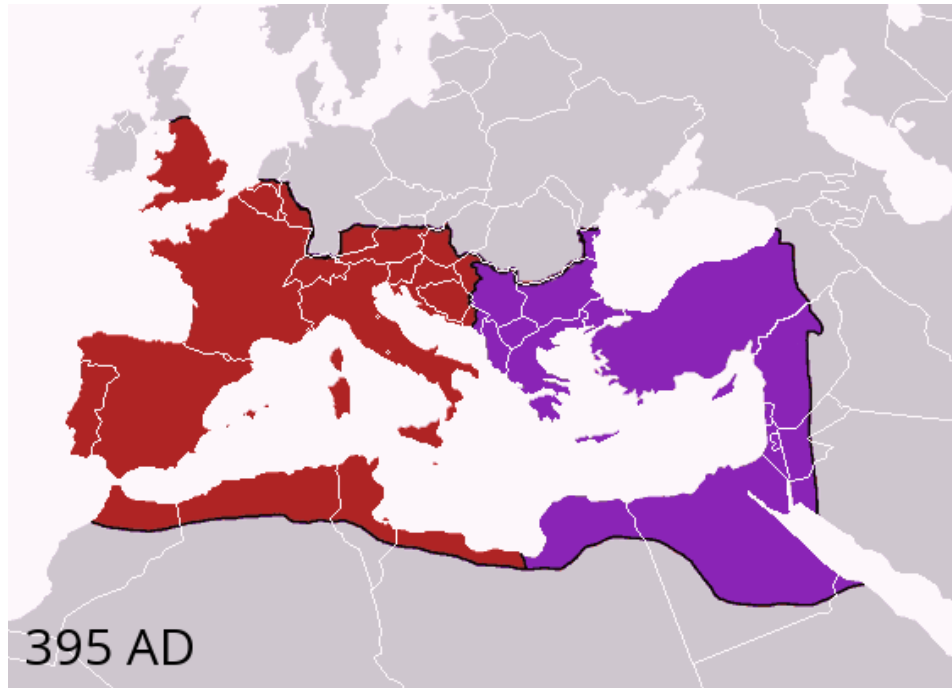
In 330 AD Constantine the Great transferred the capital of the Roman Empire from Rome to the “New Rome”, that is, Constantinople. This had strategic and economic consequences which did not take long to show. A bit later the Empire was divided

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<sup>1</sup> This is a shorter version of a more analytical paper published as: Economou, E.M.L. & Kyriazis, N. (2019). “Byzantium and the Holy Roman Empire: German – Greek Relations during the Medieval Age”, in M. Holler & G. Tridimas (eds.) *German-Greek Yearbook of Political Economy*, Vol. 2 (pp. 27-48). München: Holler-Verlag. For an analytical historical description of the life and deeds of Kaiserin Theophano, Bouradas (2013) provides a very persuasive source. Unfortunately, this book has not yet translated into either English or German.

into two parts the Eastern Roman Empire, (what is known as the Byzantine Empire) and the Western Roman Empire (Image 1).

**Image 1.** The separation of the Roman Empire into two parts



Source:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western\\_Roman\\_Empire#/media/File:Theodosius\\_I's\\_empire.png](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_Roman_Empire#/media/File:Theodosius_I's_empire.png)

However, with the passage of time and since the 7<sup>th</sup> century CE and later, they abandoned the term *Augustus* and adopted the Greek term *Basileus*, meaning king, since the Greek population was the dominant element throughout the empire. According to Judith Herrin (2009) this was decided because the multinational empire was based on “*the power of the Greek language, the ancient Greek culture and, of course, on its Roman past*”.

In reality, since the Emperor Heraclius (610-641 AD) era and later on, the Byzantine Empire was almost completely Hellenized and a famous Byzantinologist George Ostrogorsky (1956a) wrote that Byzantium, having preserved the heritage of ancient Greece, constituted the source that would satisfy the western world's thirst for Greek culture during the Renaissance.

The Western Roman Empire fell to invading Germanic tribes of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, leading to the creation of different states. The Visigoths settled down in Spain and

Northern Africa, the Ostrogoths in Italy, the Lombards in Northern Italy, the Franks in today's Northern and Central France, the Burgundians, Franks, Saxons, English in today's Germany and England, etc. In 800 CE Charlemagne, King of the Franks, was crowned by the Pope as emperor of a reconstituted Western Roman Empire, which developed later into the "Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation", lasting till 1806. German emperors such as Otto I (reigned 962-973) and Otto II (973-983) took the title 'Imperator Romanorum.'

With the present contribution, we focus in brief on some aspects regarding the deeds in politics, economics, diplomacy, religion and culture of a Byzantine medieval princess, Theophano, who became a *Kaiserin*, that is, an Empress of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation during her reign between 973–983 AD. We claim that with under her rule she contributed to the strengthening of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation in the e following centuries.

## **2. Politics and dynastic marriages**

Since both empires considered themselves to be the heirs of Rome, inevitably this would lead to some enmity, but more so to cooperation.

Enmity could arise out of issues of precedence and territorial claims. There always was the matter, both of prestige and pragmatism, concerning which of the two had precedence. The Byzantines claimed to be the oldest empire that continued, without a break, Roman traditions. The German empire could not deny this fact. German emperors were crowned by the Pope of Rome, which lay outside Byzantine territory although sometimes within, and often under the influence of the Germans which, by the way, led also to friction between emperors and popes, as was the case during the lengthy struggle between the Guelphs (adherents of the pope) and the Ghibellines (adherents of the emperors, due to their origin, i.e., the town of *Waiblingen*). Because of this, German emperors argued that since the papacy was an institution that was older than the patriarch of Constantinople, they could thus indirectly claim precedence.

Territorial conflict could arise only in Southern Italy, during periods when the German emperors (as for example during the 10<sup>th</sup> century, under Otto I and Otto II) extended their sway over Central Italy, thus approaching Byzantine territory in Southern Italy.

On the other hand, issues that promoted cooperation were also important. Both empires claimed their legitimacy, but also culture, laws and administrative aspects, as heirs of the Roman Empire. Both saw themselves as Christian empires, keeping and promoting the Christian faith against pagan enemies, seeing themselves as “crusaders” long before the actual start of the crusades in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. The Byzantine emperor Heraclius, the winner of a lengthy war against Zoroastrian (fire-worshipper) Persians during 610-630 considered himself a crusader and imbued this faith in his soldiers. The same implicitly applied to Charlemagne in his wars against the pagan Saxons, North men, Avars, Slavs and Saracens (Regan 2003; Nicolle 2014).

After the coronation of Charlemagne in Rome as emperor in 800 CE, the empress in Byzantium Irene, who reigned as regent for her infant son was determined to marry Charlemagne since this would lead to the unification of the imperial houses of Byzantium and the Holy Roman Empire (as happened later with the marriage between the Byzantine princess Theophano and Otto II (Section 4). The marriage did not materialize, however, because Irene was deposed by a military coup that took place in 802 and she was forced to become a nun (Ostrogorsky 1956a; Garland 1999).

Laiou and Maguire (1992) and Lefort (2002) provide a general image of the similarities between the Byzantine and the Western societies, from the 5th to the 12th century AD by arguing that most today's historians would agree that the development of Byzantium and the west had many parallel characteristics, such as, population trends, the role of agriculture in the economy, the city organization, the importance of money in the economy, economic development and the pervasive role of war into the economy etc. These similarities, they argue, stemming from shared traditions and shared realities.

During various periods, the two empires faced common enemies such as the Avars, in the northern Balkans during 6th-7th centuries and the Slavs during the 7th-8th centuries in central Europe for the Germans and in the Balkans for the Byzantines. However, institutional differences existed too. Table 1 offers a summary account of the political/constitutional status quo, the military organization and the diplomatic strategy that the two empires followed during the 9th-15th centuries.

<b>Table 1. Organization and strategy of Byzantium and the Holy Roman Empire (9th-15th centuries)</b>	
<b>Byzantium:</b>	
State:	Centralized; decision making took place in the palace and was carried out by the bureaucracy; the emperor is head of the church – the church is subordinate to the emperor since the emperor chooses the patriarch and defines doctrine (although it was perilous to turn against the church).
Selection of emperor:	Hereditary succession (the eldest son) with some exceptions (but since hereditary succession was not always certain, emperors designate co-emperors).
Political power:	In the hands of the emperor, who faces no procedural constraints; religious legitimacy of emperor.
Military:	Byzantium paid and kept a standing army (the <i>scholai</i> armies in the west and the east borders of the empire) and navy.
Diplomacy:	Byzantium's grant strategy was mainly to negotiate instead of going to battle; marriage alliances and money payments rather than fighting were the preferred means for conducting international relations.
<b>Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation:</b>	
State:	A collection of principalities, bishoprics, kingdoms including the non-German Bohemia. Up to 1077, the German monarchy was not feudal, but it became feudal afterwards.
Selection of emperor:	The position of the emperor was hereditary till the 11th century, however central authority was less strong than Byzantium due to the important presence of dukes, counts, barons etc. During later times, the position of the emperor became elective by the local princes, although the electors converged to select a candidate from the ruling house. The relations between the emperor and the papacy were not always harmonious.
Political power:	In the hands of the emperor. However, the Emperor's power on issuing decrees etc., was restricted to some extent, but after the events of the Great Saxon Revolt of 1077, emperor's decisions were strongly influenced by mighty dukes, barons, etc.
Military:	The emperor had his own knights and army. However, the overall army of the empire comprised by the contributions of the rest of the dukes, barons etc.
Diplomacy:	Dynastic marriages and alliances
<i>Sources:</i> Ostrogorsky (1956a), Norwich (1993), Borgolte (2002), Schubert (2005), Herrin (2009).	

### **3. Silk trade between Byzantium, the Italian states and the Holy Roman Empire**

The discovery of coins dating from the sixth century AD proves that early medieval trade routes had been established between Eastern and Western Europe. Mediterranean goods passed through Italy across the Alps to Switzerland and up river northwards into France, Holland and Germany. An important aspect was the silk

trade. Raw silk was bought from China. However, from 553-4 silk was introduced to and produced also in Europe through the Byzantine Empire (Laiou 2002: 725). More specifically, Emperor Justinian I (482–565) arranged to have silkworm eggs smuggled out of Central Asia in 553-4, setting the stage for the flowering of the Byzantine silk-weaving industry (Wild 2003: 108). The historian Procopius writes:

“At that time [about 550] some monks learned that the Emperor Justinian no longer wanted the Romans to buy silk from the Persians. So, they went to the emperor and promised him - even that they would give him the materials to produce the silk, not to buy again this merchandise from the Persians, who were their enemies, or by some other people [...]. The emperor asked many questions for the secret. The monks replied that the silk was coming out of a sack and that nature itself teaches them and forces them to produce it. The cocoons of these worms, the monks have said, have countless eggs each. And people can keep them if they cover it with manure. And then, if they heat up for as long as they can, they can produce insects [...]. The monks turned to Sirinda [area in China] and carried the eggs to Byzantium [Constantinople]. [...] And thus the silk began to be produced in the Roman Empire. Then, the wars between the Romans and the Persians for silk stopped” (Procopius *The Secret History* XXV).

Thus, the Byzantine capital of Constantinople became the first significant silk-weaving center in Europe. It proved to be one of the most important export-oriented commodities for the Byzantine economy, used both as a means of payment and of diplomacy (Laiou 2002: 707). Italian merchants travelling between Constantinople and the Italian shores carried goods to Italy from Alexandria. More distant travels were undertaken by the Radhanite Jews, who crossed deep into Central Asia on their way to China. Byzantium dominated silk production in Europe throughout the early Middle Ages until the establishment of the Italian silk-weaving industry in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and the conquest and break-up of the Byzantine Empire by the Fourth Crusade of 1204.

A portion of Chinese silks arrived in the West by way of Byzantine merchants who had purchased them and then traded them in the Mediterranean market. The overall pattern of distribution that emerges from at least the sixth to seventh century onwards to Western Europe is largely attributed to Italian intermediaries. The Ottonian emperors of the Holy Roman Empire approved silk trade transactions along the Rhine-Maas artery through Italian merchants in the tenth century (Pounds 1973). In exchange for silk the West supplied principally metals, slaves and, where necessary, military muscle to her trading partners. Byzantine silks traded in the West included,

among others, the eighth to ninth century silks depicting charioteer and horses of Aachen and Maastricht (Muthesius 1990). The Byzantine Empire used the sale of silks for political ends. It had established silk trade treaties with the Russians related to military aid, just as it had done with the West. These rich silks – literally worth their weight in gold – were powerful political weapons of the Byzantine Empire between the 4th and 12th centuries. Diplomatic gifts of Byzantine silks cemented alliances with the Franks (Muthesius 1992). Byzantium granted silk-trading concessions to the sea powers of Venice, Pisa, Genoa and Amalfi to secure naval and military aid for Byzantine territories.

In 812 Byzantium had already established trade concessions with Venice, which extended in volume during the 992-1198 period, endorsed through eight major treaties. Pisa drew up three similar treaties in 1111, 1170 and 1192 and Genoa also concluded trade treaties between the 1140s and 1192. Byzantine trade alliances with Genoa and Pisa of 1168/70 had a geopolitical implication since they were signed to raise support against the German Emperor Frederick I. However, Byzantium soon after changed its policy and instead, looked for an alliance with the Holy Roman Empire. Later trade treaties with the Italians were designed to stop piracy in Byzantine waters. An alliance with Venice in 1189 had the more serious intention of counteracting dangers inherent in the launch of the Third Crusade (Lilie 1984; Muthesius 1990).

Except silk, grain was the other major commodity that was produced in the Byzantine Empire. The commodities that were traded in Constantinople and elsewhere, were numerous: food products (such as olive oil, wine, salt, fish, meat, vegetables), and other products such as ceramics, timber and wax, linen, and woven cloth, as well as luxury items, such as silks, perfumes and spices (Laiou 2002: 720). According to Laiou (pp.703f) the limited diffusion of Byzantine coins found in central and Western Europe probably is an indication of noneconomic exchange between east and west. However, we think, that this view may be seen as an exaggeration, to a lesser or higher extent, since, as argued above, silk trade was in existence and probably, trade including various goods between the Byzantine and the Holy Roman Empire was taking place, at least to some extent, through Italian (and other) merchants as intermediaries, but the volume of such kind of commercial transactions is difficult to determine due to the lack of evidence. The fact that the archaeological evidence has not proved (at least yet) the existence of Byzantine coins in the Holy



Roman Empire, does not necessarily mean that this will not (possibly) happen in the future.

#### 4. Kaiserin Theophano

Theophano (959-990 AD) was probably the niece of Byzantine emperor John I Tzimiskis (969-976).<sup>2</sup> At the age of 12 she was sent to the German empire to marry Otto II, then 17 years old, in order to cement an alliance between the two empires. At the time the two empires had some territorial disputes with each other in Italy. The marriage took place in Rome, on 14 April 972. After her marriage she was crowned *Kaiserin* and *Coimperatrix* (Bouradas 2013). She had four children with Otto II, three daughters (Sophie, Adelheid, Mathilde) and one son (Otto), the future emperor Otto III. Otto II died suddenly, on 7 December 983, at the age of 28, probably from malaria.

At the death of her husband she, together with Otto's mother Adelheine, took over the role of *Mitregentin*, for her three-year-old infant son Otto.<sup>3</sup> Otto III was appointed king of the Romans at Christmas, crowned by the Mainz Archbishop Willigis at Aachen Cathedral, with Theophano ruling as empress on his behalf. She held this title till her death in 991, at the age of between 30 and 31.

During this period, she actually ruled the German empire with the help and support of some trusted advisors, first among them, Archbishop Willigis. She often stayed either in Mainz or at the Palace of Ingelheim, but travelled extensively throughout the empire, going back, among other trips, to Rome (Leyser 2002: 18, 36). Her first task was to fortify and assure the succession of her son against various pretenders, such as Duke Heinrich of Bavaria, called *der Zaenker* (meaning he who loves strife). In this, she was successful, and Heinrich was reconciled and accepted Otto III as lawful emperor. Theophano was also successful in maintaining German supremacy over Bohemia, as Boleslaus II, Duke of Bohemia, was also forced to accept the authority of Otto III (Duckett 1968: 108). Theophano, who must have had an important cultural

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<sup>2</sup> There is some controversy on this, see Wolf (1988), but we are convinced by the arguments of Bouradas (2013: 11-19) who argues that her father was Constantine Skleros whose sister, Maria, was the wife of John I Tzimiskis. Tzimiskis was one of the greatest Byzantine emperors, fighting successfully against the Russo-Scandinavians of Kiev and the Arabs, conquering Aleppo, Damascus, parts of Northern Syria and Lebanon and almost reaching Jerusalem, as a forerunner of the crusades.

<sup>3</sup> She is called by this title in various documents of the time. Theophano is buried in St. Panteleimon Church in Cologne.

and scholarly upbringing in Byzantium, accepted political and cultural duties for the German empire. For example, according to Leyser (1973: 44, 1982: 117-118), without her Byzantine artistic knowledge, none of the ivories, enamels, jewelry, goldsmith work, or illuminated manuscripts of the late Ottonian period would have been created.

In the political field Theophano undertook the task of keeping peace within the empire and increasing economic, religious and cultural relations with other states. To the north, she made a treaty with the Danish King Erich VII, *Seghersell*, promoting a defensive alliance against Slavic tribes, trade and cultural exchanges. In the East, she sent ambassadors to promote relations with the king of the Russo-Scandinavians, Vladimir of Kiev, who was married to Anna, a Byzantine princess and sister of Emperor Basil II of the Macedonian dynasty. Theophano had in mind a “family of kings,” in parallel to Byzantine tradition: The emperor was the “father” of other kings, who were his “sons” and “friends” (*amici*) in a kind of family hierarchy. She also adopted the Byzantine model of relations between the emperor and patriarch in her relations to the pope (Ostrogorsky 1956b). The “family” of the western empire included the duke of Poland, Mieszko I, Bohemia and Hungary.<sup>4</sup>

At the same time, missionaries from the empire were proselytizing to various Slavic tribes at the northern, eastern and southeastern borders of the empire. The borders of the empire were at that time extended more toward the West than they are today including, for example Thuringia but not today’s Brandenburg. The Prussians were a Slavic tribe, which was “Germanized” and “Christianized” much later through the efforts of the Teutonic Order. Thus, we observe, in her “European policy,” an attempt to create an alliance of Christian states, a parallel to Byzantium. Both empires were strikingly successfully in converting the Slavs to Christianity. The Byzantines converted the Slavs in the Balkans and in today’s Ukraine and Russia. The Germans converted the Poles, Bohemians, Prussians, etc., as well as the non-Slavic Hungarians, who became Christians with their defeat (e.g., the Battle of Lechfeld on August 955) by Emperor Otto I (Bouradas 2013: 130-6, 284-290).

Furthermore, concerning commercial transactions, Otto II and Theophano promoted the city of Magdeburg on the Elbe, where there is the tomb of Otto I in the Cathedral, as a crossroads of commerce between north (Scandinavia), south (Italy, the

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<sup>4</sup> The Poles were converted to Christianity in 966, after the marriage of Mieszko with Dubrawa, daughter of Boleslav, Duke of Bohemia (Bouradas 2013: 288). Mieszko successfully used diplomacy, concluding alliances, first with Bohemia, then Sweden, and the Holy Roman Empire.

Mediterranean and Byzantium), west (the empire and the Kingdom of the Franks) and east (The Slavic lands). The emperor guaranteed traders their exemption from military service, protection of the right of free movement and settlement, and the “King’s peace.” Magdeburg had the appropriate infrastructure to support trade through river boats and for this purpose it had waterfronts and warehouses where products could be stored safely (Schwineköper 1958: 399).

Magdeburg’s commercial potential was further developed during the period of Theophano while she reigned as *Mitregentin* for her son Otto III. Far-reaching traders were further exempted from custom duties and tolls. Laws that guaranteed free movement and staying anywhere within the Reich were established. Markets and commercial transactions were protected. In order to guarantee fair trade, trading was permitted only during daylight and in the presence of witnesses. Jewish traders were welcomed. Distant traders from other nations enjoyed the privilege of being tax exempt since a series of taxes were imposed on the passage of rivers, bridges and roads. Even slaves could be traded from the East. These slaves were basically sold through the Frankish kingdoms to the Arab markets of Spain (Eickhoff 1999).

In the market, one could find a great variety of goods, from salt from the regions of Lüneburg and Halle, double bladed war axes, swords and some jewelry. Eastern (Slavic) traders were selling honey and the much sought after wax, from which candles for church were manufactured. Byzantine, Jewish but also even Arab traders brought luxury items from the East such as jewelry, illustrated books (mainly bibles), crystals, utensils (many of silver), the much sought after silk clothes and even more luxuries; people braided clothes and trained hawks for hunting, but even eagles, birds that were much sought after by the king and his nobles. Payment was made through a variety of currencies both of silver and gold. It seems that an unofficial parallel circulation of currencies was permitted. Special balances were used to weigh coins but also gold dust coins. In wide circulation were the empire’s silver coins (from the Harz Mountain’s silver), Frankish coins, Byzantine gold coins which were much sought after for their quality. They were considered (in the Mediterranean) a kind of universal coin, a medium of exchange like today’s dollar (Gregory 2010: 243) and even some Arabic coins from the Fatimid Egyptian Syrian Kingdom (Bouradas 2013: 365-372).

Although Theophano, as did the Byzantines in many cases, preferred to use diplomacy to achieve her ends instead of war, she did not lack courage, and undertook

at least one successful military campaign herself. In order to defend the reign of her son, she even put herself in danger in the summer of 987, when she went with the imperial army to aid the bishop of Liege who was threatened by the count of Blois and Troyes and successfully repulsed the count. Perhaps her greatest political achievement during her regency was that she maintained internal peace in the empire, without upheavals or revolts by pretenders.

Equally impressive and lasting was her cultural work. She introduced Byzantine protocol in the German court, which influenced dress, crowns and jewelry, eating habits and utensils, even furniture. When a Byzantine princess was sent to marry a foreign king, she was always accompanied by a grand retinue of scholars such as doctors of medicine, writers, notaries, etc. They introduced Byzantine lawyers' customs and procedures to the foreign courts. She also introduced the cult of Saint Nicholas to the empire (*ibid.*, 292; Engels 2002). The Byzantine art was introduced and influenced German artists who often borrowed Byzantine themes and styles, such as *The Annunciation* of Würzburg, painted about 1240, an elegant miniature of the Annunciation, with the Virgin Mary and the Archangel Gabriel which are set against a simple, highly burnished gold background.<sup>5</sup>

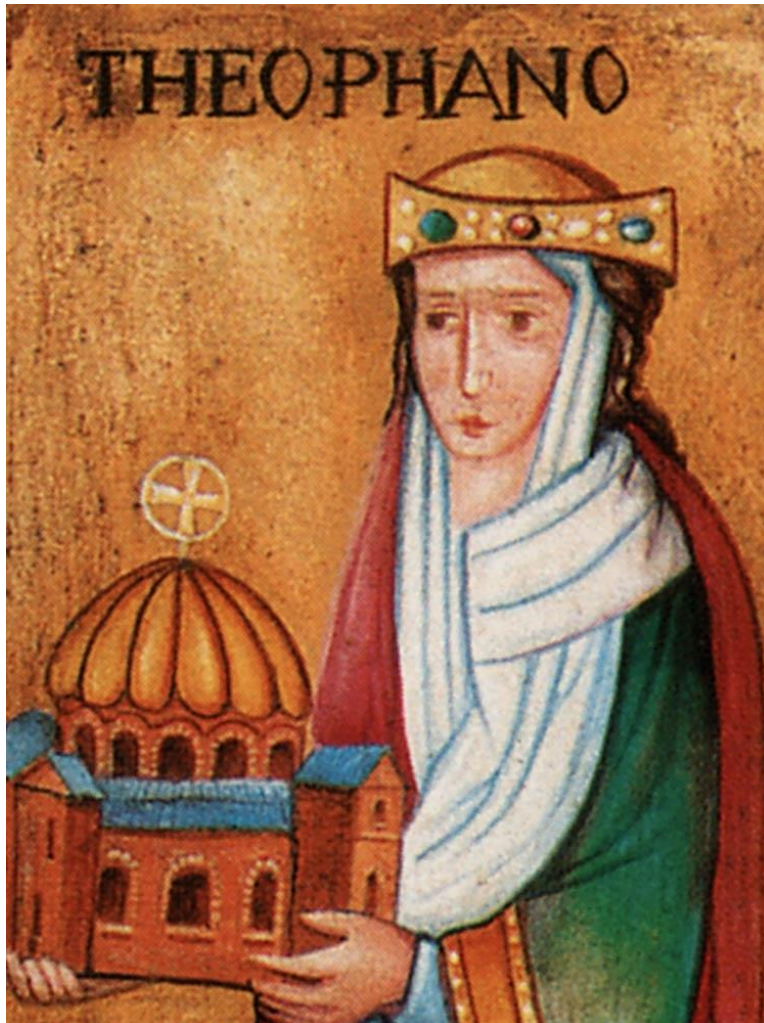
But her most lasting mark in Germany was the transformation of the German language by the so called "Greek Committee of Wise Men." She probably had as her model the introduction and codification of a written Slavic alphabet (still used today) by the Byzantine monks Cyril and Methodius. These "wise men" were scholars of the Constantinople School established by Emperor Constantine VII. When Theophano came to the German empire, there was as yet no simple official and popular language. Latin was spoken among clerks and educated lawyers, together with Saxon German, local German dialects and Slavic dialects (*Mundarten*), Polish, Hungarian, Frankish German (in the West, today's Belgium and Alsace). The 'wise men' modified the German language, introducing grammar and syntaxes based on the Greek and ancient Attic languages, as well as many Greek (especially scientific) words. Many German words with Greek roots originate from this period. This was the basis of what became later known as *Hochdeutsch* (High German). Bouradas (2013: 155-164) provides an extensive review of this. The work of the "wise men" was probably completed at the time of Theophano's death in 991.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.getty.edu/art/collection/objects/105133/unknown-maker-the-annunciation-german-about-1240/>

Theophano wanted to continue the marital relations between the two empires and arranged the marriage of her son and future Emperor Otto III to the Byzantine princess Zoe, daughter of Emperor Constantine VIII. However, there is a controversy among scholars on this point since there is a possibility that the Byzantine princess was not actually Zoe, but her sister Theodora (Davids 2002: 109).

**Image 2.** The separation of the Roman Empire into two parts



Source: <https://www.geni.com/people/Theophanu-Empress-Consort/3784382>

In September 994, Otto was deemed an adult and was crowned emperor on 21 May 996 in Rome at the age of 15. He died on 22 January 1002 without heirs. His future bride arrived in Bari in February 1002, where she and her retinue were informed of Otto's death. Thus, she had to return to Constantinople. With Otto III's death, the Ottonian dynasty came to an end. Possibly, if the Ottonian dynasty had not had such a fate, Byzantine-German ties in commerce, culture and international relations and

geopolitics could have become even stronger through the passage of time. Otto III's death may be seen as an "accident" in the Byzantine-Holy Roman Empire relationships. It actually raises the issue of the importance of random events in shaping future developments in the historical context.

But the Byzantine – Holy Roman Empire relations did not stop after the death of Kaiserin Theophano. They continued to exist in the later centuries, and between the 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries were primarily linked to the crusades. During the First Crusade period (1096–1099) the Byzantine Emperor Manuel I Komnenos (1143-1180) established friendly relationships with the Emperor Konrad III (1138-1152) of the Holy Roman Empire. Furthermore, during the Third Crusade period (1189–1192) the Byzantine Emperor John III Doukas Vatatzes (1222-1254), developed friendly relations with Emperor Frederick II Hohenstaufen (1220-1250) who, among other languages, spoke fluent Greek, since Greek, together with Latin and Arabic, were the official languages of his Sicilian-Southern Italian kingdom, where he had lived for most of his childhood.

## **5. Conclusion**

With the present contribution, we focused on some aspects regarding the deeds in politics, economics, religion and culture of a Kaiserin Theophano. We claim that with under her rule she contributed to the strengthening of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation in the e following centuries.

As its contribution to the further promotion and strengthening of the Holy Roman Empire is not so well known, we believe that with this article we contribute to the further promotion of this period of German history, giving inspiration for further research on related issues.

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