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### **Who Judged Quaestor Isocasios in Constantinople in the year 467?**

This article is devoted to the trial of the quaestor Isocasios which took place in Constantinople in the year 467. The interpretation of events that took place presents, however, some difficulties. According to Wilhelm Ensslin (1936), Isocasios should have been heard before a senate commission and before the city prefect (*indictum quinquevirale*). This explanation was opposed by Charles Henry Coster (1938) who claimed that, Isocasios would have been tried before a commission of magnates and the praetorian prefect.

In 1949 Ernst Stein expressed the opinion that the quaestor was tried before the senate of Constantinople.

A new examination of the chronicle of Malalas and other sources, which dealt with that trial may prove that we can find the traces of initiating of the procedure governed by Cod. Theod. 9.1.13 from 376 (trial before *indictum quinquevirale*), because the emperor Leo had remitted the case to Theophilus, governor of Bithynia, and Theophilus had undertaken the preliminary investigations. Yet, ultimately the final trial would have taken place before praetorian prefect Pusaesus and the senate. Because Isocasios was not a simple senator (or member of *ordo senatorius*) but a *quaestor* and *vir fillister in actu positus*, he had the privilege of being tried by the senate as whole.

TERESA WOLIŃSKA

### **The Struggle for Lazica between Byzantium and Persia in the Times of Justinian the Great (527–565)**

Lazica was a natural barrier against the attacks on the Byzantine territory from Persia and the north. It defended from the attacks of the Huns and other barbarians from the Caucasus. Natural conditions (mountains and deep forests) made the territory a difficult place for a potential aggressor. Lazica and the adjacent Iberia played therefore an important role during the wars waged continuously between Byzantium and Persia with brief intervals throughout the 6th century. Both countries tried to keep their protectorate over the Georgian areas. Besides the strategic ones, also religious grounds were important – the Christians who lived there sought aid from the Byzantine Empire.

A support to Gurgun, ruler of Iberia, by Justin I resulted in resuming the Byzantine- Persian warfare, which led to strengthening of the position of Persians in Iberia and entering Lazica by the Persian army. In 525 peace negotiations were undertaken; they failed though, as the Persians laid their claims to Lazica.

Two years later the Persians resumed military operations. Despite Byzantine assistance to the Lazians, no particular success was achieved. The peace treaty of 532 restored the status quo, maintaining the partition of Armenia and confirming the dominant status of the Persians in Georgia and of the Byzantines in Lazica. Thanks to another interval in the conflict Justinian was able to reinforce the position of the empire in the region, by fortifying mountain passes and by building fortresses in Lozorion and Petra.

Despite the above attempts, when a new conflict between Byzantium and Persia broke out, the situation in Lazica was even less favorable for the Byzantine empire than in 530s. The reason of that was the disappointment from the Lazians of the central-oriented policy of the emperor, trade limits, improper behavior of the imperial army etc. The result of all that was an outbreak of an anti-Roman uprising, whose leaders asked Choroas for intervention. He did not

hesitate, despite potential difficulties of such an expedition. In 541 the mighty Persian army entered the poorly defended country and occupied Petra.

The attitude of the Lazians and their king towards Choroës was not explicit. Those who had asked for intervention did not want the Persian ruler to capture their homes. They led him to Petra as they hated the commander of the Byzantine garrison. Lazian ruler, Gubazes (whose mother was Roman) sent envoys to Choroës, assuring of his loyalty. Later, however, he actively collaborated with the Byzantines.

The Byzantines were in retreat until 545. A peace treaty signed in that year did not cover Lazica, where the fights continued and as a result the inhabitants returned under the Roman rule. It was due to both the strengthening of the Byzantine forces and the military initiative of king Gubazes. At the end of 549 or beginning of 550 the military command in Lazica was taken over by Bessas who managed to reconquer Petra. The victory was wasted though, as the commander did not care to blockade the passages from Iberia. Faced with further Persian forces entering Lazica, the emperor had to send a bigger support too. In 554 there were some more Byzantine military commanders in Lazica, including Justin, son of Germanos, Martin and Buzes. None of them, however, was able to stop Mermeroes' army. In such conditions Gubazes informed the emperor of the situation and accused the Bessas of cowardice. As a result Bessas was called back and the command was taken over by Martin. Soon there came to a series of clashes between Gubazes and the Byzantine commanders (Martin and Rusticus), which ended up with an open conflict.

An intrigue of the latter resulted in the death of the king, accused of favoring the Persians. That nearly brought about a breach of the alliance with the empire. A quick reaction of the emperor, who punished Rusticus and recognized Gubazes' son as a new king prevented the breach.

In spite of all the described above difficulties, the military operations soon became more favorable for the empire. The aggressors were forced out of the territory. An armistice of 557 was finally extended to Lazica. The peace treaty of Dara of 561 finally returned Lazica to the Byzantines.

MIROSLAW J. LESZKA

### **Leo V and Khan Krum in the Light of an Excerpt from *Chronography* of Theophanes the Confessor (AM 6305)**

In the final part of his *Chronography* Theophanes the Confessor does not cast any direct accusations against emperor Leo V, the man by whom he was personally persecuted. The author also did not seize the opportunity of accusing the emperor indirectly, by creating a positive or at least neutral image of Bulgarian ruler, Khan Krum – a means he did not hesitate to use to reinforce the accusations against Nicephorus I. Contrary – the chronicler did not even decide to soften an inch the hostile attitude towards the Bulgarian ruler only in order to diminish the figure of Leo V.

The lack of criticism of Leo and the univocally negative image of the Khan (in particular naming him a new Sennacherim) make possible the opinion that the analyzed part of Theophanes' work may have been written after April of 814 (Krum's death took place on April 12/13) and before an openly iconoclastic policy was taken up by Leo (December 814 – April 815).