

= Domentziolus ( nephew of Phocas ) =

Domentziolus ( Greek : ????????????? ) or Domniziolus ( Greek : ????????????? ) was a nephew of the Byzantine emperor Phocas ( r . 602 ? 610 ) , appointed curopalates and general in the East during his uncle 's reign . He was one of the senior Byzantine military leaders during the opening stages of the Byzantine ? Sassanid War of 602 ? 628 . His defeats opened the way for the fall of Mesopotamia and Armenia and the invasion of Anatolia by the Persians . In 610 , Phocas was overthrown by Heraclius , and Domentziolus was captured but escaped serious harm .

= = Biography = =

= = = Background = = =

The exact parentage of Domentziolus is unclear : Phocas had two known brothers , Comentiolus and another also named Domentziolus , who has sometimes been suggested as the younger Domentziolus 's father . Shortly after the accession of Phocas , in 603 , the younger Domentziolus was raised to the titles of vir gloriosissimus , patricius and curopalates .

= = = General in the East = = =

Domentziolus , however , is better known as a general in the Byzantine @-@ Sassanid War of 602 ? 628 . Phocas 's elevation to the throne had been recognized by neither the Sassanid Persian shah Khosrau II , nor by Narses , the Byzantine governor of the province of Mesopotamia . The two had allied against Phocas , with Narses gathering his forces in Edessa , while waiting for Sassanid reinforcements . In 604 , Phocas appointed Domentziolus as magister militum per Orientem and sent him against the Persians . His predecessors Germanus and Leontius had both been defeated , the former killed in battle and the latter recalled and imprisoned by Phocas .

According to the Life of St. Theodore of Syceon , Domentziolus fell into a Persian ambush but was able to escape . In 604 / 605 , he also surrounded Narses and his troops , and persuaded him to surrender on guarantees of his personal safety . Phocas , nonetheless , had Narses executed by burning him alive . At about the same time , Dara , an important Byzantine city in Mesopotamia , fell to the Persians . Khosrau was encouraged to cease simply raiding the Byzantine provinces , instead attempting to conquer them . In 607 , he launched concurrent invasions on Mesopotamia and Armenia .

With the Byzantine forces at the Persian front having already suffered heavy casualties in previous confrontations , Domentziolus was unable to oppose the Sassanid raids during 605 . There was also little chance of further reinforcements . Phocas had concluded peace treaties with the Lombards and Avars in an attempt to secure control of his provinces in the Italian Peninsula and the Balkans . He had already stripped the Balkans of most of their military forces , reassigning them to the Persian front . But this policy had backfired with the undermanned Balkans facing a Slavic invasion , notably endangering Thessalonica .

While one Persian force , under Shahrbaraz , was able to secure control of Amida , Domentziolus concentrated his efforts on a second one under Shahin Vahmanzadegan . He was heavily defeated in the vicinity of Theodosiopolis ( modern Erzurum ) , and the Persians were able to recover most of Persarmenia , which had been ceded to Byzantium in 591 . In 608 , Shahrbaraz and Shahin continued their respective efforts to conquer Mesopotamia and Armenia .

By 609 , the Sassanid conquest of Mesopotamia and Armenia was mostly complete . Shahin next led an invasion of Cappadocia . Domentziolus 's forces were bypassed , while another kinsman of Phocas , called Sergius , attempted to face the invaders and was killed in combat . Sergius was possibly magister militum per Armeniam . Shahin managed to capture Caesarea Mazaca ( modern Kayseri ) , the main city of the area . His forces were then able to make raids " all the way to Chalcedon " in Bithynia , in the vicinity of Constantinople .

= = = Downfall of the regime = = =

Meanwhile , another front had opened . The Exarchate of Africa under Heraclius the Elder had revolted against Phocas . The situation in 609 ? 610 was quickly becoming dire for Domentziolus and all Phocas loyalists . Their defense against the Sassanids had failed . There were Persian forces in Mesopotamia , Armenia , Syria and the Anatolian provinces . Rebel Byzantine forces held Africa and Egypt . Slavs were occupying northern Illyricum . In Thessalonica and various towns of Anatolia and Syria , the Blues and Greens were settling their differences with open conflict . In areas of Syria , the Jews were revolting and lynching Christians . Even in Constantinople , the crowds taunted Phocas for his love of liquor , implying alcoholism .

In 610 , Shahrbaraz was approaching Antioch . But the Persian front was not the immediate threat : the rebels of Africa were . Having secured control of Egypt , they proceeded to invade Syria and Cyprus while a large fleet under Heraclius the Younger , a son of the exarch , set sail for Constantinople . Supporters from Sicily , Crete and Thessalonica were joining his campaign . The rebels reached Constantinople in October 610 . The only forces available to Phocas to defend the city were the Excubitors of his bodyguard and the irregular forces of the Blues and Greens , the city 's racing factions . Priscus , the commander of the Excubitors , chose the moment to reveal his allegiance to Heraclius , having apparently secretly conspired for some time . The Greens also changed sides . Constantinople fell with relative ease .

Heraclius the Younger became the new Byzantine emperor . Phocas was executed , along with several of his kinsmen and loyalists . Domentziolus too was sentenced to death , but was pardoned and released after the intercession of Theodore of Syceon . Nothing further is known of him after that .

= = = Family = = =

According to the hagiography of Theodore of Syceon , Domentziolus was married to a lady named Irene , and had three sons . Elizabeth Dawes summarizes the tale given as following : " Domnitiolus , patrician and curopalates , asks Theodore to visit him in Arcadianae . His wife Eirene has no children : the saint blesses her and promises her three children - and they will be boys . All the male and female slaves of the household are brought to Theodore for his blessing . A slave girl had long been ill , troubled by a hidden demon . He beats on her breast and the demon declares itself . Then the Saint laying her on the ground Put his foot on her neck , turned his eyes to the east and uttered a silent prayer . At the end of his prayer he recited aloud the doxology of the Holy Trinity . For some time the slave girl remained speechless and then was completely cured . Later Eirene gave birth to three sons , as the Saint had prophesied . The conception of her first son immediately followed the Saint 's prayer . Emperor and Patriarch say farewell to Theodore and he returns to his monastery . " Since Theodore died by 613 , the tale would have to occur prior to this date .