



HORMOZD (2)

HORMOZD (Ormisdas), a brother of the Sasanian great king Šāpur II (r. 307-79 C.E.), who participated in the emperor Julian's Persian expedition of 363 C.E. He was one of the eight known sons of Hormozd II (q.v.), and was imprisoned by the nobles who had done away with two of his elder brothers and declared another, Šāpur (II), king of kings (Zosimus, 2.27; Zonaras, 13.5; cf. Suidas, s.v. "Marusas"; Ammianus Marcellinus had related the story of this Hormozd, but the account is lost: 16.10.16). After a while, Hormozd managed to escape (with the help of his wife and mother) first to Armenia and from there to the Byzantine emperor Constantine, who received him with great honor and appointed him a cavalry commander, hoping to use him as a rival against his brother, Šāpur II (Zosimus, 2.27; Zonaras, 13.5; Ammianus, 16.10.16, cit.; John of Antioch, frag. 178 in Müller, p. 605). Šāpur tried in vain to appease his brother, even sending to him the wife who had facilitated his escape (Suidas, loc. cit.); but Hormozd, already an enthusiastic philhellene, felt much at home with the Romans and served them with loyalty and distinction, eventually becoming Julian's guide on Persia's topography, military capabilities, and political affairs. He led (with another Roman general) Julian's left wing and several times tried to win over Persian defenders of forts and towns, but usually received insults and was called a traitor (Ammianus, 24.1.2, 8; 2.4, 11, 20; 5.4; Libanius, *Orations* 18.258; Zosimus, 3.11.3, 13.3-4, 15.4-6, 18.1, 23.4, 29.2; 4.30.5). Once he was ambushed by the Persian general Surena and escaped only because the overflow of the Euphrates proved too much for his pursuers (Ammianus, 24.2.4; Zosimus, 3.15.5-6). Julian intended to install him as his client king over Persia (Libanius, *Epitome* 1042), but the expedition



failed and Julian was killed. Hormozd returned to the Roman empire. A rock-relief at Naqš-e Rostam in Fārs (Sarre and Herzfeld, pp. 74-76, Pl. XL; Schmidt, pp. 136-37, Pl. 95; Von Gall, pp. 33d-34) shows Šāpur II (Schmidt, loc. cit.; contra von Gall) on horseback victorious over a mounted warrior, whose Persian royal origins are “indicated by two broad wavy ribbons floating behind the helmet” (Schmidt), but who wears the “coal-scuttle” helmet of the Roman soldiers (Bivar, p. 281 and fig. 19). The only Persian prince in Roman helmet opposing Šāpur II was his brother Hormozd. The relief thus symbolizes the king’s victory over his romanized brother.

Hormozd left a son, also called Hormozd (Ormisdas), who “was given the rank of proconsul, and . . . the control of civil and military affairs” by Procopius. Zosimus (4.35.5) described Hormozd’s and his wife’s remarkable courage and military talent. His family seems to have been absorbed into the Roman aristocracy. Hormisdas, the pretorian, prefect of the East in 448-50, was probably related to this house (Jones, I, p. 552), as was probably Hormisdas, who became pope on 20 July 514 and died on 6 August 523 (Chapin).

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