

### 8.3. The GTR-war of the 6th c. A.D. and the Nika riot of the 6th c. A.D.

As we see, the GTR-war is an exceptionally important event reflected in many chronicles of different peoples. The above chronicles investigated by us were related, mostly, to events occurring in Italy and around the Italian Rome. However, it is hard to imagine that the same war was in no way considered by Byzantine chronicles describing the reign of Justinian, one of the GTR-war's principal heroes and "principal king" (who did not take part in the battles himself).

It turns out that the GTR-war, in fact, was considered by "purely" Byzantine history as the well-known Nika riot, which took place in 532 A.D., i.e., almost when the GTR-war started in 534–535 A.D. Let me supply the data demonstrating that the legend of the Nika riot is, in most part, isomorphic to the GTR-war in the 6th c. A.D.

The principal documents describing Justinian's reign in New Rome are the books of Procopius of Caesarea. In one of the "Procopius' " texts ("Procopius's History of His Own Time"), Justinian is represented as a great ruler, and the treatment is in favourable terms, whereas in others (e.g., the *Historia arcana* or "Secret History of Procopius") the same Justinian is described in a totally opposite manner. Traditional history even has a legend of a "two-faced" Procopius, who wrote panegyrics to Justinian in the daytime, and filled the pages of the *Historia arcana* with the description of Justinian's atrocities at night. However, we are not interested here in the problem of these texts' authorship, which was ascribed to "Procopius", since it is immaterial for our analysis. Here is the description of the Nika riot.

The uprising shook the empire in 532 A.D. For a reason which is not very clear, a large-scale uprising broke out in New Rome without any leaders who would, e.g., fight for regal power, which was very strange. The mutiny lasted for a short time (no more than several weeks), and was characterized by its extreme extent; in military confrontations, great military forces took part; it was not just a mutiny, but a large-scale civil war. New Rome was burning. The mutiny was started by two "parties", Venets and Prasins united against Justinian, but not following any "positive" programme. Justinian's army commander Belisarius (!) was ordered to suppress the mutiny, and led into the battle a powerful Gothic under Mund's command garrison together with Roman (Romaic) troops. In fear, Justinian hid in the palace, and did not take part personally in fighting the "mutineers" (in contrast to Belisarius), not storming the palace for some reason, though, according to Procopius, there were no special fortifications around. Belisarius soon managed to lure the rioting crowd into the hippodrome (circus) by a non-trivial trick, and there massacred a lot of them.

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The Gothic war in the 6th c. A.D.

The Nika riot in the 6th c. A.D.

1a. Well-known author describing Gothic war was Procopius of Caesarea. His principal work the *Gothic War* from which this war's history is restored

1b. Well-known author describing Nika riot was Procopius of Caesarea, his text being unique primary source from which this mutiny's history is restored [105]