

## BASIL AND THE ISAURIAN UPRISING OF A.D. 375

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ISAURIA WAS THE RUGGED TERRITORY of southern Anatolia where the Taurus juts south into the Mediterranean between the plains of Adana and Pamphylia. It was first penetrated by the Romans in the first century B.C., but was subsumed under their control only gradually—some would say never. Because of its forbidding terrain, the region played home to brigands throughout its history. Its rocky clefts and deep defiles, penetrating to almost three thousand meters in some areas, offered ample refuge to those seeking shelter from state authorities.<sup>1</sup> At times these brigands became powerful enough that they posed a threat well beyond the region and commanded the attention of imperial troops. This appears to have happened with increasing frequency in the later Roman empire. Beginning in the third century, Isaurian uprisings grew so intense that the region became a permanent security threat well within the boundaries of what is generally regarded as “Roman territory.”<sup>2</sup>

The phenomenon of brigandage and revolt in Isauria has been studied extensively in recent years.<sup>3</sup> Even so, problems remain. Often these are only satisfactorily resolved with the introduction of new evidence. For example, some had argued that the testimonies we have for an uprising in the 270s are ill-founded. The *Historia Augusta* reports that Probus suppressed an Isaurian leader named Palfuerius and pacified the region by settling veterans in the highlands.<sup>4</sup> Given this source’s general lack of reliability, the incident is naturally suspect. Indeed, R. Syme argued that the entire report was a mendacious retrojection by our fourth-century author of a fourth-century problem into a third-century context.<sup>5</sup> In fact, however, the *Historia Augusta* is not alone in testifying to an uprising under Probus. Zosimus also reports that an Isaurian, whom he names Lydius,

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<sup>1</sup>On topography, see Hild and Hellenkemper 1990: 22–29; Mutaian 1988: 14–20; Magie 1950: 266–270.

<sup>2</sup>SHA *Tyr. Trig.* 26.6: *etenim in medio Romani nominis solo regio eorum novo genere custodiarum quasi limes includitur, locis defensa, non <b>om<i>nibus*; cf. *Expositio Totius Mundi* 45; Amm. Marc. 14.8.2. On Isauria as a breakaway territory from the third century onward, Lewin 1991: 172–180; MacMullen 1988: 181–183; Rougé 1966: 293–294, 300–301. Shaw (1990) contends that the Isaurian hinterland never broke away since it was never truly controlled by the Roman state in the first place.

<sup>3</sup>For surveys of Isaurian brigandage, Lenski 1999: 417–431; Lewin 1991; Shaw 1990; Minor 1979; Rougé 1966. On brigandage in the ancient world more generally, Shaw 1984; 1993; Pekáry 1987. For studies of brigandage in other regions, Drinkwater 1992; Drexhage 1988; Isaac 1984.

<sup>4</sup>SHA *Prob.* 16.4–17.1; cf. 19.8.

<sup>5</sup>Syme 1968: 43–52.

led a band of brigands into Pamphylia and Lycia during the reign of Probus but was eventually bottled up in Cremna by imperial forces and killed. Here again, scholarly skepticism has led F. Paschoud, Zosimus' most recent commentator, to cast doubt on the significance of this testimony.<sup>6</sup> S. Mitchell's archeological survey of Cremna has, however, tipped the balance in Zosimus' favor. Mitchell has located the Roman siege mound west of the city, the Roman circumvallations and a dedicatory inscription to Probus set up by Terentius Marcianus *praeses provinciae Lyciae Pamphyliae*.<sup>7</sup> Zosimus thus stands acquitted and the *Historia Augusta*, though probably confused on details, is shown to contain at least some kernel of truth.

In light of this new evidence we can safely say that the sources knew more than their critics. We might also be led to ask whether other ancient testimonies of Isaurian revolt which have been dismissed by modern critics should not be reevaluated. In this paper, I will deal with just such an incident. Zosimus, whose account of the uprising of Lydius stood up so well to F. Paschoud's criticism, reports another Isaurian revolt around the year 375 which Paschoud has similarly dismissed. Naturally one would expect the same revolt to occur in Ammianus, who covers this period in the extant parts of his narrative. Because, however, Ammianus does not mention an Isaurian event in 375, Paschoud and others have been inclined to write off Zosimus' account as a chronologically confused retelling of another uprising which Ammianus locates in 367/8.

I will assemble several pieces of evidence, only some of which have been adduced previously, in order to demonstrate that Zosimus was in fact correct to locate this uprising where he did. I will begin with a brief review of the Isaurian incidents detailed by Ammianus, particularly the revolt of 367/8 (section I). After clarifying the evidence for this earlier revolt, I will demonstrate that Zosimus' account of the 375 revolt is quite distinct. I will then offer a number of other sources, particularly a group of letters written by Basil of Caesarea in 375, which lend solid support to Zosimus' version (section II). Finally, I will close with an investigation of how this new evidence from Basil helps illuminate some broader issues about Isauria and the role it played in southern Anatolia and across the eastern empire (section III).

# I. THE ISAURIAN UPRISINGS IN AMMIANUS

Ammianus reports a total of three Isaurian revolts. In 353/4 the natives of the Taurus rose up when the citizens of Iconium (Konya) executed some

<sup>6</sup>Zos. 1.69–70. Paschoud 1971–89: 1.60, n. 98: “la place accordée à cet épisode est sans aucune proportion avec son importance modeste etc. . . .”

<sup>7</sup>Mitchell 1995: 177–218. The inscription is firmly dated between late summer 278 and early 279. There were already strong contemporary epigraphic indications of serious military operations in the region from Sagalassus, Termessus, and Trebenna: see Christol 1978; Zimmermann 1996. Gilliam (1974: 186–187) argues that Diocletian's construction of a military parade ground at Ayasofya (probably ancient Colybrassos) can be associated with the aftermath of this uprising.

of their number in the amphitheater.<sup>8</sup> Isaurian raiders attacked major cities both north and south of the mountains and eventually besieged the legions garrisoned in Seleucia (Silifke) until comitatensian reinforcements drove them back into the hills. Again in 359 Ammianus relates how the Isaurians revolted, forcing Constantius to endow Bassidius Lauricius with the title of *comes* and send him against the raiders.<sup>9</sup> An inscription from the crossing of the northern branch of the Calycadnus (Göksu) on the road between Germanicopolis (Ermenek) and Laranda (Karaman) confirms that Lauricius recaptured a *castellum* there which had "long been held by brigands" and regarrisoned it under the name Antiochia.<sup>10</sup> A second contemporary inscription reports that a certain Aur. Ious[tus] built a defensive wall at the highland town of Irenopolis (Irnebol), near the crossing of the southern Calycadnus on the same route.<sup>11</sup>

A third revolt reported in Ammianus also finds confirmation in epigraphic sources. In the later 360s, Ammianus (27.9.6–7) reports that the Isaurians once again rose up and attacked the neighboring territories of Cilicia and Pamphylia. They enjoyed early successes because they met with little resistance. In the absence of imperial help, the *vicarius Asiae* Musonius felt compelled to move against the raiders from Sardis, ca 500 km to the west-northwest.<sup>12</sup> Though he had no official military command, Musonius managed to assemble a troop of light armed *diogmitae* and march them into the Taurus where he and his men were ambushed and massacred.<sup>13</sup> Only after this failed expedition by a locally based official were imperial troops sent to drive the raiders back into the hills and strike a peace with them.<sup>14</sup> Once this had been accomplished, the Isaurian governor Fl. Uranius, apparently anticipating similar troubles, constructed a fortified harbor at

<sup>8</sup> Amm. Marc. 14.2.1–20. On the date, see Barnes 1989: 418–419. For Isaurian revolts in Ammianus, see especially Hopwood 1999; Matthews 1989: 355–367; Santos Yanguas 1977. Ammianus says that the Iconians acted *praeter morem* in feeding Isaurians to the beasts at an *amphitheatrali spectaculo*. Hopwood (1983: 180) notes, however, that this may have been common. For Isaurian captives featuring in triumphal spectacles, SHA *Prob.* 19.8; Evagrius *Hist. Eccl.* 3.35; Priscian *Pan.* lines 171–173.

<sup>9</sup> Amm. Marc. 19.13.1–2. Lauricius remained in Seleucia to oversee the Homoian Council, which met there in September 359: Sozom. *Hist. Eccl.* 4.22.2; Socrates *Hist. Eccl.* 2.39.6; Epiphanius *Panarion* 73.25.3. On the council, see Barnes 1993: 146–148.

<sup>10</sup> ILS 740 = CIL III 6733 *castellum diu ante a latronibus possessum*. On the site, see the tantalizing description offered by its discoverer, Davis 1879: 365–366, and the bibliography at Hellenkemper 1986: 634, n. 32.

<sup>11</sup> Bean and Mitford 1970: no. 231; for its date, see p. 206.

<sup>12</sup> Eunap. *Hist. fr.* 43 Blockley. Pamphylia—though not Isauria or Cilicia—fell under the jurisdiction of the *vicarius Asiae* (*Not. Dign. [or.]* 2.31, 24.12), explaining Musonius' decision to take action so far from his residence.

<sup>13</sup> On *diogmitae*, see the bibliography at Robert 1994: 91 s.v. μετὰ διωγμῶν. Especially revealing is the fine relief at Robert 1937: pl. II.2.

<sup>14</sup> Amm. Marc. 27.9.7: *excitae tandem copiae* should be taken to refer to comitatensian units sent some time after the destruction of Musonius' civic forces.

Corasium about ten kilometers north of the mouth of the Calycadnus.<sup>15</sup> At the same time, Cilicia's governor rebuilt the stadium in Tarsus and dedicated three statues to Valentinian, Valens, and Gratian, perhaps in thanksgiving for their aid in suppressing the Isaurian attacks.<sup>16</sup> Similar dedicatory bases are found in Iconium and Pisidian Antioch.<sup>17</sup> If these were all thank offerings to Valens for the relief he had provided, the raiding must have affected not just Cilicia and Pamphylia, as reported in Ammianus, but also Lycaonia and Pisidia.

All three uprisings reported in Ammianus were too large to be dealt with by anything less than imperial intervention. So grave had the Isaurian problem become in the later fourth century that emperors were forced to commit mobile troops to the region every five to ten years. It is curious that in the last instance the emperor Valens was willing to send troops only after a smaller mission, that of Musonius, had failed. Why? A firmer date for the revolt could explain. Ammianus locates the incident between events of 364 and 368. Musonius' prefecture, which could not have begun before 367, further narrows the field.<sup>18</sup> Above all, a passage from the eighth oration of Themistius, delivered to Valens in early 368, seems to clinch the date. There Themistius makes a cryptic allusion to the Isaurian troubles which seems to imply that they were still ongoing as he spoke.<sup>19</sup> If the Isaurians were in revolt in 367 and early 368, there is good reason for the failure of Valens to dispatch troops against them quickly. All through 367, when they began their uprising, Valens and his mobile army were occupied along the Danube with a war against the Goths. Only in 368, when the river flooded and

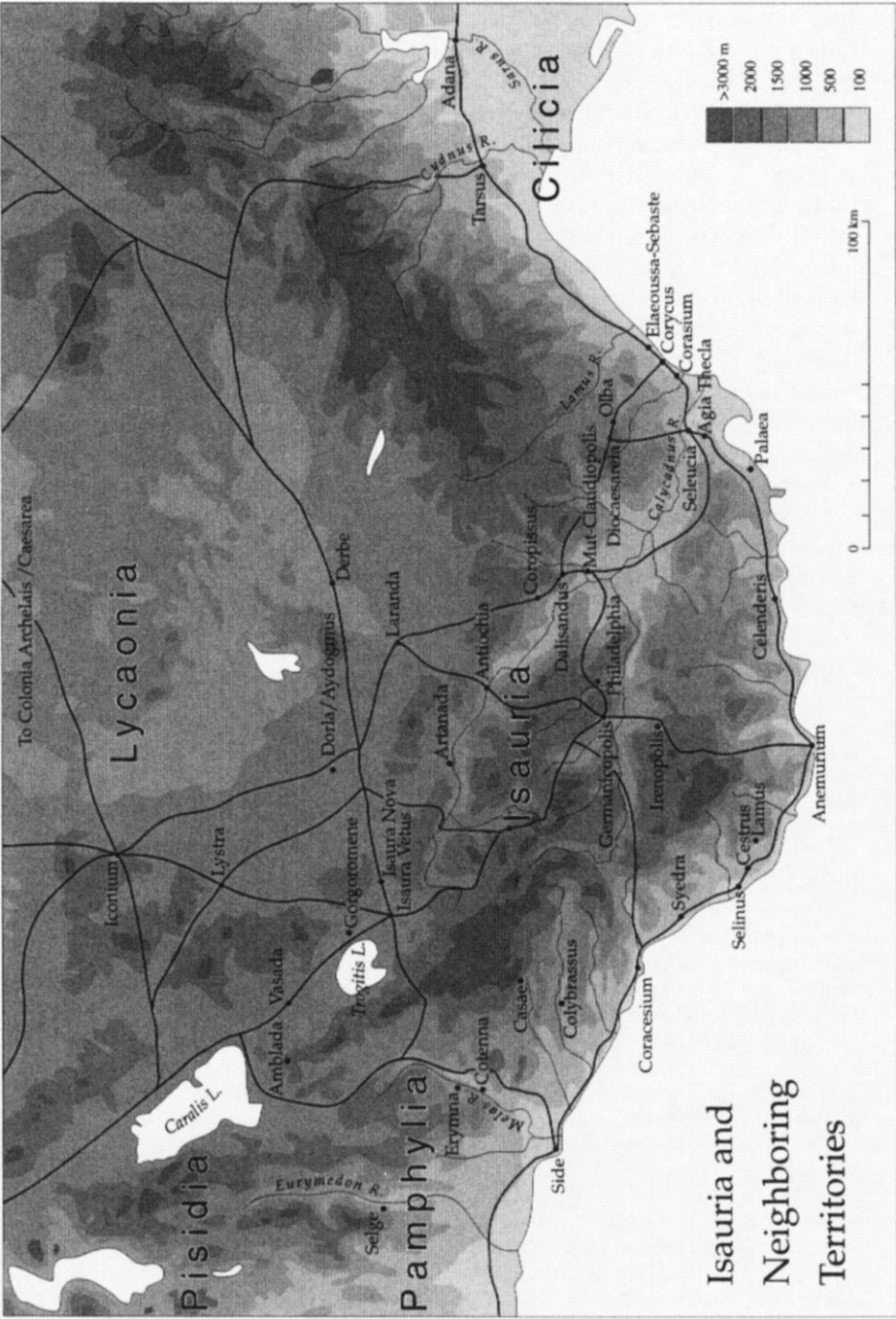
<sup>15</sup> *CIG* 4430 = *MAMA* III 102, n. 1 with pp. 102–107; cf. Hild and Hellenkemper 1990: 311–312. Hild and Hellenkemper (1990: 37, 260) also believe that the walls around the shrine of Thecla and those at the site of modern Kalın Ören (Titiopolis?) were constructed at this time; cf. Hellenkemper 1986: 628–631. On problems with the identification of Kalın Ören with Titiopolis, see Russell 1995: 103–108.

<sup>16</sup> Stadium: *CIG* 4437. Statue bases: *CIL* III 13619–621, two of which were found in Hierapolis-Castabala and the third a few hours south of there.

<sup>17</sup> Iconium: *CIG* 3992. Antioch near Pisidia: Levick 1965: 59–62 = *AE* 1965, 15. Levick also associates the inscription with the 367/8 revolt.

<sup>18</sup> Ammianus inserts his account between events in Africa from 364 to 368 (27.9.1–5; cf. *PLRE* I Romanus 3 on the date) and the urban prefecture of Praetextatus in 367/8 (27.9.8–10; cf. Chastagnol 1962: 171–178 on the date). On Musonius' prefecture, *PLRE* I Musonius 2.

<sup>19</sup> Alluding to Homer (*Il.* 13.3–5), Themistius (*Or.* 8.117a) compares Valens to Zeus, observing angrily the injustices done to his charges, first Thracians, then Mysians, then Phoenicians. Themistius seems to refer to specific incidents, though his allusions are not easy to untangle. In 367/8 Valens was protecting Thrace from the Goths (*Amm. Marc.* 27.5) and was concerned with the Phoenicians who were then suffering from the depredations of the Maratocupreni, a Syrian bandit group (*Amm. Marc.* 28.2.11–14 with Lenski 1995a: 355). If the "Mysians," proverbial victims of brigandage (*Zen. Par.* 5.15), can be taken to refer generically to Asians, Themistius must be hinting at this Isaurian uprising. "Mysian" is used elsewhere to allude to the victims of Isaurian attacks (*Vie et Miracles de Sainte Thècle* Mir. 32 [Dagron 1978: 374], hereafter *VMThecla*). On the date and circumstances of *Or.* 8, see Vanderspoel 1995: 167–171, 251. Heather and Matthews (1991: 13–26) add much, although their identification of the allusion at Them. *Or.* 117a (32, n. 59) with the revolt of Mavia (A.D. 377/8) must be rejected as chronologically impossible. On Mavia's revolt, see below, n. 24.



prevented military action in *Gothia*, would mobile troops have become available for action in Anatolia.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, Valens' earlier demand for mobile troops may have forced him to reduce the garrison of Seleucia and thereby encourage the Isaurian outbreak in the first place.<sup>21</sup>

## II. THE UPRISING OF 375

Ammianus thus reports three uprisings, datable to 353/4, 359, and 367/8 respectively. He was apparently extremely concerned with the major events in this region and extremely well informed about them (cf. 14.8.1–2). Moreover, Ammianus is generally remarkably reliable. His last two accounts find confirmation in epigraphic sources and his first is endowed with enough circumstantial detail to be considered beyond question.<sup>22</sup> It seems unlikely then that Ammianus would have omitted a fourth major revolt occurring within the chronological limits of his *Histories* (353–378). In fact, although Zosimus reports a revolt in the context of events around 375, F. Paschoud and several others have dismissed his notice as a chronologically confused version of Ammianus'

<sup>20</sup> On the flood, Amm. Marc. 27.5.5. On Valens' first Gothic war, Heather 1991: 116–121; Wanke 1990: 84–110; Lenski 1995a: 206–264.

<sup>21</sup> Valens seems to have mobilized one of the three legions which had been stationed in Seleucia for use in his forces against the usurper Procopius. In his account of the Isaurian revolt of 353/4, Ammianus (14.2.14) informs us that the garrison of Seleucia had three legions, yet the *Notitia Dignitatum* (ca 395) records only two, the *legio II Isaura* and the *legio III Isaura* (*Not. Dign. [or.]* 29.7–8). By this point the *I Isaura* had been mobilized as a pseudocomitatensian unit under the *Comes Orientis* (*Not. Dign. [or.]* 7.56). Hoffmann (1969–70: 1.420) suggested that the unit was mobilized in 363 when the Euphrates frontier was reorganized to accommodate territorial concessions to Persia. Hoffmann's argument is based on the hypothesis that Valentinian was the first to mobilize *pseudocomitatenses* and that the *I Isaura* fit into this larger program which was prompted by the need to absorb large numbers of displaced garrison troops after the 363 treaty. This hypothesis fails, however, since at least one unit of *pseudocomitatenses*, the *legio I Armeniaca* (*Not. Dign. [or.]* 7.49), had already been mobilized under Julian: see Eutychianus fr. 1 (*FHG* IV 6). Valentinian was thus not the mastermind behind the mobilization of all early *pseudocomitatenses*. Nevertheless, Hoffmann must be correct to assume that he did mobilize the units immediately preceding the *I Isaura* in the *laterculus* (*I Italica*, *IV Italica*, and *VI Parthica*). All had been garrisoned in what became Persian territory under the treaty of 363 and needed to be recommissioned as mobile units. The *I Isaura*, by contrast, was in no way implicated in that treaty. Its location in the *laterculus* does, however, indicate mobilization under Valens since it follows the *VI Parthica* (mobilized 363) but precedes the *Balistarii Theodosiaci* (mobilized under Theodosius I: 379–395). If Valens did mobilize the *I Isaura*, the most logical context for this would have been in 365/6 when he was near the province—based in Caesarea and Ancyra—and desperate for troops for use in his campaigns against Procopius: cf. Lenski 1995a: 138–139. A fragment of Eunapius (*Hist. fr.* 35 Blockley), which describes the commander Aelianus from Isaurian Syedra and how he achieved notoriety under Valens, may point to a general whose career took off when his unit was mobilized early in the reign.

<sup>22</sup> Sabbah (1987: 163–165) argues that Ammianus' source for the 353/4 revolt was the report of Castricius, the *comes* who quelled the rebellion, obviously a particularly solid authority on its events. Cf. Syme 1968: 45.

revolt of 367/8.<sup>23</sup> These scholars remain skeptical that Zosimus, who is generally regarded as unreliable, can be used to supplement Ammianus, who is usually unimpeachable. As we have seen, however, such skepticism should not go untested.

It could be argued from Ammianus that the Isaurians are unlikely to have risen up again so soon after the peace they arranged in 368. At the conclusion of that peace, the author claims that they remained quiet for many years to come: *immobiles diu mansere* (27.9.7). Ammianus' *diu* is, however, not as long as we may suspect. At the beginning of his notice on the 359 uprising, Ammianus similarly relates that the Isaurians had been *diu quieti* despite their revolt only five years earlier. At the close of the same revolt, he claims that they refrained from major uprisings *diu* although he reports another revolt in 367/8, only eight years later (19.13.1, 2). The report of long term peace after 367/8 need not then imply more than five to ten years.

Even so, to accept a revolt in 375 causes discomfort. Ammianus, generally our most reliable source for military history in the fourth century, would have to have omitted a major event from his list of Isaurian uprisings. This too, however, can be explained. Though Ammianus covers Gothic and Saracen affairs in some detail through most of his narrative, he entirely omits a Gothic civil war (ca 372) and a Saracen uprising (ca 377/8)—both attested elsewhere—from what would have been their rightful place in his thirty-first book.<sup>24</sup> In his drive to present a well crafted account of the events leading up to the battle of Adrianople in this book, Ammianus seems to have glossed over incidental events which would have interrupted the flow of his narrative. These apparently included the Isaurian uprising of 375.

Now to Zosimus. He reports that Isaurian raids stretched west through Pamphylia into Lycia and he notes that when the emperor learned of them, he was residing at Antioch. This information confirms that we are dealing with a separate revolt from that of 367/8: Valens had never been to Antioch as emperor before 370 and the 367/8 revolt did not—according to Ammianus or our epigraphic sources—reach Lycia. Zosimus further relates that Valens quickly sent a sufficiently large force to repel the Isaurians. As we have seen, in 367/8, Valens only sent adequate troops after a long delay. Thus, the internal evidence of Zosimus already points to a separate uprising. So does comparison with Eunapius of Sardis, a contemporary of the events in question and the sole source for Zosimus in this period. A fragment from the *Histories* of Eunapius makes it clear that he detailed two Isaurian revolts under Valens (364–378) and deliberately

<sup>23</sup> Zos. 4.20.1–2 with Paschoud 1971–89: 2.2.371–372, n. 141; cf. Piganiol 1972: 177, n. 1; Rolfe 1939: 58, n. 3; Santos Yanguas 1977: 366–367. Shaw (1990: 244) omits Zos. 4.20.1–2 from his survey.

<sup>24</sup> On the Gothic civil war, Socrates *Hist. Eccl.* 4.33.1–4 with Lenski 1995b. On the Saracen uprising, Socrates *Hist. Eccl.* 4.36; Sozom. *Hist. Eccl.* 6.38; Rufinus *Hist. Eccl.* 11.6; Theodoret *Hist. Eccl.* 4.23 with Shahid 1984: 139–158; Bowersock 1980.

narrated both—τὸ κατὰ Μουσώνιον ἐπεισόδιον of 367/8 and a second of equal gravity—at the same place in his history.<sup>25</sup> The Eunapiian fragments on these events were copied by Constantine Porphyrogenitus (*Exc. de sent.* 40–44) between a notice on the Hunnic invasion of 375 (*Exc. de sent.* 39) and another on the early stages of the Gothic revolt in 377 (*Exc. de sent.* 45–46). Since Constantine copied Eunapius in the order of his narrative, Eunapius must have placed the second of his Isaurian revolts in this time-frame. This coincides well with Zosimus, who locates his account between the death of Valentinian I and subsequent election of Valentinian II in 375 (4.17–19) and the Hunnic invasion and Gothic migration and revolt between 375 and 377 (4.20.3–6).<sup>26</sup>

Though the Eunapiian fragment confirms a second Isaurian uprising under Valens and indicates that Zosimus was correct to place it in the later years of Valens' reign, the exact date is not easy to determine. Neither Eunapius nor Zosimus were particularly reliable on chronology,<sup>27</sup> nor do the rather broad termini between which their notices are placed, 375 and 377, allow for annalistic precision. For this reason, not only have many dismissed Zosimus' report, even those who accept it have offered a confusing array of dates for its occurrence. Most scholars have favored a late date of 377, though Syme preferred 376.<sup>28</sup> Hopwood offers 375 in one article, 375/6 in another, and 378 in a third, and Dagron even believed that Ammianus recorded the beginning and Zosimus the end of one nine-year event (368–377).<sup>29</sup> Though this last seems unlikely, there is no way to determine between the remaining dates based solely on Zosimus and Eunapius: their chronologies are simply too imprecise for such fine distinctions. Fortunately, however, we have further sources on the matter which not only seal the case for Zosimus' account, but also pinpoint the date precisely to 375.

The first of these, the *Life and Miracles of St. Thecla*, tells the story of Paul's apocryphal female disciple Thecla and, more importantly, the miracles worked at her shrine in Isaurian Seleucia. Though the *Life and Miracles* dates to the mid-fifth century, it collects stories related to events from much earlier. One describes the victories of the pious and renowned στρατιάρχης "Saturnilus," who has been plausibly identified by G. Dagron as Valens' general Saturninus.<sup>30</sup> *The Life and Miracles* informs us that Saturnilus(-inus) was sent by the emperor with

<sup>25</sup> Eunap. *Hist.* fr. 43.4 Blockley. Building on Goulet 1980: 65–66, Blockley (1983: 141, n. 97) recognized the implication of Eunapius for Zos. 4.20.1–2.

<sup>26</sup> On Valentinian's death, see *PLRE* I Flavius Valentinianus 7. On the Hunnic invasion and Gothic embassy, Heather 1995: 5–10; Wanke 1990: 116–122.

<sup>27</sup> Eunapius (*Hist.* fr. 1 Blockley) admitted in his preface that οἱ δὲ ἀκριβεῖς λογισμοὶ τῶν χρόνων were of little concern to him. Zosimus, whose narrative for these years is built on Eunapius, is even less accurate: cf. Paschoud 1971–89: 1.lxviii; Mendelssohn 1887: xlviii.

<sup>28</sup> Rougé 1966: 295; Minor 1979: 122–123; Hild and Hellenkemper 1990: 37; cf. Syme 1968: 295.

<sup>29</sup> Hopwood 1986: 344; 1989: 191; 1999: 232; Dagron 1978: 116–118.

<sup>30</sup> *VMThecla* Mir. 13. See Dagron 1978: 117 for the identification of Saturnilus with *PLRE* I Flavius Saturninus 10. Dagron also dates Mir. 27, the capture of Selinus, to Valens' reign though no circumstantial detail confirms this. Cf. Dagron 1978: 13–19 for the date and composition of the work.



a large and well trained army to combat the Isaurians, that he eventually won victories against them, and that he made dedications at the shrine of Thecla in thanksgiving for the saint's miraculous aid. The Thecla story thus provides a name for Valens' general (*comes*)<sup>31</sup> and, in so doing, also points to a terminus for the conclusion of the revolt. As alluded to, the year 375 saw the Huns seize the territory north of the lower Danube and thereby displace the Goths who had inhabited it. In 376 Valens permitted these Goths to relocate to Thrace, inside Roman territory, but during the process of transplantation, they broke into revolt.<sup>32</sup> Beginning in 377, Valens was forced to send mobile troops against them and Ammianus reports that among these was a division under the command of Saturninus (31.8.3–5), the commander in the *Miracles*. The Isaurian revolt he was suppressing must then have ended before his departure for Thrace in summer 377.

Epigraphy helps fill out the argument. A pair of funerary inscriptions of Seleucia report the death of two members of the *sagittarii dominici*. This was a mobile unit newly constituted by Valens, which in 374 seems to have been led by the *comes* Daniel and the *tribunus* Barzimeres.<sup>33</sup> Barzimeres is later attested among those who traveled to Thrace with Saturninus in 377 (31.8.9). The inscriptions may then record two casualties from a unit sent with the same general to Isauria in 375 and withdrawn with him by 377. Milestones also help. The road between Colonia Archelais and Iconium is littered with a concentration of eight milestones from the reign of Valens, Gratian, and Valentinian II (November 375–August 378).<sup>34</sup> This was a natural supply route from the Armenian frontier, where one of Valens' divisions was stationed at the time, into Iconium, where troops could be easily organized for an attack against the Isaurians from the north.<sup>35</sup> The milestones indicate that Valens' forces did major work on this road in precisely the period when Zosimus describes the revolt. A ninth milestone on the same route dedicated to [Valentinian, Valens,] and Gratian indicates that this work had begun before the announcement of the death of Valentinian I (in November 375) had reached the region.<sup>36</sup> The repairs cannot, then, have lasted too late into the following year. In what follows we will see further testimony that Valens' forces used this route on their way to the area earlier in 375. We might

<sup>31</sup> Saturninus was serving as *comes* ca 373 (Basil *Ep.* 132) and was first promoted to *magister equitum* in 377 (Amm. Marc. 31.8.3).

<sup>32</sup> See Heather 1991: 122–142; Wanke 1990: 111–132; Lenski 1995a: 387–412.

<sup>33</sup> *CIG* 9207, 9230. On the *sagittarii dominici* (*Not. Dign.* [or.] 6.56), see Hoffmann 1969–70: 1.240–241, making the case that Valens constituted them and that Barzimeres was their leader in 374. Add to Hoffmann that the unit must have been named after Valens' wife, *PLRE* I Domnica. Woods (1997: 277, n. 41) also saw this detail though he places the formation of the unit too late.

<sup>34</sup> French 1988: nos. 637, 639, 648, 649, 650, 651, 655, 660.

<sup>35</sup> Them. *Or.* 11.149b (A.D. 373) confirms that Valens had a division stationed in Armenia around this time. The area around Iconium was probably also the jumping off point for P. Servilius' Isaurian expedition: see Syme 1987: 134–135.

<sup>36</sup> French 1988: no. 643. On the road, see Belke and Restle 1984: 103.

assume that, once tensions had subsided, they rebuilt the road in anticipation of future incidents, much as imperial forces had built or rebuilt forts and civic structures around the Taurus following the 359 and 367/8 revolts. This evidence for operations by Roman forces stationed north of the Taurus combined with the gravestones and the notice on Saturnilus(-inus) which indicate operations from the south demonstrate that Isaurian uprisings had to be dealt with on two fronts.

A still more important source has, up to now, passed unnoticed. Recent commentators on Basil's *Epistles* have argued that several of his later letters which mention a barbarian revolt should be associated with the Gothic rebellion of 377. In fact these letters are much better explained as commenting on affairs in Isauria. The first (*Ep.* 215) was written to the presbyter Dorotheus, resident in Antioch in autumn 375. The letter discourages Dorotheus from making a journey eastward to Constantinople because, as Basil says, "I do not know why someone has not told your Intelligence that it is quite impassable this winter, the country intervening from Constantinople to our confines being full of enemies."<sup>37</sup> Basil's references to disturbances on the road between Constantinople and Caesarea should not be associated with the Gothic revolt, which confined itself west of the Bosphorus, but must instead refer to Isaurian bandits.<sup>38</sup> The Isaurians had thus reached as far north as central Anatolia.<sup>39</sup> They had also begun their revolt recently since news had not reached Dorotheus in Antioch before his last missive to Basil.

*Epistle* 215 was probably sent with the letter which follows it (*Epistle* 216) to Meletius of Antioch.<sup>40</sup> There Basil informs Meletius that he had recently visited Pisidia (read Lycaonia) to settle "the affairs of the brethren in Isauria with the bishops there."<sup>41</sup> Basil here refers to his role as mediator in the ecclesiastical controversies which had broken out in the new province of Lycaonia. In late 371 Valens had reorganized some eastern provinces to create Lycaonia out of parts

<sup>37</sup> τῆς μεταξὺ χώρας ἀπὸ Κωνσταντινουπόλεως μέχρι τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς ὄρων πολεμίων πεπληρωμένης. For the date, see Loofs 1898: 21; Fedwick 1979: 148. The chronology of Basil's letters is in need of reexamination: Lenski 1996: 442–443. Loofs 1898 and Fedwick 1979 remain the best guides.

<sup>38</sup> For the association of *Ep.* 215 with the Gothic revolt, see Hauschild 1973–93: 3.186–187, nn. 15, 18; Courtonne 1957–66: 2.207, n. 1. Goths were indeed transferred to the Euphrates frontier in 376 and did revolt, but not until early 379, after Basil's death: see Zuckermann 1991.

<sup>39</sup> We should not be surprised that Isaurian raids disturbed communications this far north and east. A number of letters of John Chrysostom report that Isaurian raids closed traffic as far east as Armenia Minor between 404 and 406 (*Ep.* 69, 70, 135, 136 [*PG* LII 616, 647, 693–694]) and *VMThecla* Mir. 16 records how Isaurian raids on the roads in Cappadocia and Cilicia threatened imperial communication lines.

<sup>40</sup> In both *Ep.* 215 and 216, Basil mentions that he had just sent *Ep.* 214 to the *comes* Terentius in Antioch. Basil informs us that he was sending *Ep.* 215 with the imperial tax collector, apparently on his return to Valens' court there, and we can assume that *Ep.* 216 went with the same.

<sup>41</sup> μέχρι τῆς Πισιδίας διέβημεν, ὥστε μετὰ τῶν ἐκεῖ ἐπισκόπων τὰ κατὰ τοῦ ἐν Ἰσαυρίᾳ ἀδελφοῦς τυπῶσαι. Basil's retention of the name "Pisidia" for what had become "Lycaonia" should not surprise. For the same, see *Ep.* 138, 161. Only *Ep.* 200, referring to the same affairs, uses the new name. Cf. Treucker 1961: 109.

of Galatia, Pisidia, and Isauria.<sup>42</sup> By transferring jurisdiction over the northern part of Isauria to Lycaonia, however, Valens transferred episcopal authority over many Isaurian bishops to the metropolitan of Lycaonia's new capital, Iconium.<sup>43</sup> Disputes naturally arose between that metropolitan, Amphilochius, and his new Isaurian suffragans. To help diffuse the tension, Amphilochius, who had been consecrated by Basil in 374, enlisted Basil's aid.<sup>44</sup> The visit to Iconium mentioned in *Epistle* 216 was thus a pastoral journey traditionally dated to summer 375.<sup>45</sup> In the late summer of that year, Basil sent another letter (*Epistle* 200) referring once again to Amphilochius' ongoing attempts to "regulate the affairs in Lycaonia."<sup>46</sup> This letter, Basil informs us, was sent with a certain Meletius "who was escorting new recruits" to Iconium (παραπέμπων τοὺς νεολέκτους). Basil's courier, it would seem, was an officer bringing troops into the Lycaonian capital along precisely the road that Valens would rebuild, troops no doubt sent to confront the Isaurians.

Some of the issues faced by Amphilochius and the Isaurians are explained in the letter which follows the first two discussed and was written around the same time they were in the autumn of 375.<sup>47</sup> *Epistle* 217 was a canonical letter, a response to specific questions which Amphilochius had posed on orthodoxy and morality. Basil addressed three such letters to the bishop of Iconium, each dealing with problems of theology, heresy, chastity, marriage, etc.<sup>48</sup> Along with these issues, *Epistle* 217 treats the consequences of recent hostile incursions in

<sup>42</sup> Belke and Restle 1984: 55; Hild and Hellenkemper 1990: 37; Mitchell 1993: 2.161; cf. 2.77. The date (between 370 and 372) is not certain. Basil *Ep.* 138 (A.D. 373), the first mention of the division in our sources, indicates that it was recent. I have chosen 371 based on advice from T. D. Barnes, who points out that Zos. 4.13.1 specifically informs us that Valens cleared up administrative problems in the cities of Asia during his eastward journey in this year. Valens is attested in Seleucia—though not certainly Isaurian Seleucia—on April 4, 372 (*CTh* 11.4), a visit which may have been related to the partitioning of the province.

<sup>43</sup> Comparison of the conciliar lists from Nicaea (325) and Constantinople (381) reveals that Isauria lost Barata, Ilistra, Isauropolis, Laranda, Umanada, and Vasada to Lycaonia, *Patrum Nicaenorum Nomina* p. 68–69; Honigsmann 1939: 48; Turner 1914: 169; cf. Hild and Hellenkemper 1990: 86–87; Belke and Restle 1984: 54–55, 86–87, 239.

<sup>44</sup> Basil's appointment of Amphilochius is confirmed at *Ep.* 161; cf. *Ep.* 138. On Basil's relationship with Amphilochius, Rousseau 1994: 258–263; Holl 1904: 14–26.

<sup>45</sup> Loofs 1898: 21; Fedwick 1979: 148.

<sup>46</sup> ἐπειδὴν διαθῆς τὰ κατὰ τὴν Λυκαονίαν. Basil's admonition to Amphilochius to celebrate the upcoming feast of Eupsychius (Sept. 7) indicates late summer. More on the date at Loofs 1898: 22; 46–47, n. 5. For more on Amphilochius' attempts to regulate affairs in Isauria, see below, 324.

<sup>47</sup> The letter is best dated to 375 based on its reference to Gregory's recent departure from Nazianzus (ἡ ἀθροῖα τοῦ θεοφιλεστάτου ἐπισκόπου Γρηγορίου ἀναχώρησις), which occurred shortly after Christmas 374: Gallay 1943: 128–129. Loofs (1898: 21) argues for autumn. Interestingly, Gregory travelled to Seleucia in Isauria, where he was still resident when called to the see of Constantinople in 379: Greg. Naz. *Carm.* 2.1.11.547–549. Unfortunately I can find nothing about Isauria in his extant writings. For mistakes in the dating, see below, n. 50.

<sup>48</sup> *Ep.* 188, 199, 217, cf. 233–236 on theological issues. These are edited and translated with introductions at Joannou 1963: 85–159. Here I follow the more accessible text and numeration of

the region. These, so Basil claimed, were sent by God to teach us "that because of our lawlessness the Lord has abandoned us and surrendered us into the hands of barbarians, and his people is driven off captive to the enemies."<sup>49</sup> Once again commentators have misidentified these events with the Gothic revolt in Thrace or with depredations caused by stragglers from the revolt of the usurper Procopius.<sup>50</sup> Both seem unlikely. Goths in Thrace would be an odd pastoral concern for the metropolitan of Iconium, 800 km away, especially since they did not begin their revolt until 377, two years after the letter was written. Likewise, it is extremely doubtful that partisans of Procopius would have been wandering Asia still nine years after the execution of their leader. Basil must certainly refer to incursions by "barbarians" closer to hand, Isaurians.<sup>51</sup>

Basil's evidence also helps pinpoint a terminal date for the revolt. In a letter from early 376 (*Epistle* 232) Basil rejoices that Amphilochius' church was at peace. This would indicate that both the Isaurian raids and the ecclesiastical conflict in Isauria had died down.<sup>52</sup> On the strength of this and the other letters, we can bring to a close the confusion over the date of the Isaurian uprising mentioned at Zosimus 4.20. The fullest description of the Isaurian incursions in Basil comes in his canonical epistle (217), which is datable to autumn 375, sometime after the bishop's journey to Iconium in the summer of that year. *Epistle* 200, written in the late summer of the same year, mentions the progress of recruits into the region, indicating that the revolt had been going on long enough for the emperor

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Courtonne 1957–66. Cf. Mitchell 1993: 2.99–100 on other doctrinal problems faced by Amphilochius and Basil in the region.

<sup>49</sup> Canon 84: εἰ γὰρ μὴ ἐπαίδευσαν ἡμᾶς τὰ φοβερά τοῦ Κυρίου, μηδὲ αἱ τηλικαῦται πληγαὶ εἰς αἴσθησιν ἡμᾶς ἤγαγον ὅτι διὰ τὴν ἀνομίαν ἡμῶν ἐγκατέλειπεν ἡμᾶς ὁ Κύριος καὶ παρέδωκεν εἰς χεῖρας βαρβάρων καὶ ἀπὴχθη αἰχμαλώτους εἰς τοὺς πολεμίους ὁ λαὸς . . .

<sup>50</sup> Hauschild (1973–93: 3.189–190, nn. 55, 57) contends that Basil is referring first to the Procopius revolt (Canon 81) and then to the Gothic revolt (Canon 84). Hauschild dates the letter to 376 based on his association with the Gothic uprising, which he mislocates in this year—it did not begin until 377 (Jer. *Chron.* s.a. 377). He has hung much of his Basilian chronology around this erroneous dating of a mistaken interpretation. The association of the letter with the Procopius revolt had already been hazarded at Joannou 1963: 87, n. 15. Courtonne (1957–66: 2.216, n. 5) holds that Basil uses *βάρβαροι* at Canon 84 to refer to the "Arians," then persecuting Nicene adherents like Basil. Though Basil is inclined to such allusive references, it is preferable to take *βάρβαροι* at Canon 84 in connection with Basil's earlier use of the word in the letter (Canon 81: ἐν τῇ τῶν βαρβάρων καταδρομῇ), which clearly refers to a specific incursion by barbarian peoples. Only Holl (1904: 21) and Teja (1974: 113–114, 139–140) recognize that *Ep.* 215 and 217, Canon 55 refer to Isaurians, but both fail to understand that the references to *βάρβαροι* in Canons 81 and 84 were to the same and that a specific revolt was at stake.

<sup>51</sup> The use of the word *βάρβαρος* to describe Isaurians was common in the period: cf. SHA *Tyr. Trig.* 26.6: *pro barbaris habentur*; SHA *Prob.* 16.5: *barbarorum qui apud Isauros sunt*; Laterculus Veronensis 13.44: *gentes barbarae*; Theodoret *Hist. Mon.* 10 (PG LXXXII 1392): χρημάτων ἔρωτα τοῖς βαρβάροις ὁ διάβολος ἐμβαλὼν; cf. Philostorgius *Hist. Eccl.* 5.2: διὰ τὸ βάρβαρον καὶ μισάνθρωπον τῶν ἐνοικούντων.

<sup>52</sup> εἰρηνευοῦση τῇ Ἑκκλησίᾳ. The date is clear from Basil's mention of Gregory of Nyssa's exile in 375 (Hauser-Meury 1960: 91) and of Amphilochius' recent celebration of Christmas.

to have dispatched forces to the area. *Epistle* 215 makes clear that travel in the region remained dangerous still in late 375, but by early 376, *Epistle* 232 seems to show an end to the conflict. The milestones mentioned earlier confirm that tensions must have died down enough by the very end of 375 that troop units could be diverted for road reconstruction. We can thus establish narrow termini for the revolt and its suppression in the second half of the year 375.

### III. FURTHER INTIMATIONS ON ISAURIAN RAIDERS IN BASIL'S REPORT

The new evidence from Basil thus offers strong confirmation of an uprising in 375. It also enhances our understanding of a few problems in the region related to the phenomenon of banditry. First, it adds more evidence for the local policing which is widely attested in the territory surrounding the Isaurian hinterland. Second, it offers insights into the religious distinction between Isaurian raiders and their victims. Finally, it gives us some clues about the significance of Isaurian uprisings in the wider sphere of imperial military operations.

It would be wrong to argue that all inhabitants of the province of Isauria were brigands or that all participated in the uprisings described in our sources. The sources make it clear that the cities of the coastline in the south and the Lycæonian plain in the north were the victims, not the perpetrators, of "Isaurian" violence. These cities had long been bastions of Hellenic and Roman culture and suffered directly from sieges, plundering, and trade stoppages at the hands of raiders.<sup>53</sup> Tacitus (*Ann.* 12.55), for example, reports raids by highlanders on the coastal city of Anemurium (Anamur) in A.D. 52. Ammianus recounts similar attacks on the coast of Pamphylia, Isauria, and Cilicia and the plain of Lycæonia at cities like Palæa (Tahtalimani), Seleucia, and Laranda. So too, the author of the *Life of Thecla* indicates that plain and coast were under threat from highlanders when he describes bandit attacks on Iconium, Selinus (Gazipaşa), and, once again, Seleucia.<sup>54</sup> Indeed, much of the sociological importance of Thecla in the region was based on her function as a holy talisman against "these brigands who, to our misfortune, are our neighbors and pillage our territory as enemies."<sup>55</sup> Isauria was not, thus, a territory inhabited by a homogeneous group of brigand peoples. Those north of the Taurus on the Lycæonian plain and south of it on the narrow

<sup>53</sup> Long time bastions of culture: Strabo 14.5.4 (670C); cf. Eyice 1981; Hellenkemper 1980; Jones 1971: ch. 8 *passim*, esp. 207–214. Trade stoppages: Amm. Marc. 14.2.3–4.

<sup>54</sup> Amm. Marc. 14.2.2–19; *VMThecla* Mir. 5–6, 27–28. On the location of Palæa, see Bean and Mitford 1970: 195; Hild and Hellenkemper 1990: 372. On the reference to "Agarenes" in the incident at Mir. 5–6, see Dagron 1978: 114–115. These same coastal cities continued to be threatened in the fifth century, as the Isaurian capture of Corycus and Elaeoussa-Sebaste in 479 indicates: Joh. Ant. fr. 211.4 (*FHG* IV 619). Indeed, Jones and Habicht (1989: 324) indicate similar attacks already in the late third century B.C.

<sup>55</sup> *VMThecla* Mir. 28: οἱ κακῶς ἡμῖν οὗτοι προσοικούντες ἀλιτήριοι καὶ ποτὲ μὲν ἐν πολέμιων μοίρᾳ τὰ τῆδε ληϊζόμενοι; cf. 13, 27, 32. SHA *Prob.* 16.5 also draws a distinction between "barbarians" and other "Isaurians"; cf. Festus *Brev.* 12.

coastal strip along the Mediterranean fought off the brigands of the highlands rather than cooperating with them.

The problem was serious enough that local authorities in the urban areas surrounding the hinterland felt compelled to take extensive measures to defend themselves. By the time Basil was writing, most of their cities had been outfitted with fortification walls, usually at local expense.<sup>56</sup> As the scale of the problem increased in the fourth century, imperial authorities often joined in helping construct or reconstruct forts and walls for the cities surrounding the hinterland.<sup>57</sup> To defend these walls and their surrounding territories, many of these cities mobilized their citizens into militia groups capable of resisting violence with violence. We have good evidence that town councils in the region oversaw civic military expenditures and appointed *εἰρηνάρχοντες* or *παραφύλακες* to act as police chiefs. These led forces of light-armed *διώγμιται* recruited among the citizenry in well organized and highly effective forays against their raiding neighbors.<sup>58</sup>

In his canonical Epistle to Amphilochius, Basil squared off with precisely these same civic policing groups in the region around Iconium. He proposed that, despite the recent threats, "those who were marching out against the bandits" (*οἱ τοῖς λησταῖς ἀντεπεξίοντες*) be debarred from the communion of the good if lay and defrocked if clerics (*Ep.* 217, Canon 55) and that those who murdered be excommunicated for twenty years if they had done so willingly and ten if not (Canons 56–57).<sup>59</sup> Some of the problems Amphilochius faced in implementing Basil's new order must then have stemmed from Basil's refusal to countenance what constituted the norms of self-defense for those surrounding the hinterland.<sup>60</sup> Indeed, strictures like those proposed by Basil would have been impossible to uphold in what had become a permanent war-zone inside the empire.

It is no surprise, then, that a quarter century after Basil was writing, local standards of civic policing remained high. Zosimus relates that, when the Goth Tribigild marched his marauding forces into Pamphylia and Pisidia in 399, he

<sup>56</sup> More on forts and walls at Hellenkemper 1980: 1267–68; Hellenkemper 1986: 630–633; Hild and Hellenkemper 1990: 143–150.

<sup>57</sup> Imperially constructed fortifications are attested epigraphically at Irenopolis (Irnebol): Bean and Mitford 1970: no. 231; "Antiochia": *ILS* 740 = *CIL* III 6733; Corasium: *CIG* 4430 = *MAMA* III 102, n. 1; Anemurium (Anamur): Alföldi-Rosenbaum 1972 = *Bull. Ép.* 1973, no. 480 with the emendations of Jones 1972 and Merkelbach 1973; Diocaesarea (Uzuncaburç): *MAMA* III no. 73.

<sup>58</sup> On *βουλευταὶ* overseeing military expenses, see *VMThecla* Mir. 35. For lists of *εἰρηνάρχοντες*, *παραφύλακες*, and *διώγμιται* in the region, Hopwood 1983; cf. Hopwood 1984; 1989. Add two examples omitted by Hopwood: Bean and Mitford 1970: no. 20 (Çaltılıçukur); *IGR* III 830 (Syedra); cf. *MAMA* III 305 (*διώγμιται* of Corycus). For background on civic policing, see Magie 1950: 647, 1514–15; Robert 1937: 102–107; Mitchell 1993: 1.195–197; and above, n. 13.

<sup>59</sup> In an earlier canonical epistle to Amphilochius (*Ep.* 188 Canons 8, 11, 13: A.D. 374) Basil also deals with penalties for murder, but offers no indication of immediate applications to specific uprisings.

<sup>60</sup> Especially because considerable glory could be won by locals who successfully repressed bandits, *AE* 1979, 624; Robert 1937: 97.

was met by a certain Valentinus, a notable of Selge, who led a band of locals “trained in battle against the neighboring brigands.”<sup>61</sup> The Selgians ambushed and decimated Tribigild’s men and forces from neighboring cities joined in to trap them between the Melas and Eurymedon. Local policing thus remained highly effective, even against large external forces. Nor were such policing efforts limited to secular authorities. By the late fourth century the shrine of Agia Thecla (Meryamlik) outside Seleucia had furnished itself with curtain walls and organized its own defensive units like those of any major city in the region.<sup>62</sup> In the end then, Basil’s attempts to regulate local policing were unrealistic. His refusal to acknowledge the right of Christians to use violence in self-defense identifies him as an outsider who had little understanding of the scale and complexity of the region’s problems.<sup>63</sup>

Basil’s evidence also sheds new light on the religious leanings of Isaurian raiders. Among the Canons of *Ep.* 217 he says that during their recent attacks the “barbarians” had deliberately forced their captives “to swear oaths to pagan gods and taste food offered to idols.”<sup>64</sup> This testimony not only reveals that Isaurian bandits continued to cultivate pagan deities well into the fourth century, it indicates that these bandits actively imposed their beliefs on their Christian neighbors, perhaps as a means to assert power and stress their distinct cultural identity in the region. Nor is Basil the only source to attest pagan leanings among the brigands. In the *Miracles of Thecla* the willingness of Isaurian bandits to plunder Christian shrines indicates that many remained pagan even into the fifth century.<sup>65</sup> So too, the fifth-century *Life of Conon* seems to reflect direct experience of pagan ritual in Isaura Nova.<sup>66</sup> More importantly, our sources indicate that

<sup>61</sup> Zos. 5.15.5–17.1. On the date, see Cameron and Long 1993: xii.

<sup>62</sup> On the shrine and its walls, *Peregr. Eger.* 23.4: *muris ingens qui includet ecclesiam*; *VMThecla Mir.* 32; cf. *MAMA* II 1–89; Hill 1996: 208–234.

<sup>63</sup> Irenarchs were eventually abolished, but more because they were felt to pose a threat to imperial security than because their activities violated standards of Christian morality: see *CTh* 12.14.1 (A.D. 409).

<sup>64</sup> Canon 81: πολλοὶ ἐν τῇ τῶν βαρβάρων καταδρομῇ παρέβησαν τὴν εἰς Θεὸν πίστιν, ὄρκους ἐθνικῶς τελέσαντες καὶ ἀθεμίτων τινῶν γευσάμενοι τῶν ἐν τοῖς εἰδώλοις τοῖς μαγικοῖς προσεχθέντων αὐτοῖς. This notice would lose circumstantial force if it merely copied previous canons, but it does not. Though Basil acknowledges that he follows the penance for pagan sacrifice laid down παρὰ τῶν πατέρων (i.e., the Synod of Ancyra, Canons 4–8 Hefele), his description of the circumstances is quite unique. Gregory Thaumaturgus, Canons 1 and 5 (*PG* X.1020, 1037 = Joannou 1963: 19–21)—on penances for those affected by the Gothic invasions of Pontus in the 250s—is also entirely distinct. Cf. Schwartz 1911: 37–42 on the relationship between Basil’s strictures and those laid down previously.

<sup>65</sup> *VMThecla Mir.* 28, 32. Dagron (1978: 80–94) treats all the evidence for paganism in the *VMThecla*.

<sup>66</sup> *Vita Cononis* 5 (Halkin 1985: 9–10) describes in great detail a festival of “Apollo” wherein the worshippers were armed (ἐνοπλος δὲ ὄχλος); cf. section 8–9 (Halkin 1985: 12–13); section 16 (Halkin 1985: 20). The life is set in the early fourth century but was probably composed in the fifth: see Halkin 1935.

paganism remained strong among the élite of the highland communities. The *Miracles of Thecla* describe a fifth-century pagan noble named Hypsistios from the highland city of Claudiopolis; a late antique dedication at the highland temple near Bağdad Kırı may indicate that the fifth-century warlord Indacus Cottunes was himself pagan.<sup>67</sup> The mid-fifth-century warlord Fl. Zeno seems to have been pagan to judge by a letter to him from Theodore of Cyrrhus encouraging conversion.<sup>68</sup> Zeno's late fifth-century counterpart Illus lavishly cultivated the ostentatiously pagan philosopher Pamprepus, and Illus' puppet, the Isaurian usurper Leontius, was pagan as well.<sup>69</sup> Priscian even implies that some of the rebel leaders from the Isaurian revolt under Anastasius remained pagan still in 492.<sup>70</sup> There is thus good confirmation for Basil's testimony.

If it is true that Isaurian bandits of the fourth century were aggressively pagan, this would put them in contrast with the majority of their neighbors in the lowlands surrounding the Taurus. Numerous inscriptions demonstrate that the inhabitants of the Lycaonian plain, to whom Basil addressed his canons, were already strongly influenced by Christianity in the second century.<sup>71</sup> Though systematic studies of the Christian epigraphy of the coastal cities have not been undertaken, it is fair to say that these too were strongly Christianized by the time Basil was writing. It is thus little wonder that pagan raiders hoping to terrorize their lowland victims sought to do so by forcing them to betray their Christian principles. This was probably one of many means used by these men "most terrifying to hear and look at"<sup>72</sup> to assert power and mark their identity.

Moreover, Basil's notice stands in contrast with what has often been assumed about Isaurian raiders up to this point, i.e., that they were Christian. At the turn of the century, A. Ramsay argued that epigraphic evidence points to an "Isaurian" population which was already highly Christianized in the third century. She built her case on a collection of inscriptions from Dorla (now Aydoğmuş)—a city on the southern edge of the Lycaonian plain—which she identified as the provincial metropolis of Isaura Nova.<sup>73</sup> The identification has since been disproved and the

<sup>67</sup> Claudiopolis: *VMThecla* Mir. 14. Indacus Cottunes: Bean and Mitford 1970: no. 148.

<sup>68</sup> Theodore of Ep. 71. See also von Haehling 1978: 280–281; Şahin 1991: 159. Indeed, Fl. Zeno is probably to be identified with ὁ μέγας ἔω στρατηλάτης whom Damascius (*Vita Isidori* fr. 303 Zintzen) identifies as an active enemy of the Christian faith; cf. *PLRE* II Fl. Zeno 6.

<sup>69</sup> Pamprepus: *PLRE* II Pamprepus; Chuvin 1990: 96–100. Leontius: *PLRE* II Leontius, especially Damascius *Vita Isidori* epit. 109 Zintzen. *PLRE* II Illus 1 claims that Illus was "orthodox Catholic" on the strength of Theod. *Lect. epit.* 435; Zacharias *Hist. Eccl.* 5.9; Liberatus *Brev.* 16; Evagrius *Hist. Eccl.* 3.16. To be sure, all these sources attest that Bishop Calandion of Antioch sided with Illus against Zeno in 484, but this was more a matter of politics than religion. Zeno had banished Calandion, and the bishop was seeking help from any quarter. Illus' well-attested passion for Neoplatonism would indicate, rather, that he remained pagan.

<sup>70</sup> Priscian *Pan.* lines 121, 139 with Chauvot 1986: 122.

<sup>71</sup> The evidence is assembled at Mitchell 1993: 2.38–43.

<sup>72</sup> Eunap. *Hist.* fr. 71.4 Blockley: Ἰσαυροὺς φρικωδεστάτους ὄντας ἀκοῦσαι τε καὶ ἰδεῖν.

<sup>73</sup> A. Ramsay 1904 and 1906 following W. Ramsay 1904: 77–79.



identity of Isaura Nova firmly established at the site now called Zengibar Kalesi, deeper in the Taurus.<sup>74</sup> For all its early Christian epigraphy, Dorla is thus better associated with its neighboring lowland cities, not with the highland towns of Isauria. So too those who have assumed, based on Ramsay, that the highlanders were strongly Christianized by the third century need to reexamine the basis for their view (for example, Shaw 1990: 266–267).

Even so, we can be certain that Christians there were in the hinterland already in the fourth century. The remains of massive fifth-century Christian churches deep in the Taurus indicate Christian traditions in the hinterland which probably stretch back earlier.<sup>75</sup> These traditions are confirmed by the conciliar lists of Nicaea and Constantinople which catalog bishops in the cities of the hinterland from the early fourth century.<sup>76</sup> Indeed, Basil himself is aware of Isaurian Christians. Among the issues on which he advised Amphilocheus was the question of how to control the appointment of clergy for the Christian communities of Isauria. In *Epistle* 190 Basil encouraged his friend to be circumspect in choosing a bishop to fill the vacant see in “the city” (πόλις: Isaura Nova?) lest this bishop challenge Amphilocheus’ authority.<sup>77</sup> In keeping with this concern, Basil recommended that, rather than immediately appoint this bishop, Amphilocheus should obviate tensions by first selecting his own προισταμένοι for the μικροπολιτεῖαι and μετροκομῖαι of Isauria which had formerly held episcopal sees (cf. *Ep.* 191). Failing this, Basil charged that Amphilocheus should circumscribe the number of communities over which the Isaurian bishop could appoint suffragans and appoint the rest himself. Basil was thus very aware that Isaurian cities and villages had a strong tradition of Christianity. He was also aware that these communities and their bishop were starkly resistant to outside control and stubbornly insistent on their autonomy. While they maintained contact with their lowland neighbors,

<sup>74</sup>For rejection of the identification of Dorla/Aydoğmuş with Isaura Nova, see Magie 1950: 1170–71. For the correct identification of the two Isauras, Hall 1973. Problems still remain with the identity of Dorla/Aydoğmuş. Belke and Restle (1984: 180–181, 198–199), building on Belke 1976: 130–142 (*non vidi*), retained the Ramsays’ identification without apparently having seen Hall 1973. Though Belke’s thesis cannot stand as is, scholarship has not explained away the inscription of Dorla/Aydoğmuş identifying the young men there as [ο]ἱ γῆν εὐτειχέα ναῖον Ἰσαυρα: A. Ramsay 1904: no. 1. Belke may well have been right to argue that Isaura was moved to Dorla/Aydoğmuş following an Isaurian insurrection in the later empire alluded to at Amm. Marc. 14.8.2. His hypothesis must, however, be reworked based on Hall 1973.

<sup>75</sup>Most of these have been dated to the reign of Zeno: Headlam 1892; Gough 1955 and 1972. For dating, see the new synthesis of Hill 1996, esp. 51–54.

<sup>76</sup>Five highland cities of Isauria were represented by bishops at the council of Nicaea: Coropissus, Claudiopolis, Metropolis (Isauropolis), Oumanada, and Vasada: *Patrum Nicaenorum Nomina* p. 68–69, 111, 113, 137, 209; Honigsmann 1939: 48. Eight cities from the same territory—now divided between Isauria and Lycaonia—sent bishops to the Council of Constantinople: Claudiopolis, Irenopolis, Philadelphia, Dalisandus, Oumanada, Vasada, Isaura, Amblada: Turner 1914: 169, 172–174. Epigraphically bishops are also attested at Germanicopolis: Bean and Mitford 1970: no. 232; Coropissus (Dag Pazari): Gough 1958; cf. (Alahan): Headlam 1892: no. 7.

<sup>77</sup>On this letter, Holl 1904: 17–20.

they apparently also maintained distance from, and suspicion of, them.<sup>78</sup> In this sense, the religious picture in Isauria is consistent. As elsewhere in the empire, some of the population was Christian; many others remained pagan. All, however, used their religious identity to draw a line in the sand between themselves and their lowland neighbors, whether by resisting outside control of their episcopacy or by actively forcing their pagan beliefs on those around them.

The evidence for the 375 revolt thus offers insights on the problems posed by Isaurian brigandage in the territory of southern Anatolia. It also provides some clues about the broader significance of Isaurian brigandage across the eastern Roman empire. The year 375 was not without military significance. As mentioned above, this year saw the invasion of the Huns into Gothic territory. The resultant immigration of the Goths into Thrace and the eventual chaos which followed may have been seriously affected by the events in Isauria and elsewhere. The tensions in Isauria in 375 and the simultaneous deterioration of Romano-Persian relations in this year must have put a serious strain on the availability of imperial mobile units.<sup>79</sup> Valens' commitments in Persia and Isauria almost certainly limited his ability to send troops to oversee the immigration and resettlement of the Goths.<sup>80</sup> Because the paucity of Roman troops on the Danube in 376 was a major cause of the Roman failure to control the Gothic immigration and resettlement, the Isaurian conflict of 375 probably played an important role in triggering the series of setbacks which led to the disaster at Adrianople. Isaurian uprisings thus not only posed a threat in the region, their ripples affected military affairs across the late Roman East.

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<sup>78</sup> For similar attitudes among the "bandit" groups of Sicily, see Catanzaro 1988: 3-16.

<sup>79</sup> Lenski 1995a: 323-329, 517-522.

<sup>80</sup> As we have seen (above, 316), Valens' commander Saturninus seems to have remained in Isauria until 377, after the Gothic troubles had exploded out of control. Cf. the revolt of 359, which detained Bassidius Lauricius in Isauria and may, therefore, have played a role in determining the venue for the Homoian Council of 359: see above, n. 9.

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