

SUDA entry beta 423: Βούλγαροι (Bulgars)

The Bulgars were pleased [to be drawn] into the clothing of the Avars and they adopted it and wear it right up to the present day.

In the reign of Justinian Rhinotmetos[1] Terbelis [Tervel], the chieftain of the Bulgars flourished;[2] and this same Justinian and Constantine, the son of Heraclius, were tributary to him. For he laid on its back the shield that he had had in war, and his own whip that he used on his horse, and started pouring money in until he covered both of them. Having stuck his spear in the ground up to the end and put plenty of silk garments at its length and having filled boxes with gold and silver he started giving it away to the soldiers, using his right hand for the gold and the left one for the silver.

These same Bulgars utterly annihilated the Avars.[3] Krem[4] asked the Avarian captives "Why do you reckon your ruler and the whole people perished?" And they answered: "the number of mutual accusations increased and destroyed the bravest and the most prudent; and then the wrong-doers and the thieves became associates of the judges; and then [there was] the drunkenness -- for everyone became drunkards once the wine had become abundant; and then [there was] the bribery, and then the business dealings -- for everyone became traders and started cheating one another. And from these things came our doom." Having heard this [Krem] convened all the Bulgars and issued decrees as their lawgiver: if someone accused someone, he should not be listened until he was tied up and interrogated; and if he was found to be a false accuser and a liar he was to be annihilated. It was not permitted to share food with a thief -- or the one daring to do it would be summarily deprived of his property. And he ordered that the legs of a thief be broken off, and that all grapevines be rooted out; and that to every supplicant should be given not everything, but a sufficiency for him, so that he would not be in need again; and anyone not doing this should have his property summarily confiscated. They [sc. the Bulgars] utterly annihilated all the Avars, as it had been said.

Notes

[1] Justinian II: see iota 447, and cf. tau 901.

[2] cf. beta 157, tau 333.

[3] cf. alpha 18.

[4] a.k.a. Krum; cf. kappa 2369.

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