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PERCEPTIONS OF PROCOPIUS IN RECENT SCHOLARSHIP

Abstract: This article offers a survey of scholarship on the historian Procopius of Caesarea in the last eleven years (2003–2014). It reviews his origins and upbringing in Caesarea in Palestine before moving on to consider his portrayal of the reign of Justinian (527–65); it argues that his accounts of Justinian's rule remain central to modern assessments of the period. But because Procopius' works have survived in their entirety and because Justinian's reign has attracted so much attention, there is a danger that both historian and ruler may distort our picture of the sixth-century empire: neither Procopius nor Justinian may have been as exceptional as is often thought. And while the sixth century did witness a general rise in intolerance of heretics and pagans, it may be that Justinian was reacting to a general tendency in society rather than leading the charge. The article concludes by discussing Procopius' three works and recent publications devoted to them, noting that scholarship has sometimes suffered as a consequence of an unawareness of research being carried out simultaneously by other scholars.

It will soon be thirty years since the publication of Averil Cameron's *Procopius and the Sixth Century* (London 1985) and ten years have now passed since Anthony Kaldellis' iconoclastic *Procopius of Caesarea: Tyranny, History, and Philosophy at the End of Antiquity* (Philadelphia 2004) and Dariusz Brodka's important monograph, *Die Geschichtsphilosophie in der spätantiken Historiographie* (Frankfurt 2004).[1] In the meantime, the pace of publication has only accelerated, leading inexorably to a forthcoming Brill *Companion to Procopius*, edited by Mischa Meier. A well-attended two-day conference in Oxford in January 2014 confirms the growth in interest in the historian.[2] Several factors are at work in this resurgence of Procopian scholarship, among which we may note an ever-growing interest in the reign of Justinian and an increasing focus on the historiography of Late Antiquity and Byzantium more gen-

[1] Brodka's work is subtitled *Studien zu Prokopios von Kaisareia, Agathias von Myrina und Theophylaktos Simokattes*, but two thirds of the book, some 150 pages, directly concern Procopius. Perhaps because it appeared simultaneously with Kaldellis' study, it has been largely overshadowed by it. I am grateful to the many scholars who helped in the preparation of this article, including Anthony Kaldellis, participants at the Oxford colloquium (see next note) and the anonymous reviewers.

[2] Meier (forthcoming). See also Börm (forthcoming). Perhaps worthy of note, although somewhat outdated in its use of microfiche, is Coulie and Kindt (2000). The programme of the Oxford conference may be found at http://procopius2014.blogspot.co.uk/p/abstracts.html; the conference proceedings will be published by Ashgate: Lillington-Martin, et al. (forthcoming). A further conference on the world of Procopius is due to take place in Mainz in December 2014.

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erally. The present article aims primarily to draw the manifold threads of this scholarship together, which is highly diffuse and often difficult to track down; excellent work on Procopius has been published in the last ten years, but some of it at least has been unduly neglected. We hope therefore to render a bibliographical service to the field while at the same time seeking to understand the varying approaches taken to the historian in recent work. We shall accordingly divide our analysis into five sections, dealing first with Procopius' background, then with his context, i.e. the reign of Justinian, before going on to consider his works, discussing the *Wars*, the *Anecdota* and the *Buildings* in turn.

1. Procopius' Background

No new information has come to light that alters the standard account of the historian's life: born at Caesarea, Palestine, ca. 500, educated in the traditional literary fashion and then trained in law, he became the *assessor* or legal adviser of Belisarius probably in the mid-520s. Having accompanied his commander most of the time from that point and having seen service in the East, North Africa, and Italy, he remained in Constantinople from the early 540s up to his death no earlier than 553 and probably somewhat later; some scholars, who prefer a late dating for the *Buildings*, would not place his death until the early 560s.[3] On the other hand, there has been recent work in several fields that bears on our perception of Procopius' upbringing and milieu. We shall consider first his hometown of Caesarea before going on to discuss the context of his education.

Excavations in Caesarea continue to reveal a thriving port city, which was also the seat of the governor of Palaestina Prima. Covering a surface area of some 111 hectares, it boasted a population that has been calculated at between 35,000 and 100,000. Although some have perceived a certain decline in the late antique period, an impressive octagonal church was erected on the quayside ca. 490, while in the 530s the orator Choricius recounts how the governor Stephanus cleared the city's aqueducts.[4] During the reign of Anastasius extensive repair work was also carried out on the harbour, no

[3] We summarise here part of Greatrex (forthcoming, g); cf. Cameron (1985) 8–15, Treadgold (2007) 176–92. Howard-Johnston (2000) 20–1 argues for the early death of Procopius. On the dating of the *De Aed.* see below. On the post of *assessor*, held also by other late antique historians, see Greatrex (2001a) and id. (1998b); cf. now Bjornlie (2013) 104. Fatouros (1980) 517–18, is a rare sceptic concerning Procopius' legal background.

[4] See Patrich (2011b) 92–4; cf. Holum (2011) 176–9. Choricius, *Or.* 3.44–7 (pp. 60–2), on the water supply; cf. Mayerson (1986) and Patrich (2001b) 109. Saradi (2006) 177, is more downbeat on the building work undertaken by governors.

doubt because of the city's commercial success.[5] But although Caesarea was renowned for its pantomime artists—which may be relevant to the bitterness of Procopius in his remarks on the closing of theatres and other places of entertainment (*Anecd.* 26.8)—it appears that both the city's theatre and its hippodromes went out of use in the early sixth century, although the precise chronology remains uncertain.[6] Epigraphy also helps to flesh out the Caesarean background of Procopius' upbringing, especially with the publication of the second volume of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae* (*CII/P*), which covers Caesarea and its environs.[7] It emerges clearly from this that Procopius' name was typical of the city and the wider area, commemorating a local martyr: several tombs bearing this name have been found, including one that commemorates a Procopia, daughter of a Procopius who was the chief of the city's patrols at some point.[8] It does not follow from this, of course, that bearers of the name Procopius who are attested in other regions necessarily have a link to Caesarea—although of the ten Procopii listed in *PLRE* III, at least three do come from there, while the origins of the others are unattested—but it is worth noting in this context that epigraphical work elsewhere has recently uncovered two hitherto unknown high-ranking Procopii of the sixth century. A milestone from Bargylia in Caria from the reign of Anastasius or Justin I was restored by a Flavius Procopius, described as a *comes* and consular (*hypatikos*), while on Rhodes rebuilding work was undertaken by a *consularis* Procopius, probably after 535/6; neither is to be found in *PLRE*.[9]

Hints at the diversity of religious groups in the city also emerge from the epigraphic dossier. One inscription exclaims, 'Lord, support the orthodox (Christians) for eternity', while another, perhaps commissioned either by a Samaritan or an anti-Chlacedonian, declares 'May the peace of the Christians persist.'[10] Samaritans may have accounted for one third of the popula-

[5] Holum (2011) 178; cf. Haarer (2006) 232–3.

[6] Holum (2011) 178; cf. id. (2005) 104, Patrich (2011b) 107–8, 111, Saradi (2006) 304, 320. *Expositio Totius Mundi et Gentium*, ch. 32 on the pantomime artists of Caesarea.

[7] Ameling et al. (2011).

[8] *CII/P*, vol. 2, nos. 1534–40, all from the fourth to seventh centuries, no. 1534 for Procopia. The editors conclude (p. 467) that the name was a common one.

[9] Bargylia: *AE* 1995, 1524 (= 1992, 1600); cf. Blümel (1995) 39–40. Rhodes: Deligiannakis (2009) 180–2; cf. Cooley and Salway (2012) 217. I am grateful to Benet Salway for drawing my attention to these two cases.

[10] *CII/P*, vol. 2, nos. 1182 (tr. Ameling et al., amended) and 1188 (tr. Patrich). See Patrich (2011b) 96, suggesting the Samaritan origins of the latter inscription; Ameling, *op. cit.*, 111 proposes rather a heretical Christian. At any rate it seems to imply a non-orthodox Christian perspective.

tion of the city, but the fifth and sixth centuries were punctuated by intermittent bloody revolts, notably in 484, 529 and 556. All were brutally suppressed; the last actually followed a rare relaxation of the legal restrictions to which the Samaritans, like other non-Christian groups, were subject.[11] The Samaritans may have been more numerous in the south-west zone of the city, which is where the inscription cited above, concerning the peace of the Christians, was found. A Jewish source suggests that they were prominent in the service of the provincial governor, and certain families undoubtedly prospered even under Justinian. While under Anastasius some Samaritans rose to high office, it appears that they were obliged under Justinian to convert to Christianity, although, as Procopius himself indicates (*Anecd.* 11.24–6), this conversion was often perfunctory.[12] In 1996 Kate Adshead argued, chiefly on the basis of the tone of Procopius' references to the Samaritans, that the historian himself was one of their number; her arguments were analysed in detail by the scholar of Samaritan history, Reinhard Pummer, and effectively rebutted.[13] It is likely nonetheless that Procopius' upbringing was marked by an awareness of religious tensions, not only between Samaritans and Christians, but also among the Christians themselves: the provinces of Palestine had initially been fiercely opposed to the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon in 451 to such an extent, indeed, that the newly promoted patriarch Juvenal was forced to leave Caesarea for Constantinople later the same year.[14]

From Procopius' successful career and his mastery of classical prose it is generally assumed that he came from a well-to-do family in Caesarea; per-

[11] Patrich (2011b) 94 and n. 11 for the proportion; cf. Pummer (2000a) 3.31–2, 3.43. Pummer (2002) 256–69, a commentary on Malalas' accounts of these three uprisings, is a good recent treatment; cf. Crown (1989) 71–6. Millar (2013) 65–78, offers a recent assessment of the position of Samaritans in Palestine in this period; cf. Dar (2010).

[12] Patrich (2011b) 95–7, on Samaritans in the bureaucracy and in the south-west zone; cf. Pummer (2000b) 184 for a detailed discussion of the rabbinic source involved (and a translation); cf. Crown (1989) 63–6. Patrich probably overstates his case, since he interprets inscriptions to the 'One God' (*CII/P*, vol.2, nos.1183–4) as Samaritan; cf. Ameling in *CII/P*, vol.2, 299–300 (on no.1342), doubting whether one such inscription, which mentions a *numerarius* (accountant) Eusebius, can have been commissioned by a Samaritan. Pummer (2000a) 3.45–8, notes Jewish hostility towards Samaritans, attributable partly to their willingness to offer sacrifices when the empire was pagan: one may infer that there was a tradition in paying lip service to the prevailing orthodoxy.

[13] Adshead (1996); cf. Pummer (2002) 291–4. It is worth noting that Procopius does not spare the Samaritans in his criticisms, e.g. the 'loathsome' Arsenius (*Anecd.* 26.6, tr. Kaldellis); cf. Faustinus, *Anecd.* 26.26–31.

[14] Ps.-Zach. *HE* iii.3d with Greatrex et al. (2011) 116 n. 108 and Honigmann (1950) 248–55.

haps he grew up in the south-west zone of the city just mentioned, an elegant quarter in which the *praetorium* of the proconsul and various mansions and warehouses were situated. Warren Treadgold has recently revived a proposal put forward originally by Jakob Haury in 1891, according to which Procopius' father was the homonymous governor of Palaestina I, a native of Edessa whom the historian mentions at *Buildings* 5.7.14 when he took measures against some rebellious Samaritans at Neapolis; as Haury observes, Procopius is certainly well informed about Edessa, but this is hardly sufficient to establish this hypothesis.[15] No doubt the young historian had cause on occasion to visit the *praetorium*, which included offices for the financial officials, vaults for the archives, the law courts, and a reception hall for the governor, as excavations have revealed. As he entered the building, at the centre of the city close to the waterfront, he would have passed through one of two waiting rooms. In each of them, he could contemplate a mosaic inscription on the floor that reads, 'Do you wish not to fear authority? Do good and you will receive praise from it!' Once arrived in the courts themselves, he could have observed a detailed tabulation of legal fees inscribed in marble, displayed in order to discourage officials from inflating their fees.[16] Whether this might have encouraged him to study law is open to speculation. The concern for justice displayed there, however, can at any rate be detected in the vigorous criticisms of corruption and double-dealing that he levels at Justinian and his ministers.[17] The presence of the governor and his staff will indubitably have helped to nurture an active legal culture in the city, where indeed it was possible to study law until Justinian restricted its teaching to Constantinople and Berytus in the East; in the early 530s the

[15] Treadgold (2007) 176–7; cf. Haury (1891) 35–7. This is Procopius 7 in *PLRE* II. See also (e.g.) Bell (2013) 226–9, on the historian's elite status; cf. Howard-Johnston (2000) 20 and n. 4, placing him in the 'middle or upper echelons of Caesarea society' while noting that he echoes the complaints of a number of social groups. Simon Ford, in a paper delivered at the 'Reinventing Procopius' conference in Oxford, January 2014, argued that Procopius' portrayal of the Samaritans, and in particular his claim that some converted under pressure to Manichaeism and polytheism (*Anecd.* 11.26), reflects standard Christian prejudices.

[16] Patrich (2011c) 212–18; cf. Holum (1995) 338–40. The quotation is from Romans 13.3: in the RSV it is translated, 'Would you have no fear of him who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval'. The inscription is also in *CII/P*, vol. 2, no. 1334, where it is dated to the sixth or early seventh century (and thus may have been laid after Procopius' youth).

[17] E.g. at *Anecd.* 13–14; cf. 26.33.

lawyers of Caesarea asked for rulings on several occasions on issues to do with inheritance, a subject Procopius also raises in the *Anecdota*.[18]

We do not propose to discuss here the possible connection of Procopius to the Gaza school; it remains a serious possibility that the historian received at least part of his education at this important nearby centre of Greek learning, where, for instance, the works of Thucydides were held in particular esteem.[19] There has been important recent work on the literature produced by members of the school, such as Choricius and Procopius (of Gaza), much of which is relevant to the educational background of our historian. From the correspondence of the latter we can observe the close links between his former students and the local elite; lawyers are numerous among them, and several went on to careers in imperial service, often in Constantinople.[20] Just as regular competitions in rhetoric and literary festivals were held at Gaza, at which the city's nobles and people would be present, so equally at Caesarea we hear of such events. Hence it is quite possible that Procopius could have remained in his hometown to receive his traditional literary education: a sojourn in Gaza is possible, but not necessary.[21] Procopius' grounding in this refined milieu no doubt exerted an influence on the shape and nature of his works, parts of which will have been designed for oral delivery to circles of colleagues and friends in Constantinople.[22] It is possible—but no more—

[18] *C.J.* 2.3.30 (531), 6.58.12 (532), *Inst.* 2.8.3 (533); I am grateful to Simon Corcoran for drawing these instances to my attention. *Const. Omnem* 7 (533) for the closure of the schools at Alexandria and Caesarea. Procopius could thus have trained in the law at Caesarea, but he may equally have departed for Berytus or Constantinople. *Anecd.* 14.16–23, 29.17–24 on inheritances, the latter case involving a noble of Caesarea.

[19] Cf. Greatrex (1996a) 128 and n. 7, for references, e.g. Procopius of Gaza, *ep.* 161, now edited and translated in Amato (2010). We discuss this issue more fully in Greatrex (forthcoming, g). Thucydides enjoyed wide popularity in Late Antiquity generally: cf. Croke (2012) 409 (on Libanius). See also Kaldellis (2012) 80 on his importance.

[20] Ciccolella (2010) 139–42, assembles the evidence. Recent work: Saliou (2005), ead. (2007); cf. Penella (2009); see also now Champion (2014), *non vidi.* Laniado (2005) gives a translation of a funerary oration for a young notable of Gaza who had risen to become a provincial governor following a literary and legal education, a useful parallel to Procopius.

[21] Festivals at Gaza: Renaut (2005) 207, 210–11, 215; cf. Webb (2006) 116–17. Festivals at Caesarea: Malineau (2005) 160. But *contra* Malineau, the festivals might still have been held in the theatre at the very south edge of the city: it is not clear when in the sixth century it passed out of use. See n. 6 above.

[22] See Croke (2012) 417–19; cf. id. (2010) 28–32. See also Agosti (2012) 377–9. Cf. Evans (2011) 213–14 for some interesting suggestions as to excerpts from the *Wars* that might have been presented orally, including *Wars* 1.24.22–41 (the Nika riot), although Kaldellis (2004a) 123–6 detects implicit criticism of the regime in this section; he is wrong, however, to see the historian as failing to take the imperial line, since this had changed by the

that Justinian at some point abolished special prizes that were awarded to lawyers for their recitations, a measure that the historian singles out for criticism in his *Anecdota*.[23]

2. The Context of Procopius' Work: the Reign of Justinian

The reign of Justinian and Procopius' works are indissolubly bound together. In writing the history of Justinian's reign, modern scholars have no choice but to rely to a great extent on his writings. It is interesting to note the varying approaches that this has inspired in recent years. Clive Foss, for instance, succeeded in building up a picture of the Empress Theodora from sources other than Procopius and then compared the resulting image with the historian's portrayal; the conclusion largely vindicates Procopius.[24] Peter Bell has sought to diminish our reliance on Procopius, noting that '[m]any recent historians of the "Age of Justinian" have also been haunted by the ghost of Procopius' (in a section devoted to 'exorcising Procopius').[25] By contrast, Hartmut Leppin, in the most recent biography of Justinian, prefers the more traditional approach of using Procopius extensively in constructing the history of the emperor's reign, although he is careful to emphasise that his account cannot always be taken at face value.[26]

It is consequently of some importance, if we are to form a just appreciation of Procopius' works, to understand the context of their genesis. There is a strong tendency in modern scholarship to portray Justinian's reign as a

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540s in order to pin the blame on John the Cappadocian: see Greatrex (1997) 83; cf. id. (1995) 4–5 and Meier (2004) 96. See further Whately (2013) 74–7, and Greatrex (forthcoming, a) on audiences for such works in Constantinople.

[23] Proc. *Anecd.* 26.2, where he reports that Justinian destroyed the rank of *rhetor* through eliminating the prizes for which they had competed after the end of their careers (*τῆς συνηγορίας ἀφειμένοι*); the version of the text in the Suda, vol.2, 116.19–20, is somewhat different. Procopius seems to refer to *rhetors* as lawyers: cf. 20.17, but there is clearly also a rhetorical element here: cf. Greatrex (2001a) 158–9. Cf. Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* 3.47.1, 50.6, on financial benefits that accrued to functionaries for their literary activities and declamations. Bjornlie (2013) 105 interprets the passage as meaning that professors of rhetoric were disbarred from pursuing a legal career, which seems doubtful, and dates the measure to ca. 545. See also Lemerle (1971) 71, Kaldellis (2004b) 9–10. I am grateful to Anthony Kaldellis for discussion of this point.

[24] Foss (2002) 163. Already Gibbon's narrative was much influenced by Procopius, as Cameron (1997) 45 notes. See also now Ziche (2013) on Procopius' treatment of Theodora.

[25] Bell (2013) 15; cf. Bjornlie (2013) 102–3.

[26] Leppin (2011) 13–17.

brutally oppressive regime, comparable to the Soviet Union under Stalin—an analogy proposed initially by Tony Honoré, but taken up with gusto by Peter Bell. Such a view emerges equally from the work of Anthony Kaldellis, who describes a 'regime [that] was in fact one of the most hated tyrannies in antiquity and drew opposition across the political and religious spectrum.'[27] The opposition to which Kaldellis refers is supposed by some to be widespread, particularly among the aristocracy: Bell insists that 'many' senators took part in the Nika revolt in 532. In fact, the property of only eighteen senators was confiscated, a remarkably low figure, given that there were (at least) hundreds of senators, let alone people of senatorial rank.[28] As we shall see below, while there were undoubtedly repressive aspects to Justinian's reign, they may not have been exceptional. Moreover, we must bear in mind that the emperor's attempts to check the growing power of the aristocracy—charted vividly by Peter Sarris—would naturally attract the ire of writers associated with the elite: in the same way Priscus condemned Theodosius II's exactions from the senators to pay Attila, while welcoming Marcian's abolition of certain taxes.[29]

[27] Honoré (1978) 28–30, Bell (2013) 9–11, Kaldellis (2005a) 13; cf. id. (2004a) 1–3, 168, id. (2010a) 258 and elsewhere; James Howard-Johnston has proposed (orally) Idi Amin as a point of comparison. Gilmer (2013) 53–4, adopts a similar approach. Bell (2013) 270–2, discusses repressive measures taken by emperors (mainly Justinian) and acknowledges that 'it would be simplistic to see Justinian as little more than a bloody tyrant or, with Kaldellis, as a revolutionary ideologue'. Yet his account of Justinian's attempts to ensure 'ideological cohesion' in his empire by the promotion of Christianity and the persecution of paganism, *ibid.*, 247–52, aligns him rather closely with Kaldellis.

[28] Bell (2013) 278, 307, 324; cf. *contra* Greatrex (1997) 80 n. 99 (accepted by Signes Codoñer (2003a) 66); cf. Greatrex (2013); although Marc. *com.* a.532 refers to the involvement of 'many' nobles (cf. Gizewski (1988) 157), this reflects the official line in the immediate aftermath of the uprising: so Greatrex (1997) 83. Theophanes, 185, refers to patricians, *illustres* and consulars, whose numbers in the sixth century are unknown: while the senate itself was undoubtedly smaller than the fourth, those with high rank remained numerous; cf. Jones (1964) 529. See also Haldon (2004) 188–9; Brandes (2014) sections III–IV, argues, however, that Justinian appropriated vast amounts of property by the confiscations, thereby funding his building programme. The mildness of these confiscations (some of which were later rescinded, e.g. in the case of Anastasius' nephew Probus) compares favorably to the 29 senators executed in the wake of Septimius Severus' victory over Albinus (see Birley (1988) 127); cf. the numerous executions in the wake of the Pisonian conspiracy against Nero (Tac. *Ann.* 15.60–71) and those criticised by Amm. Marc. 28.1, under Valentinian, on which see Matthews (1990) 56–60). Note, however, that Kaldellis (2004a) 47 does question the existence of opposition groups. See further n. 59 below on this issue.

[29] Sarris (2006), 210–17; cf. Greatrex (forthcoming, b) text to n. 36, id. (2013b) 82.

The problem with this approach, which has been sketched only crudely here, is that it focuses too narrowly on Justinian himself and his reign (and that of his uncle, Justin I). If, for instance, we presented the reader with a picture of an ageing emperor surrounded by long-serving ministers, disturbances in Constantinople and numerous parts of the empire, the exile of several prominent members of the aristocracy, and ever increasing doctrinal disputes—in sum, what appears to be an empire in crisis—then she might naturally suppose that we were discussing the closing years of Justinian's reign.[30] But in fact such a description fits Anastasius' reign just as well as Justinian's, to which one would have to add an armed insurrection in the Balkans that had only temporarily been suppressed.[31] A fragment of John of Antioch recalls similar criticisms of both Procopius and Agathias:

> He (Anastasius) offered for sale all the magistracies, associated with wrong-doers and developed an insatiable desire for money, emptying the provinces of their military units and intimidating people in unusual and strange ways. In fact, he did not repel invading barbarians, but attained peace by buying it with money.[32]

Furthermore, one of the leitmotifs of Bell's stimulating book, the bitter struggle of the parvenu Justinian to legitimise his reign in the teeth of senatorial opposition, can with equal justice be applied to that of Anastasius.

[30] Leppin (2011) ch.7 ('Ende in Isolation') offers such a picture; cf. Magdalino and Macrides (1988) 68–9, Bell (2009) 88–9; *contra*, Greatrex (2012) 219–20.

[31] Haarer (2006) 227 on riots in various cities in the 510s. In 511 the emperor struggled to rid himself of the patriarch Macedonius; cf. Greatrex and Dijkstra (2009), while in November 512 he was nearly overthrown by a major uprising: see Meier (2009) 269–87, id. (2007b). Haarer (2006) 164–79, on Vitalian's revolt; cf. Meier (2009) 295–308, who notes that even after his defeat in 515 he remained a threat. On significant unrest in the eastern provinces, near Antioch, in the 510s as a result of doctrinal differences see Greatrex (2007b) 286–7; cf. Millar (2008), 62–4, id. (2010), Meier (2009) 313–16.

Exiles: the former praetorian prefect Apion (*PLRE* II, Apion 2), whose property was confiscated and who was forcibly ordained (cf. John the Cappadocian under Justinian); Diogenianus, a former commander in the Isaurian war (*PLRE* II, Diogenianus 4); Philoxenus, another former commander (*PLRE* II, Philoxenus 8). All three were recalled by Justin I, as of course was Vitalian: see Vasiliev (1950) 108. Both the patriarchs Macedonius (noted above) and Euphemius (on whom see now Kosiński (2012) 72–8) were exiled. It is worth noting that these banishments of high-ranking nobles barely feature in treatments of Anastasius' reign. Anastasius' long-serving ministers: the *magister officiorum* Celer held office from 503 to 518, a period comparable to that of Peter the Patrician under Justinian; cf. the general Patricius. See Greatrex (1996b) 124–7.

[32] John of Antioch, fr. 243 (Mariev) = fr. 312 (Roberto), but we have followed Roberto in translating the Greek word *κατάλογος* as 'military units' rather than 'accounts'.

Mischa Meier writes, 'Areobindus, as well as his wife Anicia Iuliana in particular, represented, through their origins, traditionally-minded circles, which saw in the now reigning family of Anastasius unwelcome parvenus and looked back to the military elite of the mid-fifth century (Areobindus) and even the house of Theodosius (Anicia Iuliana).'[33] The same points could be made for both Leo and Zeno; the latter is the object of particular censure in John the Lydian.[34]

Even in the realm of religious and doctrinal affairs Justinian's reign does not stand out: Anastasius deposed and exiled two patriarchs of Constantinople, while Leo bolstered his own position against Aspar and his family by measures against Arians. Nor were pagans immune from scrutiny and public trial: Malalas and other chroniclers record the arrest and trial of the (pagan) philosopher Isocasius, who had hitherto served as *quaestor sacri palatii*, in 467, following disturbances during the reign of Leo. Such was his popularity in Constantinople, however, that he was permitted to return to his home unmolested, having been baptised. To be sure, there are more numerous examples of such conversions under Justinian, and the former praetorian prefect Phocas suffered a far worse fate in 546; on the other hand, he had initially been spared, like Isocasius, in 529.[35]

In our attempt to form a just appreciation of Procopius we are seeking to draw parallels between Justinian and his predecessors. As we have argued above, citing Mischa Meier, he enjoyed no more legitimacy than his immediate predecessors; even if Justin's elevation to the throne in 518 was a surprise, it is doubtful whether the aristocratic 'old guard' hankered instead

[33] Meier (2009) 285 (my translation, with the assistance of Birgit Wirz-Endrys); cf. 279–81. Bell (2013) 320–4 likewise emphasises the claims of Anicia Juliana, but in this case as a potential opponent of Justinian.

[34] *De Mag.* 3.46. Bell (2013) 279 acknowledges this point for Zeno. The *Oracle of Baalbek*, a non-elite source, on the other hand, gives Zeno a very favourable press: see Greatrex (2000) 222.

[35] See n. 31 on the exiled patriarchs. Wood (2011a) 305–13, on Leo. Mal. 14.38 on Isocasius; cf. *PLRE* II, Isocasius. The case of the *comes* Maurianus, unluckier in his fate, is comparable: Mal. 15.16; cf. Jeffreys (2010) 518–19. On Phocas see *PLRE* II, Phocas 5 with Bell (2013) 246, Kaldellis (2013) 348–53, Maas (1992), 78–82, Noethlichs (1986) 1167–9; Scott (2013) 209–10 doubts whether the Syriac sources are correct in reporting the execution of Phocas, however. For a general treatment of Justinian's fifth-century predecessors see Noethlichs (1986) 1183–7, Sinissioglou (2008) 40–7.

Justinian's legislation of ca. 529, which led to the closure of the Academy at Athens, was not without precedent in moving against (e.g.) divination, but did admittedly go further. See Watts (2004), Bjornlie (2013) 65–7; nonetheless Watts (2005) 310–15 argues that a number of pagan communities survived until late in the century. Bjornlie (2013) 70 is correct in seeing Justinian's measures as 'simply more aggressive' than those of earlier emperors rather than as an abrupt change.

for any of Anastasius' rather inept nephews.[36] It is only to be expected therefore that many of Justinian's political tactics, e.g. the promotion of and reliance on new men, such as John the Cappadocian and Tribonian, to the detriment of the landed elites, are hardly new: John the Lydian is scathing in his judgement on Anastasius' minister Marinus the Syrian, to cite an obvious example. Other instances have been noted above. If we want to employ the terminology proposed by Bell, we might ascribe this to the *habitus* of holders of the imperial office, who shared many experiences in their rise to power, and thus unsurprisingly acquired similar outlooks.[37] In his treatment of the upper classes, Justinian's record is remarkably good, despite the pogrom of 546; his clemency is even stressed by Procopius (*Aed.* 1.1.16; cf. *Wars* 7.32), who reports his generosity to Artabanes and the other conspirators of 548/9, since their punishment was limited to dismissal from office, followed by a remarkably swift rehabilitation. Indeed, the emperor's accessibility is the subject of some criticism from the historian (*Anecd.* 13.1; 15.1–2).[38] In contrast, Anastasius' anger could strike fear into his ministers, causing even the loftiest among them to throw themselves to the floor before him.[39] Of course, even in the highly hierarchical late Roman world, the range of options for an emperor was limited: ideas of *civilitas* and respect for senators remained important. Thus, as Henning Börm has persuasively argued, emperors could not gratuitously eliminate any aristocrat, but rather had to act with circumspection, seeking to seize the chance when it arose. Otherwise they might attract nicknames such as *makellês*, butcher, as occurred to Leo after his murder of Aspar, and, more seriously, provoke determined opposition from this class. But in fact a consensus seems to have been maintained throughout the sixth century, disappearing only with the

[36] *Contra* Bell (2013) 276, 324; cf. Croke (2007) on Justin's elevation. On Hypatius, see Greatrex (1996b) 139, stressing also the conservative nature of Justin's regime.

[37] Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* 3.36, 46–50. Bell (2013) 216, 271 on *habitus*. On Marinus' career note Meier (2007a).

[38] Cf. *Wars* 7.32.9, where Arsaces urges on his compatriot Artabanes to assassinate Justinian, a speech that is remarkably critical of the emperor. See Cameron (1985) 141, Signes Codoñer (2003b) 223, but cf. the more nuanced treatment of Frendo (2001)126; see also n. 85 below. One might cite also the remarkably indulgent treatment of Bessas: Proc. *Wars* 8.33.24, with *PLRE* II, Bessas. Paul the Silentiary similarly alludes to Justinian's clemency towards Artabanes in his *Descriptio Sanctae Sophiae* of December 562, 947–9; cf. Bell (2009) 208 n. 85. Angold (1996) 23–4 speculated that Procopius insists on Justinian's clemency because his own involvement in a conspiracy had been discovered and pardoned. Bjornlie (2013) 74–7 may well be right in seeing Justinian as treating the bureaucracy (rather than the aristocracy) more disdainfully than his predecessors.

[39] Ps.-Zach. *HE* vii.8h–i; cf. Mal. 16.16.52–5.

elevation to the throne of Phocas, who had no qualms about executing members of the aristocracy.[40]

This point is worth drawing out further before we conclude this section. It may be that modern scholars, impressed by the image of the 'sleepless' Justinian, constantly legislating and seeking doctrinal unity for his empire, have underestimated the wider forces at work in the empire, the underlying dynamics of the period. Polymnia Athanassiadi has recently argued vigorously for an increasing intolerance in Late Antiquity; Peter Bell's work likewise highlights the rising importance of Christian ideology in the period, perceiving a determination to eliminate the last vestiges of paganism and classical *paideia*.[41] Although there is much to be said in favour of this perceived rise in intolerance, other scholars, such as Averil Cameron and Matthew Dal Santo point on the other hand to continuing debates in the sixth century and the persistence of a certain pluralism: it is clear that this is an issue that continues to divide scholars.[42] If for the moment one accepts that there was a general trend towards intolerance, then perhaps it is necessary to consider the degree to which Justinian was constrained by his own historical context. Emperors no longer had the option to let doctrinal matters drift: each had to come up with a policy to unite his empire, both for pragmatic and salvific reasons. Justinian played a patient and skilful game, but his reconquest of the West undermined his efforts to reach out to the opponents of Chalcedon, as the visit of Pope Agapetus to Constantinople in 536 vividly demonstrated.[43] Despite the efforts of Justinian and other emperors, doctrinal consensus remained elusive. Even if deals were brokered, as in 568 for instance, they foundered on the inflexibility of certain adherents of one

[40] Börm (2010) 167–73. Theoph. Sim., in the dialogue that precedes his *Historiae*, §4, p. 20, refers to history being dead while Phocas remained on the throne. Cf. Wood (2011a) 310 on Leo as butcher.

[41] Athanassiadi (2010), esp. 18 and ch. 4 (on Procopius and Justinian), Bell (2013) chs. 4–5. On the sleepless Justinian, see now Croke (2011).

[42] See Cameron (2012) 15, 22–3 and n. 68, Dal Santo (2012), esp. 328–30, emphasising resistance among some of the élite to the imperially backed rise of the cult of the saints, with the review by Turner (2012). There is also a vigorous rebuttal of Athanassiadi by Morlet (2010). See also now Bjornlie (2013) 82–123, on debate during the reign of Justinian, with Scott (2013) 199–201 and Averil Cameron (forthcoming).

[43] See Leppin (2011) 181–91; cf. Frend (1972) 272–5. On the increasing involvement of emperors in solving doctrinal disputes see Athanassiadi (2010) 101–2; on the difficulties for the emperors, especially Justinian, in resolving disputes, see Cameron (2012) 16–19, ead. (2007) 14–15.

side or the other, in this case the Miaphysite monks.[44] The indoctrination into one view or another of Christ's incarnation of certain populations had been so successful that it now presented an obstacle to the unity of the empire, a unity that ought, in principle, to have been furthered by Christianity. Three examples may suffice to illustrate this. First, it is striking how Justinian sought to restore the position of the Catholic church in North Africa following Belisarius' reconquest gradually, in order not to alienate the many Arians who remained there; but in the end he felt obliged to bow to pressure from the local church there, thus triggering a significant revolt.[45] Second, the Emperor Tiberius was the object of vehement criticism among the people of Constantinople in the 580s for wishing to allow the Goths in the Roman army to have the use of a church; he also endured obloquy for refusing to take measures against opponents of Chalcedon.[46] Third, there is the spectacular *volte-face* of Basiliscus in 476, who was obliged by pressure from the patriarch Acacius, Daniel the Stylite and the people of Constantinople to rescind his *Encyclical* and overturn it with an *Antiencyclical*.[47] In other words, Justinian should not be viewed as an exceptional case, an emperor who could stamp the age in his image—however much he strove to give this impressions to contemporaries—but rather as a ruler no less subject to the wider forces at work in the sixth century, which themselves demanded a more militant and intolerant Christianity and, in much of the empire, a firm allegiance to Chalcedon.[48] Like other emperors, he could tap into this doctrinal fervour to rally support among the population when his regime was in difficulties, notably in the wake of the plague, when persecutions of minorities grew more frequent.[49] In the same way, both Leo and Tiberius were able

[44] Frend (1972) 318–20; cf. Bell (2013) 176, 190, rightly noting that church leaders were not always able to persuade their followers when they agreed to a compromise. Cf. Drake (2000) 420.

[45] Justinian, *NovJ.* 37 (535); cf. Greatrex (2001b) 80; cf. id. (2007b) 291 and Kaegi (1965) 38–42.

[46] Greatrex (2007b) 291; cf. Frend (1972) 332, noting on the other hand how Maurice's refusal to persecute the anti-Chalcedonians met with some criticism. See also Bell (2013) 303 on Tiberius.

[47] Ps.-Zach. *HE* 5.5a (with Greatrex's commentary, 187); cf. Evagr. *HE* 3.7, Frend (1972) 171–3, Blaudeau (2006) 183–5, Bell (2013) 199.

[48] Cf. Lemerle (1971) 73. Bell (2013) comes close to such a view; cf. e.g. 201, although we would disagree with his supposition that Justin I's pro-Chalcedonian stance was adopted merely out of convenience (cf. Menze (2008) 18–30): see Croke (2007) 19 and Greatrex (2007a) 100. We are consciously portraying Justinian in a way similar to that in which Drake ((2000) 298–305, 402–9) characterises Constantine as a moderate.

[49] So Meier (2003) 300–1; cf. 200–3, with Maas (1992) 64–5. Constantelos (1964) 378–9 rightly notes the inconsistent nature of persecutions under Justinian and his successors.

to play upon hostility to Arians in Constantinople to boost their popularity under difficult circumstances; on the other hand, when they had more room for manoeuvre, both Tiberius and Maurice preferred to abstain from such persecutions.[50]

In conclusion, we are not calling into question the genuineness of the fear that Procopius clearly experienced in compiling his *Anecdota*. He was certainly taking a considerable risk by expressing his trenchant opinions in the work, but one may doubt whether much of the criticism to be found there would have led to immediate execution. After all, the overt attacks on the emperor in the *Anecdota* are matched by the implicit—and occasionally explicit—criticisms in the *Wars*, sometimes put into the mouths of foreign rulers or ambassadors. Juan Signes Codoñer has assembled the evidence for this and explored certain instances in greater depth. For all the oppression of pagans and their works, including the auto-da-fé of 562, the situation of historians does not appear to have been quite as perilous as it was in the first century AD, of which Tacitus provides a vivid portrait in his *Agricola*. There are no grounds for supposing that history books were publicly burnt and historians executed; in the early fifth century, Eunapius merely toned down some of his anti-Christian passages for a revised edition of his work. Furthermore, in the early sixth century, Zosimus produced a work of history critical of both Christianity and the imperial system, while Hesychius likewise authored a remarkably pagan history.[51] To remark, as one scholar has

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We thus favour the Millar model of a reactive emperor, adopted also by Errington (2006); cf. the review of Blodgett (2008).

[50] Cf. Greatrex (2007b) 291, Wood (2011a) 306–8, 311–12. Tiberius' weakness is particularly clear at Joh. Eph. *HE* 3.12–13; cf. 5.15–16 (Maurice). The orthodox zeal of the people emerges strongly at 3.31, as riots break out when they fear that the aristocracy will close ranks to protect pagans. Cf. Evagr. *HE* 5.19, reporting the accusations of paganism levelled at Gregory, the patriarch of Antioch, in the 590s.

[51] Signes Codoñer (2003b); cf. id. (2005). See also (on Kaiserkritik) Greatrex (2000). Tac. *Ann.* 1.1, *Hist.* 1.1, *Agr.* 2–3, on the suppression of hostile histories in the first century; cf. Arnaud-Lindet (2001) 179, 204; even in the *Anecdota*, Procopius does not refer to the burning of works of history that displeased the regime (as happened to those of Cremutius Cordus); the pagan books burnt in 562 (Mal. 18.136) are unlikely to have been works of history: cf. Athanassiadi (2010) 116–17, MacMullen (1997), 162 nn.4–5, Liebeschuetz (1996) 90. Bjornlie (2013) 84 thus exaggerates in seeing the literary elite as the target of the emperor's pogroms. See further Cameron (2007) 10–12, Herrin (2009) 207–8, 210–13.

On the threats to Procopius, see Bell (2013) 246; cf. Lemerle (1971) 71–2, Scott (2013) 216. Eunapius: see Blockley (1981) 2–3. Kaldellis (2010b), lv, on Zosimus and Hesychius; cf. id. (2005b) 402–3, but see Treadgold (2007) 270–8, for a different interpretation of Hesychius; cf. Scott (2013) 204. See also Cameron (2009) 16–17, 36, for doubts as to a 'crisis of culture' in the sixth century. Some prefer to date Zosimus to the mid-fifth century: see Jeffreys (2010) 511–12.

put it, that more writing hostile to Justinian has survived than for any other emperor, is to pass a verdict that is open to several interpretations: on the one hand, a number of elite writers were clearly bitterly opposed to his policies, but on the other, they felt able to express themselves—some openly—even during his lifetime. The same cannot be said for all regimes, either in antiquity or more recent times. Moreover, Warren Treadgold has actually pointed to a flourishing of historiography in Byzantium in the generation that followed Procopius, perhaps inspired by his work.[52]

3. Procopius' Works

Our principal aim in this section is to review recent research on Procopius' works and to see what recent developments have taken place in Procopian studies. First, however, just as we have argued against overemphasising the particularity of Justinian's reign, so we should also insist on not regarding our historian as an exceptional case. Classicising historians, as we have argued elsewhere, just like their predecessors, were far from unwilling to express forthright opinions on emperors, ministers and generals; an obvious instance is the bilious Eunapius, while Zosimus, no doubt under his influence, is hardly less critical. Procopius, of course, was unfortunate in not surviving the emperor whom he wished to attack, and this is surely the most plausible explanation for the composition of a separate work, the *Anecdota*, which might otherwise have been incorporated into the *Wars*.[53] Nor is he unusual in having turned his hand to different genres, both panegyric and history, and it is worth noting that he intended at least to embark on a church history alongside his secular work, as Anthony Kaldellis has noted.[54] Eunapius wrote both biography and history, while in Procopius' own day his contemporary John the Lydian composed works not only on portents and the magistracies of the Roman state, but also on Justinian's first Persian war, even if the last has not survived. We might also note the case of Theophylact Simocatta, whose *History* blends secular and ecclesiastical elements, and who also produced philosophical dialogues.[55] The fact therefore that Procopius

[52] Kaldellis (2010b) lv and 3 n. 4; cf. Bell (2010) 73, Sykoutres (1927) 24. On Procopius' successors see Whitby (1992) 27–8, Treadgold (2007) 310; cf. Bjornlie (2013) 121–2.

[53] As we have argued at length in Greatrex (2000); cf. id. (1995) and Signes Codoñer (2003a) 48–50. On Zosimus see n. 51 above and Bjornlie (2013) 85–9.

[54] Kaldellis (2009) 606–16; see also Taragna (2000) 70 and n. 13 and (more generally) Signes Codoñer (2003c) 129–44, emphasising the similarities between ecclesiastical and secular histories.

[55] Treadgold (2007) ch. 7 offers a survey of Procopius' contemporaries; on Eunapius, Penella (1990) ch. 1, noting overlaps between his two works. Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* 3.28.4–5

turned his hand to works of different types should not call into question his status as a historian, as Denis Roques provocatively argued in 2000: he saw Procopius as a 'lettré', who, under the strong influence of his literary education, reshaped his historical material the better to conform to the narratives of Herodotus and Thucydides, thereby returning to arguments already put forward in the late nineteenth century. As Haury long ago pointed out, however, Procopius' narrative can often be substantiated by other contemporary accounts.[56] It seems likely, in conclusion, that Procopius looms larger in scholarship than his fifth-century predecessors for much the same reasons as the Emperor Justinian does: both have left a much larger trace in the record.

Before turning to the individual works, we should discuss a general point that cuts across all of them and goes to the heart of our perception of this historian. This concerns his own persona, his views on empire and religion. For there exist several Procopii, one might say, in recent scholarship.[57] On the one hand, there is the crypto-pagan neo-Platonist Procopius, an ardent critic and opponent of Justinian's wars, a portrait drawn with verve by Anthony Kaldellis in his book of 2004 and in several articles.[58] Some then associate him with groups of disaffected senators, themselves conservative and bitterly opposed to Justinian's policies. We have already cast doubt on the notion of widespread opposition to the emperor, however, and caution must be exercised before identifying (e.g.) a 'war party', which favoured reigniting hostilities with Persia in the late 520s, let alone associating Procopius with such a group.[59] On the other hand, what one might call the 'traditional'

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for the commissioned work; cf. Maas (1992) 33; Cameron (1985) 242 and n. 1, expresses some doubts as to whether it was ever composed. The new edition (with French translation and extensive commentary) of this work by Schamp and others is rarely cited, despite its great value. On overtly Christian elements in Theophylact, see Whitby (1992) 50–4; cf. Liebeschuetz (1993) 163. On his two dialogues, see Treadgold (2007) 331–2, suggesting that they were chiefly intended to boost his career. Whether the *Buildings* should simply be categorised as 'panegyric' is something to be discussed below; it certainly contains ekphrastic elements, a genre widely practised in the period: cf. Renaut (2005).

[56] Roques (2000) esp. 10, 37; Haury (1896) 5–6. Cesaretti (2008) 157 is more persuasive in arguing for an underlying historiographical project behind all of Procopius' works; cf. Bjornlie (2013) 106.

[57] As is noted also by Croke (2012) 424.

[58] Kaldellis (2004a); cf. id. (2005a) and (2010a).

[59] Kaldellis (2005a) 13; cf. id. (2004b) (largely limited to intellectuals, however) and (2004a) 213, while in (2010b) lxviii–lxix, he emphasises the variety of groups opposed to the emperor. Bell refers to 'many senators' (noted in n. 28 above); cf. Karpozilos (1997) 380. On a pagan war party see Lounghis (2005). Börm (2007) 318–20 offers a more nuanced picture of events.

view, that the historian was indeed a Christian, even if his work is resolutely classicising in its approach and appeals to notions such as *tychê*, remains the orthodoxy: in a recent article, Sarah Gador-Whyte has argued convincingly that *tychê* for Procopius is a homonym for the Christian God, who intervened regularly in the course of history, often to punish the Romans for their sins.[60] Further support for the notion of a Christian Procopius comes from a recent analysis by Dariusz Brodka of the Abgar legend treated at *Wars* 2.12.7–30, where, as he notes, Procopius unambiguously refers to Christ's incarnation and expresses no doubts as to the protection afforded to Edessa by him.[61] All in all, it still seems preferable to see in Procopius a Christian who was nonetheless steeped in classical culture and, like other contemporary writers, did not balk at infusing his works with these pagan elements (alongside Christian references).[62]

Just as there exist both a pagan and a Christian Procopius, so also we seem to have an imperialist and an anti-imperialist Procopius. Anthony Kaldellis is a vigorous exponent of the second view, insisting on 'Procopius' anti-war stance' and rejecting the consensus view that the historian approved Justinian's wars, even if he had doubts as to the methods by which the emperor sometimes pursued them.[63] In fact, however, the difference in

[60] Gador-Whyte (2011) 111. She further argues that since Justinian saw himself acting with God's support, Procopius' references to hostile *tychê* thus undercut this and offer veiled criticism of the emperor. See also Cameron (1985) 117–19, Brodka (2004) 40–61, 229, Karpozilos (1997) 381–4, Scott (2013) 207. Hinterberger (2010) addresses this issue more generally, noting that later Byzantine authors also have recourse to *τύχη* and *φθόνος* (the latter of which features little in Procopius, 196). Further criticism of Kaldellis' position may be found in Whitby (2007); cf. the reviews of Meier (2005), Becker (2007) and the very useful one of Fahey (2005); Scott (2013) is the most eloquent rebuttal, esp.204–7 (on Procopius).

[61] Brodka (2013a); cf. id. (2004) 21–39, Cameron (1985) 116–17, opposing Kaldellis (2010a) 272–3; cf. id. (2009) 614. Evans (2011) 240 n. 14, suggests that Procopius might have inserted the section in response to the fall of Phocas in 545/6. Brodka further argues that Procopius probably did not use Eusebius' *Church History* in recounting the story of Abgar. He may also have relied on earlier Christian historiography, e.g. Hippolytus or Julius Africanus, for his anecdote on Punic letters cut on two columns at Tigisis in Numidia that refer to the expulsion of the Canaanites by Joshua related in the Old Testament (*Wars* 4.10.13–22): see Schmitz (2007) and now Amitay (2011).

[62] So Scott (2013) 211; cf. Jeffreys (2010) 517–18 viewing Malalas somewhat similarly as a (more or less) conventional Christian, indifferent to theological issues. References to gods or fate(s) hardly suffice to infer an author's paganism: see (e.g.) Lepelley (2010) 486–9, on Corippus, Bowersock (1990) generally and id. (2006) 62–3, rightly rejecting Barnes' conclusion that Choricius of Gaza was a pagan on such a basis.

[63] Kaldellis (2010a) 258 for the quotation, 257–9 more generally for this point; cf. id. (2004a) 118, where he promises to show 'that Procopius opposed Justinian's wars … en-

this case between scholars lies rather in nuances. It is, after all, difficult to argue that the historian whose avowed aim was to record the wars waged by Justinian in East and West and to preserve them for posterity was fundamentally a pacifist.[64] On the other hand, the obvious setbacks that befell imperial forces for much of the 540s must have blunted the ardour of even the fiercest Roman imperialists and led to questions about issues of strategy and command. Thus it is likely, as indeed Kaldellis notes, that Procopius' attitudes changed over time and that he became increasingly disenchanted with the reconquest project. This may have been because he became a pacifist, but a more plausible explanation is that he considered the operation to have been bungled by the incompetence and venality of the generals assigned to the task. It is consequently risky to try to argue that Procopius was firmly opposed to the whole reconquista in the first place, as Maria Cesa proposes, although she is right to emphasise that he highlights the vulnerabilities that arose in the Balkans and in the East as a consequence of the redeployment of forces in the West; she also draws attention to the significant point that few contemporary (or later Byzantine) historians attached much significance to the immense effort invested in regaining the West.[65] Dariusz Brodka offers the most balanced assessment of Procopius' attitude towards the western campaigns, detecting numerous signs of favour for the enterprise, not least in his reporting of its remarkable success in the 530s.[66]

It is not surprising that scholars have difficulty in pinning down our historian's judgement about Justinian's western ventures, for even on less broad issues it is often unclear how his text should be interpreted. A few examples may be cited. First, as we have noted elsewhere, Procopius reports how the Emperor Anastasius refused to take control of the Caspian Gates despite an offer from the Hunnic king Ambazuces to do so. The Persians subsequently took over the pass. While Kaldellis takes Procopius as generally praising Anastasius' prudence, Benjamin Isaac interprets the passage rather as a criti-

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tirely'. But at (2004a) 221, as he points out to me, he notes that the historian was 'not immune to the charms of military glory'.

[64] The case of Tacitus provides a good analogy: although Arnaud-Lindet (2001) 243 supposes that the historian was by nature a pacifist, most scholars rightly propose that he (like Sallust) was broadly favourable to the Roman imperial mission, even if he had reservations about the manner in which certain emperors or generals undertook it. See Syme (1958) 530–1, Sailor (2012) 29–32, Levene (2009) 231–2; and note *Annals* 15.31 for a favourable reference to *vis imperii*.

[65] Cesa (1981) 403, 406 (cited with approval by Kaldellis (2004a) 236 n.23), ead. (2006) 208–9, 219–20; cf. Cataudella (2003) 409–15, Kaldellis (2010a) 256. Cf. Scott (1996) 27, on Malalas' lack of interest in the Vandal wars, though note Greatrex (forthcoming, c).

[66] Brodka (1999); cf. Pazdernik (1997) 289, Börm (2007) 261.

cism of his want of initiative.[67] The preface to the *Wars* has long been the subject of debate: should it be perceived as a genuine paean to the renewed capability of imperial forces as a result of the adoption of new combat techniques or as a criticism of the barbarisation of the Roman army or even as a rather jokey 'farrago'?[68] No consensus has yet emerged. Did Procopius believe in a hard-line eastern policy, brooking no compromise with the dangerous Sasanian empire? Such a view has been advocated by scholars such as Telemakhos Lounghis and Maria Cesa; the apparently favourable description accorded to the traditionalist quaestor Proclus, who opposed the proposal of Kavadh that Justin should adopt his son Khusro, is often regarded as signalling the historian's approval for his warlike stance.[69] If, on the other hand, following Kaldellis' lead, we take into account the opening chapters of the *Persian Wars*, a different picture emerges. Procopius highlights the co-operation that gave rise to the despatch of a guardian for the young Theodosius, an episode that Agathias found implausible and which is evidently recounted because of its relevance to the later adoption attempt.[70] In the same vein, it is striking how differently scholars have interpreted the historian's portrayal of the Sasanian king Kavadh I: for Kaldellis, he represents a further decline in the moral standards of the monarchy, 'the first Persian to kill other Persians in the introduction', paving the way for the baleful Khusro.[71] On the other hand, both Giovanni Pugliese Carratelli and Arthur

[67] Greatrex (forthcoming, e), text to n. 13, citing Kaldellis (2004a) 98 and 160, Isaac (1990) 230.

[68] See (e.g.) Greatrex, Elton, and Burgess (2005) 72, cf. Rance (2005) 428–9; Kaldellis (2004–5), followed by Gilmer (2013) 47–8; Scott (1981) 73. See already Cesa (1981) 397 and n. 33, noting very diverse judgements. Cesaretti (2008) is a valuable discussion of the preface to the *Wars* as much as to the *Buildings*.

[69] Lounghis (2005) 25–6; cf. Rubin (1960) 259. Cesa (1981) 404 argues that Procopius favoured concentrating the empire's resources against the Persians and the Balkan tribes. See Börm (2007) 311–16, who offers a more balanced account of the episode, related by Procopius at *Wars* 1.11.

[70] On which see Bardill and Greatrex (1996), Heil (2006) 170–4, Greatrex (2008) 85–7; cf. Börm (2007) 308–11. As both McDonough (2011) 58 and Maas (forthcoming) note, Procopius' narration of the adoption of Theodosius implies at least a 'grudging respect' (McDonough's term) for the Sasanians. See further Kaldellis (2004a) 62–9, on the early chapters, although he over-interprets their organisation.

[71] Kaldellis (2004a) 80–90, quotation from 84. It is worth noting in passing that at the same time as he observed that it had 'not yet been noticed that Chosroes is the only ruler in Procopius' works who is frequently designated by his patronymic, "Chosroes son of Cavades"' (p. 81), Schmitt (2004) 674 remarked on the same idiom, seeing in it an adaptation of Iranian usage; cf. Börm (2007) 106 (with further examples for other kings, e.g. *Wars* 2.26.31). The significance of the expression postulated by Kaldellis is thus gravely compromised.

Christensen consider Procopius to have admired Kavadh, seeing in him a king who respected the laws and showed himself merciful in the war he waged against the Romans, in which he released prisoners because of his *philanthrôpia* (*Wars* 1.7.34).[72]

Nor is it any easier to determine Procopius' attitudes towards barbarians more generally. On the one hand, when discussing the withdrawal of the Roman frontier in Egypt under Diocletian, which ended up merely encouraging further barbarian attacks, he declares 'Thus (there is) no mechanism as regards the barbarians for keeping faith with the Romans that does not require soldiers to defend (it).'[73] Yet his attitude to barbarians is remarkably variable, ranging from the admiring, e.g. in the case of the Hephthalite Huns or the Goths (especially Totila) to the bitterly hostile, as in the case of the Heruls.[74] It is even possible sometimes to observe his change of attitude, such as in the case of al-Harith and Rome's Jafnid allies, where, following his defeat at al-Mundhir's hands and the execution of one of his sons, Procopius admits that 'from this it was known that Arethas (al-Harith) was not betraying the Romans to the Persians.'[75] In similar fashion, his treatment of Belisarius ranges from the eulogistic to the critical.[76] Philip Wood has drawn attention to the same issues in Procopius' treatment both of the Vandal king Gelimer and of the Moors in the *Vandalic Wars*: the former, for instance, is portrayed in a more sympathetic light following his defeats, becoming a figure of laudable humility.[77] No doubt these inconsistences are due in part to changes of view on the part of the historian, reflecting a disillusion with

[72] Pugliese Carratelli (1971) 600–1, followed by Fiaccadori (1983) 261–2, Christensen (1925) 107–9. Note also *Wars* 1.6.19 for praise for Kavadh's effectiveness, with Börm (2007) 252.

[73] *Wars* 1.19.33, my translation. Cf. Cesa (2006) 209, citing *Wars* 3.2.7 and noting other instances.

[74] Cf. Greatrex (forthcoming, e), Cesa (1981) 404–5. For a detailed treatment see Revanoglou (2005), section IV, esp. 209–10 on the Heruls, 219, 225–6 on the Hephthalites. See also Maas (2003) 160–7 (on Procopius' treatment of the Tzani) and id. (2007) 80.

[75] *Wars* 2.28.13, tr. Dewing; cf. his more hostile account at 1.17.47–8. See further Greatrex (forthcoming, d). Brodka (2004) 48–50 likewise notes uncertainty as to how to interpret *Wars* 7.13.15–17, concerning Belisarius' strategy in Italy.

[76] See Rubin (1960) 178–9 on praise for Belisarius in the *Wars*. Admiration of Belisarius, e.g. *Wars* 2.21.28–9, 3.21.8, 5.22.1–6; criticism, 7.35.2, *Anecd.* 3.30–5.27; cf. Cameron (1985) 230, Brodka (2004) 115–20, Pazdernik (1997) 302–3.

[77] Wood (2011b) 441–6. Wood's perceived allusions to Scripture and the church historians are significant in the light of the continuing debate as to Procopius' religious convictions, on which see above, pp. 91–2. On the Moors contrast the positive description of Cabaon's campaigns (*Wars* 3.15) with his bitter remarks at 4.17.10 on their faithlessness. See also Knaepen (2001).

Roman generalship in the 540s; they may also be influenced by the sources on which he draws, as by the requirements of a particular context, in which he may wish to give vent to criticism of an individual or people.[78] The whole conundrum, moreover, is aggravated by Procopius' tendency never to harmonise his text, i.e. to remove superseded judgements or inconsistencies; he prefers to correct himself later, sometimes implicitly rather than explicitly. Since much of the first seven books of the *Wars* was completed already by the mid-540s, this meant that he had to insert updates or corrections here and there, as he could, and on occasion to shoehorn things in rather awkwardly. In the light of this tendency, it becomes increasingly difficult, albeit not impossible, to argue for elaborately crafted criticisms of the imperial government.[79]

Ten years ago, Kaldellis confidently declared, 'In truth, there is only one Procopius', going on to explain that this Procopius is the man who vented his spleen in the *Anecdota* and offered numerous oblique clues to his real views in the *Wars* and even in the *Buildings*. Our approach is more hesitant. Patrick Gray, for instance, has aptly drawn attention to the fact that there appears to be more than one Cyril of Alexandria: both sides in the discussions about the nature of Christ at Chalcedon were able to marshal passages from his writings to uphold their point of view.[80] Consistency is a rare virtue, both in the ancient world and in modern scholarship. We should not therefore be too quick to build up a picture of a monolithic historian, a steadfast opponent of the regime whose every declaration requires scrutiny to unearth a hidden meaning, invariably one that contains a vicious dart aimed at the emperor or his ministers.[81]

[78] Wood (2011b) 446–7 stresses the second point. The praise lavished on Cabaon (e.g. *Wars* 3.8.15) in his opposition to the persecutions of King Thrasamund may, however, reflect a Catholic source rather than the historian's convictions; so Rubin (1957) 408.

[79] Fatouros (1980) 523; cf. Sykoutres (1927) 24 on this tendency of Procopius, with Haury (1891) 7, 21–2. Implicit correction: *Wars* 8.2.6–9, correcting 1.15.20–1, 2.29.14–19, with Greatrex (1998a) 186 n.43. See also id. (1995) on insertions in *Wars* 1–2 and note *Wars* 6.5.26–7 for the insertion of updates. On the general difficulties of ensuring consistency and avoiding repetition in ancient historiography see Rhodes (2008) 87–8. The same problem was faced by Gibbon: cf. Cameron (1997) 51–2, noting inconsistencies in his treatment of Justinian, no doubt in part arising from Procopius; cf. Fowden (2014) 7 on Gibbon.

[80] Kaldellis (2004a) 45; Gray (2005) 222–3; cf. Price and Gaddis (2005) I.60–73.

[81] See Cesaretti and Fobelli (2011) 42 on the issue of consistency; cf. Cesaretti (2008) 170–8 (sympathetic to the presence of latent criticism). Against the idea that the *Wars* is replete with oblique criticism of the emperor, accessible only to those well versed in the classics (so Kaldellis (2004a) 115–17) is the fact that he could hardly be sure that one such person would not denounce him to the emperor, if indeed the criticisms were so danger-

(a) *Wars*

A consensus has now been established regarding the works' date of publication. The first seven books appeared in 550/1, while Book 8 followed in 552 or 553.[82] Scholars have devoted considerable attention to the latent criticism of Justinian to be found in the work, especially in the speeches.[83] Juan Signes Codoñer has even found an allusion to the empress Theodora's death in Procopius' reporting of the killing of a whale near Constantinople in 547 (*Wars* 7.29.9–20); he argues, moreover, that the historian went through a more positive phase in the late 540s, as it appeared likely that Germanus would replace Justinian, now isolated in the wake of his wife's death, and it is in this context that he drew up his *Anecdota*, partly as a means to ingratiate himself to the new regime that he believed would soon take over.[84] In line with what we have argued above, we should stress that there are limits to the extent to which one can mine the *Wars* for traces of hostility to Justinian, an exercise that once was popular, for instance, with the *Aeneid* and Augustus, but which can end up being over-ingenious and subtle, even if never entirely refutable. For on the one hand, it is striking how overt criticism could be, especially when Procopius describes Justinian discussing theology with elderly priests, albeit in a speech attributed to a conspirator.[85] On the other hand, very different interpretations can be put on some episodes or speeches: does John the Cappadocian, when he opposes Justinian's projected expedition to recapture North Africa, function as a Herodotean 'wise advisor'? Such an approach is adopted by Cesa and Kaldellis, despite the historian's antipathy towards the prefect. Yet as Brodka points out, Justinian's decision is vindi-

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ous and the regime so brutal. A loyalist such as the long-serving *magister officiorum* Peter the Patrician, himself a historian, would undoubtedly have been as au fait with Aristophanes and Herodotus as Procopius himself; cf. Sarris (2006) 217 n. 93. As Cesaretti (2008) 174 and n. 67, notes, more study is needed of Procopius' public.

[82] So Treadgold (2007) 188–90; cf. Greatrex (1994) 105–7 (with corrections noted in Zuckerman (2013) 334), Greatrex (2003) 52–7, *contra* Evans (1996) 301–13. Cf. Croke (2005) 422–3, 425. Kaldellis (2010a) 253 puts *Wars* 8 in 554, however, while Evans (2011) 240 n. 20, continues to prefer ca. 557.

[83] Kaldellis (2010a) 260–2, which fails, however, to take into account the important article of Signes Codoñer (2003b) or his other contributions (noted below); see also Meier (2004) 93, Pazdernik (2006), and now id. (forthcoming).

[84] Signes Codoñer (2005), esp. 55–7; cf. id. (2003a), esp. 58–68, but note the serious objections raised by Croke (2005) 421–4.

[85] *Wars* 7.32.9 (on which see n. 38 above). On the *Aeneid* cf. e.g. Lyne (1987) 217, drawing on the 'pessimistic Harvard school'.

cated, and the advice is shown to be mistaken, even if the conquest proved more troublesome in the long run that might initially have been hoped.[86]

One further illustration of the difficulties involved in an over-subtle approach to the work may be offered. Kaldellis has recently emphasised the deception practised by a Roman peasant in order to lure Glon, the Persian garrison commander at Amida, into an ambush. Arguing that Procopius builds up 'complex patterns of textual and metatextual resonance' by such artful means in order to express his criticisms in an oblique way, he sees in the episode, which he regards as the historian's invention, a desire to highlight the incompetence and corruption that plagued the Roman army. But on the one hand, it appears that he had access to a good local source for this episode, one which he shares for much of his information with the Syriac historian known as Pseudo-Zachariah of Mytilene. Hence it is likely that he is merely embellishing local traditions in this case. On the other hand, in the preceding chapter (*Wars* 1.8), Procopius is damning in his description of the failed operations of Patricius and Hypatius, just as John the Lydian, when referring to the same operations in the *De Magistratibus*, is full of scorn for the efforts of the general Areobindus. It is unclear therefore why the historian should resort to such subtlety to make a point when it is quite evident that criticism of the army's performance was fully acceptable, not only for past operations, as in this case, but even in contemporary campaigns.[87] Naturally some criticisms of individuals or policies remained too delicate to raise directly in the *Wars* but may rather have been touched on obliquely: Marion

[86] Cesa (1981) 401, ead. (2006) 212 and n. 44; cf. Kaldellis (2004a) 180–1, Scott (1981) 73–4, *contra* Brodka (1999) 246–7. Cf. the differing interpretations of the criticisms of Justinian put forward by the Armenians and others to Khusro at *Wars* 2.2: while Kaldellis (2010a) 258–61 infers from them and from the brief defence that Procopius offers that the historian opposes the emperor's projects *tout court*, Brodka (1999) 252–3 perceives them rather as complaints as to the methods employed by him to achieve his (laudable) aims; cf. id. (2004) 131–2. Pazdernik (1997) 6 sensibly argues that one should not suppose that any particular speaker in the work is a mouthpiece for the historian, cf. 147, on the allusions both to Xerxes and to the Athenian expedition to Sicily in the run-up to the despatch of the expedition to North Africa. The Vandalic wars proper—those whose end Procopius records at *Wars* 4.8.1—indubitably vindicated Justinian; but their aftermath, as Procopius notes, *Wars* 4.28.52 (cf. *Anecd.* 18.4–9), left a sour taste. Cf. Pazdernik (1997) 181–4. See further now Kruse (2013).

[87] Kaldellis (2010a) 260 on Glon; cf. id. (2004a) 12 for 'a false story' that 'conceals a deeper truth'. But see Greatrex (2010) 244–5, on Procopius' sources. Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* 3.53 for his criticisms. See further Greatrex (forthcoming, f), text to n. 22, on criticism of the Roman performance in the Anastasian war with id. (1998a) 75–6. Procopius' criticisms of operations under Justinian, e.g. *Wars* 2.6.1–8, 2.8.13–19. See further Greatrex (2010) 247–8, more generally arguing in favour of taking the initial chapters of *Wars* 1 at face value, *contra* Kaldellis (2004a) ch. 2.

Kruse thus has argued that Procopius' reference to Belisarius' distribution of gold coin at Syracuse in December 535 represents an implicit criticism of Justinian's banning of the practice in 537 when he scaled back the expenditure associated with the consulate before abolishing it in 541.[88]

Before moving on to discuss the *Anecdota*, we should note a few relatively recent works on the *Wars*. The *Gothic Wars* have attracted the most interest, the subject of an Oxford doctoral thesis by Maria Kouroumali (Kouroumali 2006), as well as of a monograph concerning its manuscript tradition by Maria Kalli (Kalli 2004).[89] A (posthumous) translation into French by Denis Roques is announced.[90] Several important articles of Dariusz Brodka have shed light upon the sources on which Procopius draws in the introductory sections of the *Gothic* and *Vandalic Wars*, while Philip Rance's detailed discussion of the battle of Busta Gallorum deals as much with Procopius' presentation of the engagement as with issues of military history.[91]

It is necessary also to draw attention to the close links between all three of Procopius' works. For while *Wars* 1–7 have been conventionally dated to 550/1, as has the *Anecdota*, the *Buildings* has been placed rather in 554 or 559. But if a new hypothesis, founded on a meticulous study of the two manuscript traditions of the last work by Federico Montinaro, is correct, then it is

[88] Kruse (forthcoming) referring to *Wars* 5.5.17–18 and Justinian, *NovJ.* 105 (537). Cf. Greatrex (2000) 218–19.

[89] See, however, the critical review of Wilson (2004). Miranda Williams is preparing a doctoral thesis under the direction of James Howard-Johnston on the *Vandalic Wars*, while Conor Whately (Winnipeg) completed a dissertation at Warwick University (U.K.) under Michael Whitby entitled *Descriptions of Battle in Procopius* (2009), which should be published subsequently in revised form. A revised version of Kouroumali's thesis is due to be published by Cambridge University Press.

[90] Roques (2011) vi. It is worth noting that Averil Cameron (1967) long ago translated extensive parts of all of Procopius' works, including the *Wars* in *Procopius*, part of a series on 'The Great Histories' edited by Hugh Trevor-Roper that abruptly ceased for financial reasons, so that this work is hard to obtain. Anthony Kaldellis is planning to bring out a revised and annotated version of Dewing's Loeb translation of the *Wars*. The entire *Wars* has been translated recently into Spanish, with notes, by F. A. García Romero and J. A. Flores Rubio, 4 vols. (2000–7); cf. Roques' French translation of the *Vandal Wars* and A. Chekalova's Russian translation of *Wars* 1–4 and *Anecdota* (1993).

[91] Brodka (2012a), (2013b); cf. (2012b). Note also his recent Polish translation of *Wars* 1–4 (Brodka (2013c)). Rance (2005) 424–70. We have already cited two recent contributions about the *Vandalic Wars*: see n. 77 above. Van Nuffelen (2007) examines rebellions in the *Vandal Wars* and Procopius' attitude towards them.

Several contributions to Sarantis and Christie (2013) contain important discussions of Procopius' works, notably those of Sarantis (2013); cf. id. (2009), Lillington-Martin (2013), Colvin (2013). All three gave papers on similar themes at the Oxford conference, 'Reinventing Procopius', in January 2014.

quite possible that the first and shorter version (hitherto thought to be a later abridgement) was brought out to accompany the *Wars* already upon its first publication.[92] He proposes, moreover, that the longer version was updated subsequently as more information became available to Procopius. Building upon this theory, we have suggested that the historian may likewise have brought sections of the *Wars* up-to-date, for instance concerning the reign of al-Mundhir and the campaigns of Abraha in southern Arabia.[93]

(b) The *Anecdota*

Procopius' unpublished indictment of Justinian's reign continues to attract the most attention, most visible in the number of translations to appear in the last few years. Following Juan Signes Codoñer's annotated Spanish translation of 2000, there are now revised and annotated ones in German and English as well as a new English one by Anthony Kaldellis and a new French one by Pierre Maraval.[94] Despite arguments to the contrary of Brian Croke, the date of completion of the work seems well established in 550: Kaldellis has marshalled strong arguments to reinforce the traditional view.[95] The same scholar has argued persuasively for two periods of composition of the work, positing an initial section from chapters 1–18, to which was later joined a second section, more concerned with administrative matters.[96] As regards the context of composition of the work, we have noted above the extensive analysis of this by Signes Codoñer, who connects it with the death of Theodora and the brief period in which Procopius came to hope for a transfer of power to Justinian's nephew Germanus.[97]

[92] Montinaro (2011) 104. His full comparative edition is to be found in his doctoral thesis (2013), vol. II.

[93] Greatrex (forthcoming, d). If we accept that Procopius continued to make such corrections until 554, then naturally our arguments in Greatrex (2003) 54 about the lack of any references to events post-552 are weakened (cf. also Evans (1996) 306–7), although we continue to believe in an initial date of completion of *Wars* 8 in late 552.

[94] Signes Codoñer (2000); Veh with Meier and Leppin (2005), Williamson (2007); Kaldellis (2010b) with notes and translations also of excerpts from the *Wars*; Maraval (2004). Note also Cesaretti and Conca (1999).

[95] Croke (2005); cf. Kaldellis (2009) 585–98. Scott (2012b) 13 and n. 37 continues to prefer the later dating, however.

[96] Kaldellis (2009) 598–606; cf. id. (2010b) xxix–xxxv.

[97] See n. 84 above. In a provocative paper at the 'Reinventing Procopius' conference in Oxford in January 2014 Henning Börm argued, while supporting Signes Codoñer's suggestion, that Procopius' criticisms simply represent standard accusations that belong to the genre of invective rather than a heartfelt tirade; he differed from other critics, he contends, only by taking the risk of identifying himself as the author.

The tone of the work is clearly one of hyperbole, in which Justinian is cast as the 'Prince of Demons' in his overweening ambition and its disastrous consequences for humanity. It is a blistering response to the propaganda put forward by the emperor, often rebutting the claims he made. It is not necessary to infer that the historian believed in the literal truth of his rhetoric. Rather, it is worth citing the novelist Anthony Trollope in this context, who declares in *The Way We Live Now* à propos of the grandiose swindler Augustus Melmotte that 'You can run down a demi-god only by making him out to be a demi-devil.'[98] The only way therefore to counter the barrage of excessive claims put out by the imperial authorities was to turn it on its head. Despite these exaggerations, Procopius' specific criticisms, when closely examined, find confirmation in other sources, as Signes Codoñer and others have noted.[99] To claim, as Leslie Brubaker has done, that '[t]he *Secret History* is a successful piece of fiction, a brilliant parody on the imperial panegyric. It tells us nothing about Justinian and Theodora' does the work a serious disservice and flies in the face of scholarship that has established the well-founded nature of the criticisms expressed.[100]

(c) The *Buildings* (*De Aedificiis*)[101]

This work continues to attract much attention as scholars struggle to grasp its genre, its purpose and indeed its sincerity (or lack of it), no doubt stimulated by the issue of *Antiquité Tardive* devoted to it in 2000. It is in the case of the *Buildings* that the lack of communication between scholars in the field is

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One should also note the literary analyses of the work brought out in the last few years by Konstantinos Païdas, most recently on the theme of the power of women and impotence of men (2007), with references to earlier publications.

[98] Trollope (1994) ch. 44, p. 338.

[99] On the vilification of Justinian as the 'Prince of Demons', see (among recent works) Brodka (2004) 32–9, Kaldellis (2004a) 155; Treadgold (2007) 210–13 interprets him rather literally; cf. Brodka (2007), a review of Treadgold, text to n. 14. On the response to the administration's propaganda, see Scott (1985), Signes Codoñer (2000) 95–105, Kaldellis (2004a) 223–8, id. (2010b) xlix–lv.

[100] Brubaker (2004) 101; cf. ead. (2005) 432–6. Spatharas (2012) likewise casts doubt on Procopius' portrayal of Antonina and Theodora, detecting parallels with speeches by the two orators; that proposed between Neaera and Theodora is more convincing than that between Euphiletus' wife and Antonina. Cf., *contra*, Greatrex (2008) 66–7, noting how Procopius himself had anticipated the doubts that would be cast on his work (*Anecd.* 1.4); Kaldellis (2009) 593. As regards the empress Theodora, Foss' study (cited above, n. 24) confirms at least some of Procopius' accusations; cf. Kaldellis (2010b) xlix–lv.

[101] As Cesaretti (2008) 154 n.5 reminds us, the full title is 'Concerning the Buildings of the Emperor Justinian', Περὶ τῶν τοῦ δεσπότου Ἰουστινιανοῦ κτισμάτων.

felt most acutely, leading to a number of publications that take no account of the arguments of others; this is also sometimes attributable, of course, to works coming out nearly simultaneously. Thus two recent translations of the *Buildings* (or part of it) opt for two different dates of the work: while Denis Roques assembles a number of new arguments in favour of the later dating, ca. 559, Paolo Cesaretti and Maria Luigia Fobelli prefer the more traditional ca. 554.[102] Furthermore, as we have mentioned earlier, Federico Montinaro has now propounded a new theory as to the genesis and evolution of the work, according to which a first edition appeared ca. 550, perhaps to accompany the *Wars*, which was then progressively updated in the light of new information—and, he suggests, to offer more explicit praise of the emperor—to result in a fuller, although not definitive, version ca. 554.[103] Meanwhile, Georgios Makris at Münster is preparing a new edition of the *Buildings*, of which he considers approximately a quarter, such as the names of the forts listed in the Balkans, to be a forgery of the eleventh or twelfth century designed to endow Kastoria with a spurious sixth-century past.[104] We are therefore now witnessing perhaps the most exciting period in the study of this work for centuries: the approaches of Montinaro and Makris are evidently diametrically opposed and we can only welcome the debate that they will generate and the closer attention that will therefore be paid to the two versions of the *Buildings*.[105]

We do not propose to rehearse here the arguments for a later or earlier dating of the *Buildings*. Most scholars continue to prefer the earlier dating, viz. ca. 554, but a significant minority opt for the later one, following Michael Whitby's article of 1985; Denis Roques in particular is a zealous partisan of the late dating.[106] We have dealt with this issue in a separate article,

[102] Roques (2011), a complete translation and commentary, published posthumously; Cesaretti and Fobelli (2011), a translation into Italian of *Buildings* 1.1. Note also the recent Polish translation of Grotowski (2006). Archaeological work continues to shed light on the *Buildings*; Roques (2011) has a rich bibliography, supplementing *AnTard* 8 (2000), dedicated to the *Buildings*. We do not propose to supplement Roques here, although one might note (e.g.) Brands (2002) 214–21, id. (2004), Hof (2009), ead. (2010), all concerned with Sergiopolis or Dara and the eastern frontier more generally, none of which he mentions.

[103] Montinaro (2011) 104–5; cf. id. (forthcoming).

[104] I owe this information to an e-mail from Professor Makris (of 2 June 2013). He intends to publish a paper on this in 2014. In the meantime see http://www.uni-muenster.de/ZeTeK/laufendeprojekte/laufend8.html concerning the project.

[105] Montinaro (2011) 102, it should be noted, explicitly believes in the genuineness of the lists of forts, as do the majority of scholars.

[106] Whitby (1985), Roques (2011) 52–9; cf. (*contra*) Greatrex (1994) 107–13, Cesaretti and Fobelli (2011) 15–18.

however, since Roques brings forward interesting new arguments to back up his case, which need to be considered. His work, we should note, is a very important contribution to the field, which so far seems not to have attracted the attention it deserves.[107] It is worth noting, moreover, that the chronology of Procopius' works is of some importance—rather than merely providing an excuse for scholars to pour forth endless articles—since it affects our perception of the relationship between the works and of the evolution of the historian's thought.[108]

Not surprisingly, scholars remain puzzled as to how best to approach the *Buildings*. Many detect traces of insincerity, of artfully concealed jibes at Justinian and his administration: such is the approach, for instance, of Philip Rousseau, Denis Roques, Anthony Kaldellis, and, more recently, Peter Bell.[109] Yet, as Barry Baldwin once pointed out, '[i]n these cynical times, it needs to be remembered that panegyric can be sincerely written and well deserved.'[110] Thus Averil Cameron and Jaś Elsner argue in favour of taking the work more at face value, seeing in it a deliberate creation of a work of mixed genres, which owes much, of course, to the panegyric, but much also to the *ekphrasis*; as we have noted above, moreover, both genres were flourishing in Gaza in the sixth century.[111] Paolo Cesaretti, on the other hand, prefers to see it as closely linked to the *Wars*—an approach that fits well with the proposal of Montinaro that the initial version of the work accompanied the publication of the *Wars*—and offering a different slant on the same events, this time one that is deliberately partial but remains above all historiographical.[112] The work as a whole demonstrates by detailed descriptions

[107] See Greatrex (2013a). See, however, the detailed and useful review of Roques' work by Saliou (2012).

[108] Cf. Roques (2011) 58–9, who argues that his later dating of the work (to 561) fits better with the idea of a Procopius mellowing in old age.

[109] Rousseau (1998), Roques (2000) 41, Kaldellis (2004a) 51–6; cf. Bell (2013) 11. Montinaro (forthcoming) follows Kaldellis in perceiving criticisms of Justinian, drawing attention to the fact that they all come in the second, revised version, and thus may represent his reaction to those who urged him to amplify his praise of the emperor. Cesaretti (2008) 170–8, while perceiving a double register in the work, argues that the debate as to his sincerity is misplaced: Procopius, in his view, always remained consistent in his devotion to the genre of historiography.

[110] Baldwin (1981) 58; *contra*, Kaldellis (2004a) 56–7, arguing that panegyric under an autocracy is *ipso facto* insincere.

[111] Elsner (2007) 34–5; cf. Cameron (2006) 20–2, Roques (2011) 36–43 and Whitby (2000) (against Rousseau). Cesaretti and Fobelli (2011) 19–29 see in the work a type of *periêgêsis*. On genres at Gaza see Greatrex (forthcoming, g) *ad init.*

[112] Cesaretti (2008) 175–8, drawing attention also to an allusion to Dionysius of Halicarnassus in the *praeteritio* at the opening of the *Buildings*. He stresses the need not to be

and by its wide-ranging survey of the empire the efforts deployed by Justinian to defend his empire, in which he enjoyed divine support. It was once suggested by James Howard-Johnston that the historian was trained as an engineer, since both in the *Wars* and in the *Buildings* he evinces a distinct interest in flood defences, e.g. at Antioch and Dara.[113] His suggestion has received little support, and more recently Elodie Turquois has argued convincingly that Procopius' grasp of technical matters was limited: his descriptions of architecture and, perhaps more surprisingly, even of military equipment (in the *Wars*) tend to be rather imprecise, and on occasion even erroneous. She proposes therefore that he is a layman writing for laymen, but resorting on occasion to pseudo-technical vocabulary in order to claim a greater expertise than was the case. She thus sees the work as a combination of genres, including those of *periêgêsis*, of encyclopaedic works and of technical handbooks, as well as those noted already.[114]

Conclusion

The start of the twenty-first century has seen a renaissance in Procopian studies.[115] Our aim in this article has been to gather some of the threads together and to identify some of the themes that have emerged in the studies that have appeared. As can be seen, scholarship on his various works, especially the *Buildings*, is proceeding in various directions simultaneously. It is of some concern that quite different interpretations—or indeed, on occasion quite similar ones—are often put forward without taking into account others' work. It is, furthermore, a symptom of the increasing dominance of the English language that Anthony Kaldellis' publications, for instance, enjoy much greater recognition than the equally important contributions of Dariusz Brodka and Juan Signes Codoñer, published in German.[116] It is therefore

misled by notions of genre in our reading of the work, likening Procopius to Picasso and Stravinsky in his lack of adherence to any one particular school.

[113] Howard-Johnston (2000); Maas (2007) 75 is one of the few to accept his arguments.

[114] We summarise her arguments in Turquois (forthcoming); cf. her thesis, Turquois (2013).

[115] And in the field of sixth-century historiography more generally, as an international congress on Malalas in Tübingen in February–March 2014 demonstrated, part of a long-term project under the aegis of the Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften to produce a full on-line commentary on the text. Progress is also being made in the field of Syriac historiography of the period: see (e.g.) Debié (2009) and her forthcoming monograph.

[116] The free availability of *GRBS* on-line, in which several of Kaldellis' articles have appeared, is no doubt also a factor. But the skewing of publications towards English, fre-

possible for studies to appear, such as the monograph of Aikaterini Revanoglou, and to fall through the cracks in the system, despite their merits.[117] The risk of parallel projects grows as the field expands, and thus part of our objective in publishing this study is to reduce the chances of this. The conference held in Oxford in January 2014 has helped to bring scholars together, as has the preparation of a *Companion to Procopius*. A further long-standing *desideratum* has been for an adequate historical commentary on Procopius' works, at any rate for the *Wars*, and work has begun on this with a projected volume on the *Persian Wars* by the present writer, due to be published by Cambridge University Press. It is encouraging to think that our understanding of Procopius will grow considerably over the coming years, and with it our ability to comprehend the age of Justinian. Yet as we stressed in the second part of this article, it is important not to lose sight of the wider context when we consider both the emperor and the historian.

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quently as a result of pressure of external evaluation, is a disturbing phenomenon, on which see (e.g.) Gazzola (2012). For the impact of this in the field of Late Antiquity, see Athanassiadi (2010) 30, Giardina (1999) 168 (Italian) = (2013) I.11 (English) with n. 35.

[117] See n. 74 above. We have found not a single review of this work, even in *BZ*.

Bibliography

1. Abbreviations

CFHB	Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae.
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium.
PLRE	*Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, ed. J. R. Martindale et al., 3 vols. (Cambridge 1970–92).
SC	Sources chrétiennes.
TTH	Translated Texts for Historians.

2. Primary Sources

Agath.	Agathias, *Historiae*, CFHB, ed. R. Keydell (Berlin 1967); tr. J. D. Frendo (Berlin–New York 1975).
Amm. Marc.	Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, ed. W. Seyfarth (Leipzig 1978); also ed., tr. and comm. E. Galletier, J. Fontaine, G. Sabbah, M.-A. Marié and L. Angliviel de la Baumelle, 6 vols. (Paris 1978–2002); tr. J. C. Rolfe, 3 vols. (London and Cambridge, Mass. 1935–9).
Choricius	*Choricii Gazaei opera omnia*, edd. R. Foerster and E. Richsteig (Leipzig 1929).
Chr. Pasch.	*Chronicon Paschale*, ed. L. Dindorf (Bonn 1832). Partial tr. by M. and M. Whitby, *Chronicon Paschale 284–628 AD*, TTH 7 (Liverpool 1989).
C.J.	*Codex Justinianus*, in *Corpus Juris Civilis* vol.2, ed. P. Krueger, eleventh edition (Berlin 1954); tr. B. Frier et al., 3 vols. (Cambridge, forthcoming).
Evagr. *HE*	Evagrius, *Ecclesiastical History*, ed. J. Bidez and L. Parmentier, tr. M. Whitby, *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius Scholasticus*, TTH 33 (Liverpool 2000).
Expositio Totius Mundi et Gentium	Ed. and tr. J. Rougé, SC 124 (Paris 1966).
Inst.	Justinian, *Institutes*, ed. P. Krueger, tr. P. Birks and G. McLeod (London 1987).
Joh. Ant.	John of Antioch, *Ioannis Antiocheni fragmenta quae supersunt omnia*, ed. and tr. S. Mariev (Berlin 2008); ed. and tr. U. Roberto, *Ioannes Antiocheni Fragmenta ex Historica chronica* (Berlin 2005).
Joh. Eph. *HE*	John of Ephesus, *Historiae Ecclesiasticae Pars Tertia*, ed. and tr. E. W. Brooks, CSCO Scr. Syr. 54-5 (Louvain 1952).

Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.*	John the Lydian, *De Magistratibus populi Romani*, ed. and tr. J. Schamp et al., *Des magistratures de l'empire romain*, 2 vols. (Paris 2006).
Mal.	Malalas, *Chronographia*, ed. J. Thurn, CFHB (Berlin 2000); tr. E. and M. Jeffreys and R. Scott (Melbourne 1986), tr. J. Thurn and M. Meier (Stuttgart 2009).
NovJ.	Justinian, *Novellae* in *Corpus Juris Civilis* vol. 3, ed. R. Schoell and W. Kroll, sixth edition (Berlin 1954).
Oracle of Baalbek	Ed. and tr. P. J. Alexander, *The Oracle of Baalbek. The Tiburtine Sibyl in Greek Dress* (Washington, D.C., 1967).
Paul the Silentiary, *Descriptio Sanctae Sophiae*	Ed. C. de Stefani (Berlin 2011); tr. Bell (2009), TTH 52, see below.
Proc. *Aed.*	Procopius, *De Aedificiis*, ed. J. Haury, rev. G. Wirth (Leipzig 1964); ed. and tr. H. B. Dewing (London and Cambridge, Mass. 1940). Other translations noted below under author.
Proc. *Anecd.*	Procopius, *Anecdota*, ed. J. Haury, rev. G. Wirth (Leipzig, 1963); ed. and tr. H. B. Dewing (London and Cambridge, Mass. 1935). Other translations noted below under author.
Proc. *Wars.*	Procopius, *Bella*, ed. J. Haury, rev. G. Wirth, 2 vols. (Leipzig 1963); ed. and tr. H. B. Dewing, 5 vols. (London and Cambridge, Mass. 1914–28). Other translations noted below under author.
Suda	*Suidae Lexicon*, ed. A. Adler, 5 vols. (Leipzig 1928–38).
Theophanes, *Chronographia*	Ed. C. de Boor (Leipzig 1883); tr. C. Mango and R. Scott (Oxford 1997).
Theoph. Sim.	Theophylact Simocatta, *Historiae*, ed. C. de Boor, rev. P. Wirth (Stuttgart 1962); tr. M. and M. Whitby (Oxford 1986).
Ps.-Zach. *HE*	Pseudo-Zachariah, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, ed. and tr. E. W. Brooks, CSCO Scr. Syr. 38–9, 41–2 (Paris 1919–24); tr. G. Greatrex, R. Phenix et C. Horn, *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Zachariah Rhetor*, TTH 55 (Liverpool 2011).

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