

REVIEW–DISCUSSION

NEW VIEWPOINTS ON PROCOPIUS

Christopher Lillington-Martin and Elodie Turquois, edd., *Procopius of Caesarea: Literary and Historical Interpretations*. London and New York: Routledge, 2017. Pp. 300, 12 B/W illustrations. Hardback, £92.00/US\$160.00. ISBN 978-1-4724-6604-4. Paperback, £29.59/US\$47.95. ISBN 978-0-367-88076-7.

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In 2014 scholars and enthusiasts of Procopius were blessed with two international conferences: ‘Reinventing Procopius: New Readings on Late Antique Historiography’, in January in Oxford, followed by ‘The Late Mediterranean Society according to Procopius of Caesarea’, in December in Mainz. These colloquia reflected and responded to a boom in Procopius-related scholarship over preceding decades, marked by a proliferation of interpretative approaches and a growing tendency to discern in his writings ever-greater intellectual sophistication, compositional artistry, and allusive meaning; today it is hard to envisage how or why his stock should ever fall.¹ Two supporting pillars (on different storeys) of this increasingly elaborate literary edifice are Averil Cameron’s *Procopius and the Sixth Century* (1985), which located the author and his oeuvre in literary-cultural contexts, digested older bibliography, and became a point of reference for all subsequent enquiry, and Anthony Kaldellis’ *Procopius of Caesarea: Tyranny, History, and Philosophy at the End of Antiquity* (2004), which assailed prevailing contextual assumptions, applied a Straussian hermeneutical agenda, and became a *succès de scandale*. These two monographs self-consciously frame the volume under review. Its sixteen chapters mostly comprise selected fruit from both conferences, ten from Oxford, two from Mainz, along with four additionally commissioned items. The collection is edited by co-organisers of the Oxford gathering, Christopher Lillington-Martin (presently a PhD candidate at Coventry University) and Elodie Turquois (now a Postdoc-Mitarbeiterin at the Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz). An introduction by Lillington-Martin sketches Procopius’ career and works, outlines the volume’s aims and some recent and forthcoming publications, and briefly summarises the contributions. The papers primarily concern *Wars*, though some treat aspects of the *Secret History* and/or

¹ See the bibliographical survey in Greatrex (2014), with ‘Addenda’ at 121A–E; also Greatrex (2019).

touch upon *Buildings*. An eight-part sectional framework configures the chapters into a coherent sequence and, to some extent, identifies research themes, but is not always essential.

In a personal retrospective, Averil Cameron (Ch. 1) surveys the terrain of Procopian studies and reflects on her own interest, role, and publications in this field, since the mid-1960s, and specifically on her monograph of 1985. Noting a general shift in focus from literary-cultural perspectives towards historiography and military-political narrative, she observes how scholarship has moved on, conceptually and interpretatively, from questions of genre and classical mimesis, at least as previously framed, to address newer concerns, including intertextuality, narrativity, ethnicity, identity, and, more recently, fictionality. Acknowledging significant advances in understanding the imprint of Neoplatonic thought on sixth-century society, Cameron concedes that Procopius' religious-philosophical outlook remains a more intractable issue and she critiques, *in extenso*, interpretative challenges raised by Anthony Kaldellis in this sphere. Turning her gaze to a mass of scholarship on and beyond the horizon, Cameron concludes with monitory advice for those who seek to infer Procopius' personal views from his writings. This reviewer, who first encountered Cameron (1985) in the late 1980s, found himself ambivalently nostalgic for an era when, although there was much less to read about Procopius than now, that less, in its own terms, seemed more.

Michael Whitby's thoughtful essay (Ch. 2) muses on the nature of literary-historiographical greatness and Procopius' now commonly accepted claim thereto. An evaluation of the universally acknowledged greats of the Greco-Roman canon provides criteria against which Procopius might be measured. Some are ancient and conventionally asserted: scale and significance of subject, participation and/or autopsy, impartiality and truthfulness, linguistic-stylistic refinement. Others are modern and susceptible to anachronism: 'accuracy' in the sense of analytical rigour and critical evaluation of evidence, and objective distance—geographical, chronological, emotional. Each criterion is deemed necessary but not sufficient; all historians, even the 'greatest', in one or more respects fall short. Whitby finds that Procopius' *Wars* (if not his other works) earns him a place in this pantheon, both in comparative terms and on intrinsic merits, on account of its conceptual and thematic grandeur, engagement with classical historiographic tradition, and narrational or reportorial technique—or storytelling, even if the author makes no significant contribution to the philosophy of history. Observations on Procopius' literary-historical evolution conclude that post-540 'adversity transformed Procopius from a good writer into a great historian'. Whitby acknowledges distorting bias in Procopius' portrayal of Belisarius, which some recent scholarship seems willing to overlook or excuse, though here too distinguished antecedents are not beyond reproach (e.g., Thucydides on Pericles; Polybius on the Scipiones). Ultimately, modern readers of Procopius must make up their own minds as to

whether he manages, often or ever, to achieve a truly Thucydidean analytical progression from specifics to fundamentals, and thus from contemporary to enduring significance.

Peter Van Nuffelen (Ch. 3) initially addresses the hazards of inferentially (re)constructing Procopius' opinions and personality from his text, in the absence of external testimonia, and of wanting to distil a historical reality (or to decode esoteric messaging) from literary historiography. Van Nuffelen proposes, in contrast, that the difficulties a historical writer encounters in attempting to convey the world in words are an explicit theme of Procopius' narrative. He discerns in *Wars*, as a specimen text, a self-reflexive use of language to describe shifting historical and contemporary realities in the knowledge that words are themselves subject to semantic change. The resulting tensions or uncertainties accentuate human inability to grasp the past or foresee the future and, by extension, self-consciously intimate the limitations of classicism, especially its lexical dimension. Van Nuffelen locates this literary trait within a pervasive lack of confidence in the formerly self-evident adequacy or appropriateness of classical learning in late antique historical composition and, more broadly, a consciousness of mankind's limited capacity to relate or comprehend the interactions of human and divine causalities. A brief summary can hardly do justice to the richness of ideas in this chapter, which rewards careful reading.

Franco Basso and Geoffrey Greatrex (Ch. 4) investigate the content, structure, and purpose of the preface to *Wars* (1.1), which has elicited widely divergent responses, including, arguably, its most puzzling feature, Procopius' idealised portrait of a contemporary horse-archer, whose weaponry skills and martial ethos he contrasts with the low repute and inferior capabilities of Homeric bowmen. It has long been evident that, even if, from military-historical perspectives, Procopius here foreshadows the prominent role he allocates to imperial horse-archers in defeating Vandals and Ostrogoths, other, literary-rhetorical considerations shaped his choice of this prefatory vignette. Basso and Greatrex relate the historiographical purpose of the preface to the largely unrecognised sophistication of Procopius' intertextual engagement with his two greatest predecessors, Herodotus and Thucydides, which embraces both creative and emulative objectives. Far more than a rehearsal of over-familiar tropes of classicising historiography, they find an elaborately integrative composite of Herodotean and Thucydidean elements—linguistic, formal, and conceptual, which both exhibits Procopius' mimetic creativity, at least in comparison to more jejune and long-ridiculed specimens of such literary posturing, and permits Procopius to articulate an axiological agenda based on qualitative (Herodotean) notions of conspicuous valour (*ἀρετή*) rather than quantitative (Thucydidean) criteria of geographical, material, and human scale, and thereby to substantiate his contention that the wars of Justinian's reign surpass ancient conflicts. While Basso and Greatrex

offer the most carefully argued—and, in my view, compelling—analysis of the preface to *Wars*, it seems unlikely that the proliferation of interpretations may abate.² One might also have noted (complementary to cited observations by Clemens Koehn) that Homeric scholia and related literature had long featured specific comparative analysis of archery in Homer, including some of the technical points addressed by Procopius.³ This scholiastic material potentially provides an intellectual background that mitigates some of the apparent idiosyncrasy of Procopius' remarks.

Departing from—without entirely dismissing—prevailing biographical approaches, Alan Ross (Ch. 5) selectively applies narratological techniques to *Wars* in order to elucidate Procopius' participatory and autoptic appearances in his narrative, as one aspect of the historian's authorial persona as narrator-participant. Drawing on extensive recent scholarship on modes of narratorial self-representation in ancient historical writing, but sparing his readers the sometimes theory-laden jargon of more doctrinaire narratologists, Ross deftly shows that Procopius' ostensibly revelatory self-references are at once selective and artfully contrived, and have interpretative value beyond mere biographical extrapolation. Through careful analysis, Ross taxonomises several classes of self-representation and demonstrates close correlation between the type of authorial intrusion (participation, autopsy, anecdote) and the chosen verbal person/number, within an overarching concern to create a reliable narratorial persona that balances proximity to protagonists and objective distance. Furthermore, Ross argues persuasively for Procopius' emulation of self-representative strategies employed in classical historiography ('Herodotean' first-person singular and 'Thucydidean' third-person singular)—itself a form of literary alignment and tradition-conscious validation—and his own innovation in this sphere (first-person plural).

Lyvia Vasconcelos Baptista (Ch. 6) identifies and examines ways in which Procopius exploits the magnitude and/or uniqueness of his subject in axiological amplification strategies in *Persian Wars*, the most digressive and complex of his three geostrategic zonal narratives. She argues that, consistent with Procopius' prefatorial assertion of 'greatness' to validate Justinian's wars as a subject worthy of historical record, rhetorical magnification of events, deeds, conduct, and authorial experience forms part of the compositional and textual

² Since publication, see e.g., Kruse (2017), who conceives the archer as a self-referential metaphor for authorship, expressing Procopius' agonistic attitude towards classical historians.

³ E.g., *Wars* 1.1.11: Homeric archers draw bowstrings only to their chests, cf. *Scholia in Homeri Iliadem* (Erbse (1969–88) II.359–60), θ 325a¹ (Aristonicus and Nicanor, both citing Neoteles); similarly Porphyry, *Quaestiones Homericae ad Iliadem pertinentes*, θ 322–9 (MacPhail (2011) 142–4), who believed that Neoteles 'wrote a whole book about archery among the heroes' (ὅλην βίβλον γράψας περὶ τῆς κατὰ τοὺς ἥρωας τοξείας).

fabric of *Wars*. Drawing on studies of amplification in ancient rhetorical manuals (*progymnasmata*), she traces manipulative devices of aggrandisement, comparison, and accumulation in three sample episodes (Homeric archers, the plague, the Nika revolt). Vasconcelos Baptista's short contribution exemplifies the depth of her literary-theoretical engagement with the text. A more expansive study could perhaps investigate whether, in parallel with rhetorical technique, amplification is detectable at a lexical-syntactical level, beyond obvious use of superlatives. It might also prove enlightening to explore whether this aspect of Procopius' artistry is a creative reflex to specific ancient historiographical exemplars and/or can be more closely linked with rhetorical precepts in curricular texts of early sixth-century education.

James Murray (Ch. 7) endeavours 'a reconfiguration of Procopius as a Christian philosopher-historian', by comparing some philosophically equivocal passages in *Persian Wars* with Boethius' monument to Christian Neoplatonism, *The Consolation of Philosophy*, with a view to elucidating Procopius' educational milieu and the solace that his religion and *paideia* may have provided in response to calamitous events. A brief contrastive survey of Cameron's and Kaldellis' views on Tyche, Providence, divine intervention, and human agency misses other important, especially non-anglophone, bibliography.⁴ In the absence of evidence for a direct textual connection, Murray seeks in *Wars* 1–2 traces of Neoplatonic-infused Christian discourse and modes of thought, primarily in substance, occasionally lexical or phraseological, to demonstrate Procopius' philosophical erudition and Christian orthodoxy. While this reader was unpersuaded of any link, direct or indirect, between Boethius and Procopius, Murray's exposition is mostly cautious and, perhaps not surprisingly, glimpses elements of a common intellectual environment and theological-philosophical outlook. Whether one can argue, on this basis, for Procopius' implicit philosophical sophistication remains fraught with subjective judgements.

Conor Whately (Ch. 8) assesses Procopius' portrayal of the general Bessas, a significant secondary character, as a 'test case' of the historian's powers of characterisation, and to what extent these adhere to his prefatorial—if largely conventional—assertions of impartiality and truthfulness. In response to scholarly verdicts of inconsistency in Procopius' characterisations (though one could question whether presentational consistency should be expected), Bessas offers a potentially instructive case study insofar as he is both reviled as venal and lauded as personally courageous, while his generalship straddles a fine reputational line between commendable caution and reprehensible timidity. Well informed by recent scholarship on ancient historiography, Whately's close

⁴ E.g., notably Brodka (2004) 25–61, especially 46–55; Whitby (2007).

readings yield many insightful observations on Procopius' varying use of different techniques of characterisation, in comparison to classical and near-contemporary historians, and in relation to 'Procopian' themes of Fate, divine/supernatural intervention, and heroism. Whately finds that Procopius' depiction of Bessas is, on the whole, consistent and unbiased, though partly by inferring comedy or pathos—and implicit disparagement—in a key episode of ostensible valour during the siege of Petra (8.11.44–53). While Whately is correct to treat boldness as a multivalent attribute, comic intent (which surely entails bias?) defies demonstration.⁵ A broader question arises: when Procopius can and does openly and unambiguously criticise Bessas (even two chapters later: 8.13.11–13), what might be the purpose of or audience for veiled or ambiguous criticism? More specifically, when venality and courage are not mutually exclusive, is oblique ridicule of Bessas' gallantry necessary to satisfy a (modern) criterion of consistency? Given that most generals experience fluctuating fortunes, it is perhaps inevitable that, outside unalloyed panegyric, a commander will attract 'mixed reviews', especially if, as long-discerned features of the received text suggest, Procopius, from the mid-540s, did not, as a rule, revisit or revise previously written sections of *Wars* in light of subsequent events or his own shifting opinions—arguably, optimal conditions for 'inconsistency'. These concerns do not detract from an overall appreciation of Whately's study.

Long one of the most astute and philologically sensitive modern readers of Procopius, Charles Pazdernik (Ch. 9) investigates how *Wars* variously conceives both Goths and imperial forces in Italy as both trespassers and agents of legitimate authority, within contemporary power-political discourse, and particularly Justinian's promoted ideology of imperial *renovatio*. Examining Procopius' introductory précis of the initial establishment of Gothic rule in Italy, Pazdernik shows how the differing interpretations and contested legacy of those events pervade and contextualise the subsequent narrative of Roman-Gothic conflict, shaping readers' expectations and judgements. He closely analyses some long-recognised instances of Procopius' intertextual allusivity to accentuate aspects of his *imitatio Thucydidis*. In particular, by choosing Thucydides' obituarial portrait of Pericles as a model for both Theoderic's acquisition of dominion in Italy in 489–93 and Belisarius' conduct of the Gothic War up to 540, Procopius is able to draw—or contrive—analogy between the common intent and alternative outcomes of two imperially sanctioned missions to wage war on tyrants. Within the Thucydidean/Procopian antithesis between the equivocal language and harsh reality of power, more nuanced than simple opposition of *de iure* and *de facto*, Pazdernik unravels the protagonists' competing claims to legitimacy and more clearly distinguishes Procopius' narrative

⁵ In the Epilogue to this volume (264), Anthony Kaldellis appears to be persuaded by this interpretation, though he is alert to inherent subjectivity (262).

voice. The argumentation is compelling even to a reader who (like this reviewer) suspects that the patterning of Theodoric and Belisarius—and, indeed, elsewhere Totila⁶—on the common template of Thucydides' Pericles may in fact point to the limits of Procopius' allusive repertoire.

In the longest chapter (10), Christopher Lillington-Martin reconsiders East Roman strategic goals in the western Mediterranean, and diverse related matters, primarily through comparative analysis of *Wars* 3–4 and *Codex Justinianus* 1.27 (April 534), which prescribes new civil and military administrations for the restored African diocese. In the first of two parts, he initially addresses Procopius' status and position within Belisarius' staff and/or household, and particularly his self-definitions as *ξύμβουλος* and *πάρεδρος*, which are commonly equated to *consiliaris* and *assessor* (respectively, their exact semantic correspondents), even if scholarship is sometimes hazy about potential synonymy of *ξύμβουλος*/*πάρεδρος*, given Procopius' apparently fluctuating technical and generic usage. Inferring a hierarchical progression, Lillington-Martin instead identifies *ξύμβουλος* as (semantically unrelated) *assessor* and *πάρεδρος* as an ill-defined and otherwise unattested species of '*quaestor*'.⁷ It is not necessary to accept Lillington-Martin's terminological deductions to agree with his inference of Procopius' possible promotion (in/by 533) and/or preference for *πάρεδρος* as a means of self-distinction, relative to other instances of this term and its cognates in *Wars*. There follow: a selective précis of Procopius' participatory self-references; conjectures on his socio-economic background and associations with shipping; remarks on the dating of his works; the date and character of East Roman military operations in Spain (early/mid-550s); and reasons for their omission by Procopius (and others). Lillington-Martin concludes this section by proposing a common origin of certain passages in *Wars* 4, *Buildings* 6 and *CJ* 1.27.2, which he traces to operational paperwork drafted or processed by Procopius in 534. If some lines of argument may be contestable or hard to follow,⁸ the basic premise that Procopius' 'staff work'

⁶ Cresci (1986–7) 239–41; Pazdernik (2015).

⁷ In his Introduction (p. 1), Lillington-Martin states this novel proposition as established fact. Note that the attested usage of *quaestor* in contemporary military-administrative titu-
lature, as *quaestor exercitus*, refers to one of the highest-ranking officials (a *vir gloriosissimus*); see *PLRE* IIIB 1510.

⁸ E.g., Lillington-Martin (166–7) attaches particular significance to military preparations undertaken by the *magister* Solomon for an expedition against the Barbaricini of Sardinia (*Wars* 4.13.41–5). These preparations Lillington-Martin places 'some months after ... Spring 534', deducing that they must have been conceived and ordered by Belisarius before his departure 'in early Spring 534' and left for Solomon to implement. In fact, Solomon only commenced these arrangements during the winter of 535/6, for a projected (and possibly unrealised) campaign in spring 536 (see *PLRE* IIIB, Solomon 1, p. 1172). If he was thus 'carr[ying] out the order' previously issued by Belisarius, Solomon waited two years to execute that conjectural command. I see no grounds for supposing that Belisarius could

informed his military narrative and that the diocesan administration in *CJ* 1.27.1–2 was inspired by official reports from Africa (and not conceived *in vacuo*) seems unexceptionable. In the second part, Lillington-Martin examines Belisarius' military strategy in the western Mediterranean during and after the reconquest of northern Africa in 533–4. He argues persuasively that Spain was always a strategic consideration in the military-diplomatic planning of regional powers; charts a rapidly implemented policy of additional Roman conquests of insular (Sardinia, Corsica, Balearics) and coastal strongpoints; and plausibly infers offensive strategic options directed towards remaining western kingdoms. Judicious application of geographical and oceanographical data informs his survey of Roman command structures, resources, and jurisdictions.⁹ As presented here, a parallel hypothesis, positing Justinian's macroeconomic objective of controlling Mediterranean-Atlantic trade routes, is less compelling and might benefit from clarification of the precise ends and means of mercantilist-sounding 'control of trade routes' in the circumstances of the sixth-century Mediterranean. It is to be hoped that the author will expand upon this theme in a future publication.

Marion Kruse's contribution (Ch. 11) extends investigation of the significance of Roman law in Procopius' oeuvre, beyond previous studies of polemic in the *Secret History*,¹⁰ to encompass the reception of Justinianic legislation in *Wars*, which, in contrast, has elicited negligible scholarly investigation, surprisingly, given their contemporaneous completion in 550/1 and closely woven intertextuality, and a common interest, to differing degrees, in fiscal-administrative malpractice. Kruse's case study identifies in *Wars* clear resonances of *Novel* 105 (537), which regulates the expenditure and form of inaugural and valedictory consular processions. His close reading shows how Procopius' portrayal of Belisarius' two consular 'triumphs' (534/5), framing the last traditional consulship before the reform, creates dramatic tensions between historical context and readers' hindsight to undermine this *Novel's* rhetoric of the decay of the consular office and to fashion, implicitly, the same inverting critique of Justinian's ideological and legislative agendas as is discernible, overtly, in the *Secret History*. Kruse concludes with provisional remarks on the possible further impact of Justinian's legislation—or Procopius' critique

have 'informed Constantinople' (166–7) of these plans before the first promulgation of *CJ* 1.27 (13 April 534) or that 'related paperwork [for military preparations begun in winter 535/6] ... will have informed the *CJ* in 534' (167).

⁹ The position/title of the John installed by Belisarius at Caesarea/Cherchell (*Wars* 4.5.5) is uncertain; Lillington-Martin (173, 178, more cautiously at 177) plausibly identifies the *dux Mauritaniae* (a *vir spectabilis* according to *CJ* 1.27.2.2), even if the *ducatus* was yet to be formally created; but see *PLRE* IIIA, Ioannes 16.

¹⁰ To the cited bibliography one could add Rance (2019) 398, 401–3 (where the analysis is heavily indebted to Kaldellis' work).

thereof—on the structural configuration of *Wars*, opening a new and potentially rewarding line of enquiry.

Ian Colvin (Ch. 12) directs a narrow focus on the two different but complementary accounts that Procopius and Malalas provide of events leading up to Roman-Persian hostilities in 525/6–32, and investigates what can be inferred from content, emphasis, and, especially, omissions about each author's historical and ideological purpose. In both cases, Colvin accounts for divergence in terms of conscious authorial selectivity and manipulation, conditioned by differing responses to Roman military-diplomatic successes—actual or alleged—and humiliations, in contrast to alternative explanations, such as unintended oversight, availability of source material, and/or textual interrelationship. In particular, Colvin discerns in Procopius' work a strand of polemic against the injustice of Persian claims to Lazica and demands for Roman monetary contributions, concluding that such payments, designed to enhance Persian prestige rather than alleviate fiscal exigencies, were the main bone of contention, with implications for understanding both motivations and pretexts in the renewal of conflict in 540. While difficulties arising from the precarious transmission and constitution of Malalas' text may linger, Colvin presents a well-written and judiciously argued case.

In light of the vast scholarship and ongoing debate concerning the genesis, nature, and dynamics of ethno-political identity among early medieval barbarians, and particularly the literary-cultural contexts and evidential value of contemporary Roman accounts, Alexander Sarantis (Ch. 13) reconsiders Procopius' depiction of the character, culture, and military-political behaviour of barbarian population-groups in the Balkans and its northern hinterlands. He reaffirms and nuances an essentially positivist view that Procopius was concerned to present historical events accurately and objectively, based on oral informants and documentary sources, even if his exposition is, to varying degrees, couched in literary-rhetorical motifs, shaped by inherited cultural attitudes and constrained by linguistic and conceptual conventions of classicising historiography. Sarantis discerns across Procopius' writings inherent inconsistencies that reveal his awareness of and interest in the complexities of this geopolitical landscape, and which, at the very least, complicate alternative theses that he pursued one of several overarching, strictly non-historical agendas. He plausibly accounts for Procopius' disjointed and cursory coverage of Balkan events owing to his lack of personal involvement in this zone and the relative unsuitability of its anarchic and low-intensity conflicts for grand-style military-historical narrative—though much the same could be said of Procopius', in contrast, continuous and detailed narratives of protracted 'counter-insurgency' and sometimes tedious, small-scale attritional warfare that followed thrilling 'shock-and-awe' conquests in Africa and Italy. Indeed, the comparatively high proportion of antithetical rhetoric in some Balkan-related episodes (e.g., *Wars* 7.34; 8.18–19) may more simply compensate for scant

information available even from secondary sources. Sarantis also makes assumptions about Procopius' intended audience: 'also officer classes in places like the Balkans' (233; and 229: 'officer classes for whom he wrote');¹¹ one might legitimately wonder whether this elaborately wrought Atticising composition is, on the whole, consistent with known educational and socio-cultural profiles of this group, especially within the semi-barbarised latinophone military culture of the Balkans, even allowing for the possibility that the text may have been read at different levels.

Embracing all three of Procopius' works, Peter Sarris' contribution (Ch. 14) examines issues pertaining to land, its ownership and exploitation, and its central position in Procopius' critique of Justinian's regime. Procopius' familiarity with social and economic conditions is reflected in his demonstrable knowledge of the existing legal framework and new laws, presumably linked to his post as Belisarius' *assessor*. Following a perceptive examination of multiple facets of human attachment to soil or locality—tenurial, economic, emotional—Sarris finds in Procopius' text diverse incidental insights into the nature of rural society, traversing socio-economic strata from bond-labourer and tenant-farmer to estate owner, up to the place of land in a ruler's fiscal and strategic calculations. He affirms that Procopius' military service makes him a crucial and informed observer of landed society in Vandalic Africa and Ostrogothic Italy, where his testimony regarding monetised agrarian economies has important implications for western medievalists. Finally, Sarris shows how property and proprietorial rights figure prominently in Procopius' rhetorical invective, which again is informed by and inverts Justinianic policies in this sphere.

In a short but erudite contribution (Ch. 15), inspired by a recent study by Dirk van Miert (2010), Federico Montinaro points out and ties up some loose threads concerning the collaborative and competitive scholarly endeavours that culminated in David Hoeschel's *editio princeps* of *Wars* and (the 'long recension' of) *Buildings* in 1607. Through examination of the correspondence of Joseph Justus Scaliger, the ἐργοδιώκτης or 'executive editor' of this project, principally with Hoeschel and Isaac Casaubon, a paper trail leads Montinaro to absolve Scaliger of academic theft imputed by Bonaventura Vulcanius, to whom Scaliger had originally allocated the edition, but who had failed to complete this textually difficult task, at least to Scaliger's timetable.¹² This tale reminds us that the rush to publish and publishers' marketing priorities are

¹¹ Similarly, Whately (2016), especially 3–5, 221–32, contends that *Wars* was partly intended as instructional literature for senior army personnel.

¹² Note that the autograph notation of Charles Labbé in Leiden *Scal.* 56B (30^r) reads '*Descrip̄si ex vet. cod.*', rather than, as Montinaro reports (256), '*Descrip̄si ex veteri manuscript [sic]*', though this does not substantially affect his observation of parallelism with the third-person note '*descripsit ex vet. MS*' in *Monac. gr.* 513 (26^v).

hardly modern academic phenomena. To be fair to Vulcanius, his story is largely told by others, and although he failed over six years to make headway with the edition, it took Hoeschel, with assistance from Scaliger and Casaubon, well over five.

As a pendant to Averil Cameron's introductory chapter, an epilogue (Ch. 16) by Anthony Kaldellis affords him a corresponding opportunity for personal reflection on scholarly developments since his monograph of 2004, taking into consideration the preceding papers and looking ahead to directions future scholarship might take. Following praise of Procopius' depiction of his own times, superlative style, relative balance, and depth of insight, Kaldellis offers thoughts on, *inter alia*, Procopius' literary-linguistic artistry and modern academic marginalisation of late Roman paganism. He foresees scope for fruitful enquiry in further studies of intertextual allusivity and in more securely locating Procopius' writings within a clearer understanding of Justinianic laws and legislative culture. He self-consciously addresses the precarious subjectivity of below-surface readings, where humour, irony, critique, or subversion—like beauty or perfection—is in the eye of the beholder. If, perhaps inevitably, Kaldellis' standpoint rests on belief in the superiority of his own hermeneutical assumptions, he is hardly alone in this respect; and it is hard to disagree with his intimation that younger (and future) scholars of Procopius have little to gain—intellectually or professionally—from adherence to older 'minimalist' approaches. Ultimately, Kaldellis' refreshing sentiment that scholarship on Procopius 'needs ... to convey a sense of why we enjoy reading him' should transcend differences of interpretation.

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This is a stimulating collection; all chapters may be read with profit. Christopher Lillington-Martin and Elodie Turquois are to be congratulated on its organisation, scope, and, especially, balance. The volume's aim to furnish new and diverse research and foster international dialogue (even if mostly through anglophone contributors) is admirably accomplished. The production quality, including a collective bibliography and index, is high. Aside from a couple of dozen trivial typos, a few technical errors were noticed, mostly minor.¹³

¹³ Errors: **2**: *Illustrius* (twice) > *illustris*; **4**: *Quo tempo* > *Quo tempore*; **7**: Chapter 12 misnumbered 14, and numeration of 13 and 14 transposed; **18**: '*illuminati*' was Fahey's term (*BMCR* 2005) well before it was Montinaro's (2015); **33**: Claudian > Claudius; **79**: *tibincen* > *tubicen*; **86**: Menander Prot. *Exc. de Sent.* 27 > frg. 27 (apud *Exc. de sent.*); **94**: Aftonius > Aphthonius; **95**: *progamnasmata* > *progymnasmata*; **125**: 'with Vitalian' should read 'with John, nephew of Vitalian'; **161**: Pamphilia > Pamphylia; **165**: Gotheus > Gothaeus; Fuscia > Fuscias; **174**: Goda[s]; **183**: Casilium > Casilinum; **253**: quotation from Scaliger ad Hoeschel 19 Nov. 1601 should read '*non solum consilium*' rather than '*non consilium solum*' (and the page reference to ed. (1627) should read 738 not 378); **274**: Berndt, C. > Berndt, G. M.;

Although it might be invidious to single out contributions, in my view those primarily concerned with literary interpretation and intertextuality (Basso/Greatrex, Pazdernik, Kruse) and literary-theoretical aspects (Van Nuffelen, Ross, Vasconcelos Baptista) promise or adumbrate broader advances in understanding Procopius' oeuvre. With regard to future scholarship, while I agree with Kaldellis' forecast, and aware that some work-in-progress will fulfil long-standing desiderata,¹⁴ I suggest that some more fundamental work is also desirable. Unsurprisingly, all the contributors, to some degree and often extensively, discuss issues relating to Procopius' style, rhetoric, and/or audience. Yet, despite heightened enthusiasm for all manner of Procopiana in recent decades, there is no up-to-date or comprehensive monograph on the style and language of Procopius' works; the most recent study is the relevant section of Rubin (1954 [1957]), which now seems even more outdated in light of recent sociolinguistic approaches to high-register medieval Greek.¹⁵ There is no exhaustive examination—or any English-language treatment—of Procopius' oratory or epistolography in *Wars*.¹⁶ Procopius' distinctive accentual prose rhythm, that most recondite of compositional dimensions, which might assist, for example, in assessing performability or other aesthetic qualities, or even in new editorial choices, has attracted no attention for a century.¹⁷ I concede that these are traditional and unfashionable-sounding concerns, but if Procopian studies continue to grow at their current rate and trajectory, renewed and reinforced philological foundations might help to anchor interpretative subjectivity and bear the weight of more voguish research agendas, and, perhaps in the longer term, underpin shifts in scholarly consensus.

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280: in Haury (1895 [1896]) abbreviation *k.* = *königlichen* not *kaiserlichen* (*nie in Bayern!*); **288:** Rubin (1952) appears to be a misdated duplicate of Rubin (1957), both titles differently misspelt, and omitting Rubin (1954).

¹⁴ I note, in particular, the commentary on *Persian Wars* that Geoffrey Greatrex is preparing for Cambridge University Press.

¹⁵ Rubin (1954) cols 37–50 = (1957) cols 310–24. See now, e.g., Cuomo and Trapp (2017).

¹⁶ The best available study is Taragna (2000) 65–139, 221–36.

¹⁷ The last monographic, if brief, treatment was de Groot (1918). The foundational study (using *Wars* 1–2 as a sample) remains Dewing (1910), esp. 448–61; with critical remarks by Maas (1912). See also subsequent observations in Kumaniecki (1927); Cameron (1970) 68–9.

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